

XIX Pg *'Small Christian Communities'*

8 Pg *Water for life*

9 Pg *'Pasku Natya'*



April

14

We wish you a prosperous Sinhala & Tamil New Year

Messenger

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► Pope Francis on theme of 'World Youth Day'

"Go make disciples of all nations"

(Mt.28:19)

The Holy Father, Pope Francis recently addressed young people in a spiritual preparation for his forthcoming meeting with the youth of today, on World Youth Day to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The main focus at this year's event scheduled from July 23 to 28, will be the 'celebration of faith' by the young people during this 'Year of Faith'.

Specially targeting the thousands of young people who were present at St. Peter's for the Palm Sunday Service, the Holy Father said, "You have an

important part to play in the celebration of faith! You bring us the joy of faith and you tell us that we must live the faith with a young heart, always, even at the age of seventy or eighty! A young heart! With Christ, is a heart that never grows old with age.

"You carry the pilgrim Cross through all the Continents, along the highways of the world! You carry it in response to Jesus' call: 'Go, make disciples of all nations' (Mt 28:19), which is the theme of World Youth Day this year. And you are not ashamed of His Cross! On the contrary, you

"You bring us the joy of faith"

embrace it, because you have understood that it is in giving ourselves that we have true joy and that God has conquered evil through love"

The Argentinean Pontiff told the young people that he looked forward with joy to meeting them in Rio de Janeiro and encouraged them to "prepare well - prepare spiritually above all - in your communities, so that our gathering in Rio may be a sign of faith



for the whole world." Pope Francis exhorted, "Young people need to tell the world: It is good to follow Jesus; it is good to go with Jesus; the message of Jesus is good; it is good to come out of ourselves, from

the edges of existence of the world and to bring Jesus to others! I think of you celebrating around Jesus, waving your olive

branches. I think of you crying out his name and expressing your joy at being with him!" The Holy Father said.



Hon. John Amaratunga Member of Parliament and Chief Opposition Whip greets His Holiness Pope Francis on his ceremonial Installation. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Neomal Perera is also in the picture.

La-Kri-Vi National Annual Orientation Seminar for Animators

La-Kri-Vi National Annual Orientation Seminar (AOS) for Animators will be held from April 18 to 21, 2013.

The AOS is a four day residential programme and about 250 animators will participate from the various districts of the country. The animators are young men and women, over 16 years of age, who will be actively involved in the planning, implementation (conducting children's programmes and

assisting in related activities) and the monitoring of the projects.

The AOS is the 'springboard' of the formation of animators which becomes a time spent in solidarity and testifying to the fact how a strong body like La-Kri-Vi functions, in a world when voluntary service is fast disappearing.

The AOS will precede all activities of the movement for the year 2013 and 2014.

Bogahapalassa Children's Home - No connection whatsoever to the Catholic Church

A statement made by a Buddhist prelate to the *Divaina* Newspaper dated April 6, 2013 reads as follows:

"The inmates of Bogahapalassa Children's Home at Tissamaharama, have been misused by the 'pastor', leading them to slaughter animals at a farm belonging to the Children's Home. We are keen to inquire about the steps taken by the Archbishop and the Catholic Church, in relation to this issue."

In reply to this statement the Catholic Church wishes to state that the above mentioned children's home has never been, or is in no way associated with the Archbishop nor the Catholic Church. Thus the Children's Home and the 'impersonative pastor' do not come under the purview and scrutiny of the Archbishop or the Catholic Church.

The reason that the Archbishop and the Catholic Church stepped forward in settling the issue with regard to "Prem Nivasa" at Rawatawatte, Moratuwa was because that home belonged to the Catholic Church, and those governing it were Rev. Sisters.

These clarifications have been made in order that the said Buddhist prelate be convinced that the allegations leveled against the Catholic Church are incorrect and baseless.

If what took place at the Bogahapalassa Children's Home is true, the Catholic Church too condemns this inhumanly act of misusing and abusing children.

Archdiocese of Colombo will be blessed with twelve new priests

The Sacerdotal Ordination of the Archdiocese of Colombo, is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2013, when 12 deacons from the National Seminary - Ampitiya, will be ordained priests. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will preside at the Ordination Ceremony, which would be held at St. Lucia's Cathedral at 9.00 a.m. The Apostolic Delegate, the Auxiliary Bishops and Archbishops Emeriti, would also concelebrate at the ceremony. A large crowd is expected to participate, specially from the parishes related to the ordinandi.

(CONTD ON PG. 3)

Ratnapura interreligious group holds 'Protest Meeting'



Catholics, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, and other Christian denominations recently gathered together in interreligious harmony to protest against the injustices committed against the Sri Lankan pilgrims who visit India.

The meeting was co-ordinated by Ven. Kotapola Sudharama Thero, President of the Ratnapura Interreligious Group.

The meeting was held in the premises of the Ratnapura Municipal Library.

Rev. Fr. Gabriel Nicholas, Asst Parish Priest, Peter and Paul Cathedral, Ratnapura was also present.

- Theobald Samarungana

New Mission House for Thambakande Shrine



His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera Bishop of Kurunagala, blessed and declared open a two storeyed building for the Mission House for Thambakanda in the Kurunagala Diocese recently.

The successful completion of this building is the result of the hard work and contribution of the large numbers of dedicated people. The Parishioners of Thambakanda raised valuable funds (about 150 million Rupees) for this project.

Picture shows His Lordship unveiling the plaque at the Mission House.

G.B.H. Livera

Caritas Sethmini, Ratnapura Launch of Website



Caritas Sethmini, Ratnapura launched her website last month at the Ratnapura Bishop's House, in the presence of several priests from the diocese and the Bishop of Ratnapura, Rt. Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandrasiri Perera OSB. Former Director of Catechetics, Rev. Fr. Paul Fernando explained the importance of possessing new technology like the website as this will provide information about Sethmini, the parishes in the diocese, the province, population etc., and places of historic and tourist interest.

Even those coming from abroad can access such information he said.

Director of Sethmini, Rev. Fr. Texie Dissanayake and administrative Officer Sunil Fernando also spoke.

Picture shows Fr. Paul Fernando helping the Bishop to log on to www.caritassethmini.org.com.

J. Antony

SHARE Foundation celebrates five years of service at Alagollewa



Share Foundation established in the year 1999, is a charitable organisation registered in the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka. The main objective of SHARE is to make available high quality nursing care to the sick, terminally ill and the mentally and physically disabled in their own homes.

The Community Nursing Service founded by Mrs. Celine Samarasinghe, introduced the first project to Sri Lanka in November 1999 as a millennium project, during the year of the elderly to help and nurse the sick amongst the poor. When SHARE Foundation commenced the third project in Alagollewa, Anuradhapura on the January 31, 2008, it took another step of advancement.

The five year Thanksgiving Mass was held at St. Anthony's Church Alagollewa on January 31. The celebrant at the service was Bishop of Anuradhapura, Rt. Rev. Bishop Norbert Andradi. Rev. Fr. Samantha Senanayake Parish Priest of Alagollewa, the staff, a few volunteers and well wishers including nuns and priests were present.

Rev. Fr. Damian Perera

'Way of the Cross' borne by University of Colombo through the Catholic Students' Movement



The annual 'Way of the Cross' conducted by the Catholic Students' Movement of the University of Colombo was held in the premises of Tawatte Basilica during the last week of Lent. Holy Mass was celebrated after the Way of the Cross. Rev. Fr. Saman Maximus, University Chaplain and the students took turns carrying the cross through the 14 stations in remembrance of Jesus's walk to Calvary.

Thusitha Jayakody (CSM, UOC)

Passion Play in Maggona Calvary



A passion play organised by the staff of St. Vincent's Home, Maggona was held at the National Calvary Shrine on Good Friday, directed by Rev. Fr. Lal Pushpadeva OMI.

The arrangements for the Passion Play were made under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Sriyan Ranasinghe OMI, Manager, St. Vincent's Home, Maggona and the Oblate Community.

D. Anselm Fernando

Waragoda Lenten Spiritual Retreat

A Lenten Spiritual Retreat on the theme 'Lord Increase Our Faith' organised by the Waragoda Legion of Mary for the third successful year was held recently at St. Paul's Church, Waragoda, Kelaniya. Rev. Fr. John Camillus, Rev. Fr. Anton Lakshman, Rev. Fr. Krushan Kumara, and Rev. Fr. Nilushan, OMI, were among the preachers. The retreat was organised under the guidance of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Gihan Redly Perera and Asst. Rev. Fr. Nilantha Ediriwickrama.

Clarence Leonard

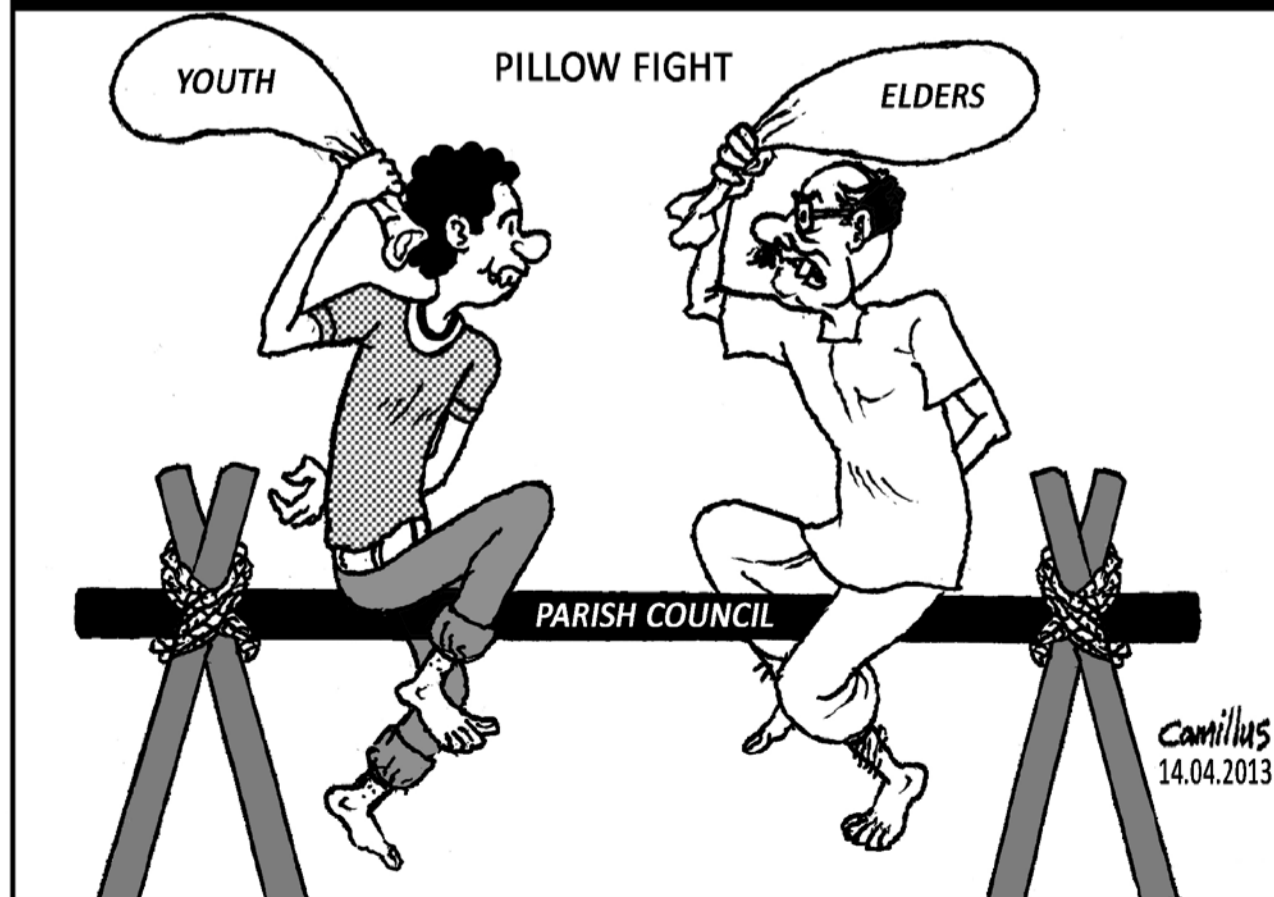
Passion Play at Kadolkelle

In spite of the inclement weather that prevailed on Palm Sunday. The presentation of a Passion Play together with so many other episodes in the life of Jesus at the premises of the Divine Mercy Church at Kadolkelle won the applause of thousands of Catholics gathered there. Rev. Fr. Linton Joseph Fernando the Parish Priest, deserved commendation for production of this remarkable show.

J.T. Miranda

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



Twelve new priests for the Archdiocese

Rev. Bro. Kamal Nishantha Fernando



Son of late Wijeratne Muhamdirange Joseph Shelton Fernando and Codippily Arachchige Dona Mary Leticia was born on November 27, 1970. He is from the parish of Welivita and an Old Boy of St. Benedict's College, Kotahena.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 1986 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary at Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Grand Street, Battaramulla and Kotahena.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Mary's Church, Welivita on April 21, 2013, at 9.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. Roshan Chaminda Fernando



Son of Kehelbaddarage George Stanley Fernando and Irene Mary Rita Fernando, was born on May 15, 1975. Kimbulapitiya and an Old Boy of Andiambalama Roman Catholic Primary School and Maris Stella College, Negombo.

He entered St. John Mary Vianney Minor Seminary, Mattakuliya in 2004 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Deva Dharma Nikethanaya and at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Willorawatte and Dalupotha.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at Holy Rosary Church, Andiambalama on April 21, 2013, at 4.00 p.m.

Rev. Bro. Jude Chrisman Perera



Son of Liyanage Laos Peter Perera and Kuruppuarachchi Appuhamilage Dona Philomen Ekanayake, was born on August 14, 1978. He is from the parish of Bopitiya and an Old Boy of Bopitiya Roman Catholic Boys' School and Pamunugama Maha Vidyalaya.

He entered St. John Mary Vianney Minor Seminary, Mattakuliya in 2003 and then joined Our Lady of Lanka, Major Seminary in Ampitiya where he did his philosophical and theological studies. As deacon he served in the parishes of Batagama, Indigolla, and Dalupotha.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Nicholas Church, Bopitiya on April 21, 2013, at 5.00 p.m.

Rev. Bro. Lalith Chrisantha Tissera



Son of War-nakulasuriya Alexander Tissera and M.K. Vivian Concy Fernando, was born on October 20, 1979. He is from the parish of Pallansena and an Old Boy of the Duwana Mixed School and Kochchikade Maha Vidyalaya.

He entered St. John Mary Vianney Minor Seminary, Mattakuliya in 2005 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Deva Dharma Nikethanaya and at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Uswetakeiyawa, and Battaramulla.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at Holy Spirit Church, Kochchikade on April 21, 2013, at 8.30 a.m.

Rev. Bro. Thusitha Gayan Solangaarachchi



Son of Antony Ranjith Solangarachchi and Charlotte Philomena Fernandopulle, was born on September 9, 1981. He is from the parish of Welihena and an Old Boy of Ethgalle Roman Catholic School.

He entered St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Borella in 1997 and then joined Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya where he did his philosophical and theological studies. As deacon he served in the parishes of Battaramulla and Kotahena.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Maria Goretti Church, Ethgalle on April 21, 2013, at 8.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. Clement Sanjeewa Senanayake



Son of Peter Canisius Senanayake and Sunita Janet Kurera was born on November 10, 1981. He is from the parish of Badalgama and an Old Boy of Pahalala Madampella Kanishta Vidyalaya and St. Mary's College, Negombo.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 2003 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Dalupotha, Willorawatta and Batagama.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Benedict's Church, Godigamuwa on April 21, 2013, at 9.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. Chanaka Prabath Welikadarachchi



Son of Welikarachchige Don Carlo Edmund Appuhamy and Attinipanagoda Liyanage Dona Agnes Liyanage was born on April 14, 1982. He is from the parish of Kattuwa and an Old Boy of St. Peter's College, Negombo.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 1997 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary at Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Indigolla and Dalugama.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Francis De Sales Church, Kattuwa on April 21, 2013, at 4.00 p.m.

Rev. Bro. W.A. Ajith Suranga Appuhamy



Son of Weerasinghe Arachchige Jude Linus Appuhamy and Kurukulasuriya Mary Carmel Chryshanthi Peiris, was born on September 20, 1984. He is from the parish of Grand Street, Munnakkara and an Old Boy St. Nicola Junior School, Munnakkara, Negombo.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 2000 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary at Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Indigolla, and Ja-ela.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at Holy Cross Church, Munnakkara on April 21, 2013, at 9.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. T.D. Anton Dinesh Priyasad

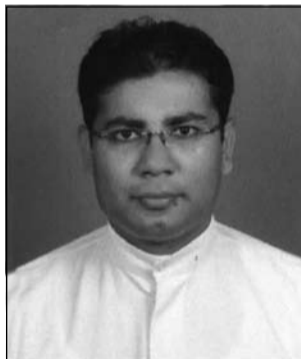


Son of Thebuanage Don Cecil Nilkama Anton and Thevaranthirige Mary Therese Priyangani Perera, was born on October 17, 1984. He is from the parish of Batagama and an Old Boy of De Mazenod College, Kandana.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 1999 and then joined Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya where he did his philosophical and theological studies. As deacon he served in the parishes of Kotahena, Dalugama and Kurana.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Anthony's Church, Batagama on April 21, 2013, at 8.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. H. Priyan Subashana Tissera

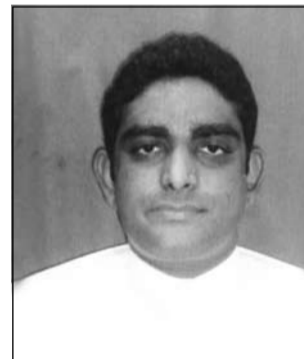


Son of Hettiarachchige Paul Tissera and Hettiarachchige Nirmala Mary Augusta was born on December 10, 1984. He is from the parish of Batagama and an Old Boy of St. Sebastian's College, Kandana.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 1999 and then joined Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary at Ampitiya where he did his philosophical and theological studies. As deacon he served in the parishes of Ja-ela, Kurana and Uswetakeiyawa.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Anthony's Church, Batagama on April 21, 2013, at 8.00 a.m.

Rev. Bro. Clariyan Haiyens Fernando



Son of Cluster Mason Jenerius Fernando and Mary Jacintha, was born on April 24, 1985. He is from the parish of Chekku Street and an Old Boy of St. Lucia's College, Kotahena and Isipathana College, Colombo.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 2002 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Dehiwela, Sea Street and Grand Street.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at St. Anne's Church, Chekku Street on April 21, 2013, at 9.30 a.m.

Rev. Bro. S. Onacis Fernando



Son of James Stanislaus Fernando and Josephine Patricia Stanislaus was born on December 25, 1985. He is from the parish of New Chetty Street and an Old Boy of St. Lucia's College, Kotahena and Isipathana College, Colombo.

He entered St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Borella in 2002 and then did his philosophical and theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka Major Seminary in Ampitiya. As deacon he served in the parishes of Nayakakanda, Grand Street and Sea Street.

He will celebrate his first Holy Mass at Our Lady of Sorrow's Church, New Chetty Street on April 21, 2013, at 7.00 a.m.

Harmony or Disruption - What will it be?

Recently the President of India Dr. Pranab Mukherjee referred to a new phenomenon in India - a culture of disruption. We are seeing the same culture of disruption today in our country where members of extremist Buddhist organisations are carrying out a campaign of hate directed at the Muslim Community. They are using the social media networks to insult and desecrate Islam and the Muslims. Crowds have been organised to attack Muslim shops and businesses. Even Muslim ladies have been subject to insult and abuse for wearing the Hijab or the Muslim ladies dress.

The Government has shown an ambivalent attitude. The President appeals for harmony and tolerance and seeks to pacify the Muslim community. The Government does not wish to displease the Sinhala Buddhist majority on whose votes they depend to come to power. The Government perhaps thinks that it can control the extremists with sweet talk. But the extremists, who obviously are well organised, would interpret such leniency as tacit approval by the powers that be. Such leniency by the law enforcement authorities would only encourage the extremists to continue their hate campaign and seek to mobilise the larger Buddhist population behind them. What could be easily controlled in its incipient stage could well grow out of hand and then the normal law enforcement machinery of the State will have to deal with a much bigger and more violent movement.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was condemned to death because he protested against the social discrimination practiced in the society.

Jesus sought to change society by peaceful protest against the evil social practices of His day. Those High Priests and the Pharisees sought to suppress His protest movement by arresting Him and condemning Him to a cruel death. He drew attention to the principle that those who take to the sword will perish by the sword. The validity of this principle is evident today in many countries across the world. Jesus died for a cause the cause of truth and non-discrimination in social relations between people. Jesus rose from the dead and guides His followers to follow His teachings and live in the world with the same attitudes of protesting against injustice and discrimination. But His protests are not to be contaminated with violence. Mahatma Gandhi used 'satyagraha' or non-violence in his protests against the British.

We as Christians cannot look the other way when a part of our people are subject to hatred, abuse and violence. We must stand up for the right and condemn evil. No man has right to use violence against another. Nor can anyone interfere with the religion or ways of living of others although they are different from one's own religion or culture. Nor should those who are entrusted with the duty of enforcing the law and protecting the rights guaranteed by our Constitution, compromise their duties for political expediency. We need to practice liberty, equality and fraternity the slogans of the French Revolution which are now incorporated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Institutionalised Church and the Spiritual Church

(A Review on the article "The Holy Spirit; Our Hope" by Cardinal Leo Josef Suenens)

According to the Vatican Council II, there exists the necessity of the adaptation of the Church according to the modern changing world. For that, there remains the great importance of responding to the action and guidance of the Holy Spirit, for it is only with the Holy Spirit that the continuation, adaptation, inculturation and unification are possible in the Church.

But at times one can feel that still the Church has not recognised precisely the whole truth about it. In other words, it has not fully grasped the total truth of the invisible or spiritual side of it, due to the over emphasis on the visible institutionalized Church. Therefore we can notice an unnecessary gap between the so called hierarchical Church [Institutionalised Church] and the charismatic Church [Spiritual Church].

There is no doubt that the Second Vatican Council, as an inspirational surprise from the Holy Spirit, was a movement, which renewed the Church and started to spiritualize it more and more. With the due respect offered to the institutionalised Church, it ushered its faithful to open themselves in a spirit of faith to what the Spirit of God continues to perform. Yet since God's action is something very discreet and profound, we the humans should not look at it as we look at human realities, but with the eye of faith.

There can never exist a double Church, one over emphasising on the structure and the other over emphasizing on the spiritual side. *Lumen Gentium* No 22 expresses therefore the need of visible and total unity of both institutionalised element and the spiritual element of the Church. "...in it the bishops, whilst loyally respecting the primacy and pre-eminence of their head, exercise their own proper authority for the good of their faithful, indeed even for the good of the whole Church, the organic structure and harmony of which are strengthened by the continued influence of the Holy Spirit..."

Cardinal Leo Josef Suenens, the Archbishop Emeritus of Maline- Brussels, who was a leading participant in Vatican Council II, looked at the Hierarchical Church as the body of Christ and the Charismatic Church as the anointing of the Holy Spirit. No one can separate the Body of Christ from the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and Holy Spirit are two persons, but still one, as Jesus is one with the Father.

According to Jn 4:6, when the Holy Spirit is sent into the world, he does not introduce anything new, but gives to the faithful new eyes to see and a new heart to understand what Jesus has already revealed. Thus the 'Truth' is not changed, but there exists a renewal and newness on our understanding and perception of that 'Truth'. Therefore the institutional Church and the charismatic Church are not two realities, but one. Both are interconnected and interdependent and it is only in their unity, that they arrive at the total truth.

Specifying the importance of the charismatic life in the Church, one orthodox theologian writes;

"... without the Holy Spirit, God is far away; Christ stays in the past. The Gospel is a dead letter. The Church is simply an organisation; authority a matter of domination, mission a matter of propaganda, the liturgy no more than an evocation, Christian living a slave morality..."

The Holy Spirit serves us in arriving at the fullness of the truth and guides us in our renewal movement in the modern world. But at the same time one should not forget that, it is the institutional Church, which provides the continual security to the charismatic life in the Church being deeply rooted in the sacred Scripture and Tradition. It has the responsibility to distinguish true charismatic movements which are faithful to tradition and Scripture from different charismatic movements which are influenced by fundamentalistic interpretations. *Lumen Gentium* No 12 says that those who are in charge over the Church

There can never exist a double Church, one over emphasising on the structure and the other over emphasising on the spiritual side. *Lumen Gentium* No 22 expresses therefore the need of visible and total unity of both institutionalised element and the spiritual element of the Church

should judge the genuineness and proper use of the gifts [Charisms], not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good, because charisms whether remarkable or simple are very essential for the needs of the Church. Therefore, the institutional Church is of course like the trunk and the bark of a tree which gives the strength and security to the sap which can be equaled to the spiritual life drawn from its very roots.

When the institutional Church allows the 'Charismatic Renewal', it should see that much emphasis is given to the giver of charisms more than to the charisms and to whom they have been given. If one possesses a charism, all glory and honour should be given to the Holy Spirit, the giver and the source of all charisms. Humility is the Mother of all Virtues and it is also considered that humility is the best of all gifts and charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit.

Charismatic renewal is a grace growing movement and such a truly inspired charismatic renewal would definitely lead the Church to the first Pentecost in Jerusalem, where the Church started. It never divides, but unifies. It never condemns the other, but accepts and embraces all. The Church was born with the coming of the Holy Spirit. We have to assert that the Holy Spirit is the source which increases Faith, Hope and Love. Therefore it is Church's prime responsibility to open itself to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and to let the Spirit to act. The Church should not be an encumbrance to its faithful in listening to the Holy Spirit.

We love the sacred Scripture. We love the sacred Tradition. We love the Ooneness of the Church. We love the Holiness of the Church. We love the Catholic Church. It is the Spirit who inspires us to love the Church and it is the Church which introduces us to the Holy Spirit specially through the Sacraments. Thus the complementarity of both are certified.

For the institutional Church to be progressive it has got to be animated by the Holy Spirit, and on the other hand for the spiritual renewal to be safeguarded, it has got to be engulfed by the Rock on which God built the Holy Mother, the Church. We need no institutional extremists or charismatic extremists, but the Church needs well balanced Catholics who are conservative and progressive; progressive in their spiritual experience and conservative in faithfulness to the sacred tradition.

Therefore it is our prime responsibility today as Catholics to work for the unity among Catholics. The unity is our witness. The unity is our love. The unity is our preaching and the unity is our future. Both the clapping hands and the stiffened hands praise the same saving God if the worshipper is genuine in his prayer.

We do not need another Vatican II. But we need another Pentecost, the Pentecost II. On that day we can all meet one another at the upper room in Jerusalem. Let the Holy Spirit be our constant hope and sure guidance. May Holy Mother the Church be our Rock and the Refuge.

Rev. Fr. Shiran Chamaka Perera
St. Paul's Minor Seminary- Marawila

● Pope Francis encourages Cardinals to respond with faith to their mission

The Sense of Responsibility

"Dear brother Cardinals, take courage!" With these words at an Audience held on the morning of March 15, in the Clementine Hall, Pope Francis encouraged the Cardinals to continue together in their mission. The following is the English text of the Holy Father's Discourse, which was given in Italian.



The period of the Conclave has been a momentous time not only for the College of Cardinals, but also for all the faithful. In these days we have felt almost tangibly the affection and the solidarity of the Universal Church, as well as the concern of so many people who even if they do not share our faith, look to the Church and the Holy See with respect and admiration. From every corner of the earth fervent prayers have been offered up by the Christian people for the new Pope, and my first encounter with the thronging crowd in Saint Peter's Square was deeply moving. With that evocative image of the people gathered in joyful prayer still impressed on my memory, I want to express my sincere thanks to the bishops, priests, consecrated persons, young people, families, and the elderly for their spiritual closeness, so touching and so deeply felt.

Profound Gratitude

I want to express my sincere and profound gratitude to all of you, my venerable brother Cardinals, for your ready cooperation in the task of leading the Church during the period of the *Sede Vacante*. I greet each one of you warmly, beginning with the Dean of the College of Cardinals, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, whom I thank for his devoted words and his fervent good wishes addressed to me on behalf of all of you. I also thank Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Camerlengo of Holy Roman Church, for his attentive service during this transitional period, as well as our dear friend Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, who led us during the Conclave: Thank you very much! My thoughts turn with particular affection to the Cardinals who, on account of age or ill health, made their contribution and expressed their love for the Church by offering up their sufferings and their prayers. And I should tell you that the day before yesterday, Cardinal Meija had a heart attack and was taken to the Pio XI Hospital. But they think his condition is stable, and he has sent us his greetings.

Nor can I omit to thank all those who carried out various tasks in the preparation and the conduct of the Conclave, providing the Cardinals,

with security and peace of mind in this period of such importance for the life of the Church.

Benedict XVI

My thoughts turn with great affection and profound gratitude to my venerable Predecessor Benedict XVI who enriched and invigorated the Church during the years of his Pontificate by his teaching, his goodness, his leadership, his faith, his humility and his meekness. All this remains as a spiritual patrimony for us all. The Petrine Ministry, lived with total dedication, found in him a wise and humble exponent, his gaze always firmly on Christ, the Risen Christ, present and alive in the Eucharist. We will always accompany him with fervent prayers, with undying and affectionate gratitude. We feel that Benedict XVI has kindled a flame deep within our hearts: A flame that will continue to burn because it will be fed by his prayers, which continue to sustain the Church on her spiritual and missionary path.

Dear brother Cardinals, this meeting of ours is intended to be, as it were, a prolongation of the intense ecclesial communion we have experienced during this period. Inspired by a profound sense of responsibility and supported by a great love for Christ and for the Church, we have prayed together, fraternally sharing our feelings, our experiences and reflections. In this atmosphere of great warmth we have come to know one another better in a climate of mutual openness; and this is good, because we are brothers. Someone said to me: The Cardinals are the priests of the Holy Father. That community, at friendship, that closeness will do us all good. And our acquaintance and mutual openness have helped us to be docile to the action of the Holy Spirit. He, the Paraclete, is the ultimate source of every initiative and manifestation of faith. It is a curious thing: it makes me think of this. The Paraclete creates all the differences among the Churches, almost as if he were an Apostle of Babel.

But on the other hand, it is we who creates unity from these differences, not in "equality," but in harmony. I remember the Father of the Church who described him thus: *Ipse harmonia est. The Paraclete who gives different charisms to each of us, unites us in this community of the Church, that worships the Father, the Son, and Him, the Holy Spirit.*

In Christ and with Christ

On the basis of the authentic affective collegiality that unites the College of Cardinals. I express my desire to serve the Gospel with renewed love, helping the Church to become increasingly, in Christ and with Christ, the fruitful vine of the Lord. Inspired also by the celebration of the 'Year of Faith', all of us together, pastors and members of faithful, will strive to respond faithfully to the Church's perennial mission: To bring Jesus Christ to mankind and to lead mankind to an encounter with Jesus Christ, the Way the Truth and the Life, truly present in the Church and also in every person. This meeting leads us to become new men in the mystery of Grace, kindling in the spirit that Christian joy that is the hundred fold given by Christ to those who welcome him into their lives.

As Pope Benedict XVI

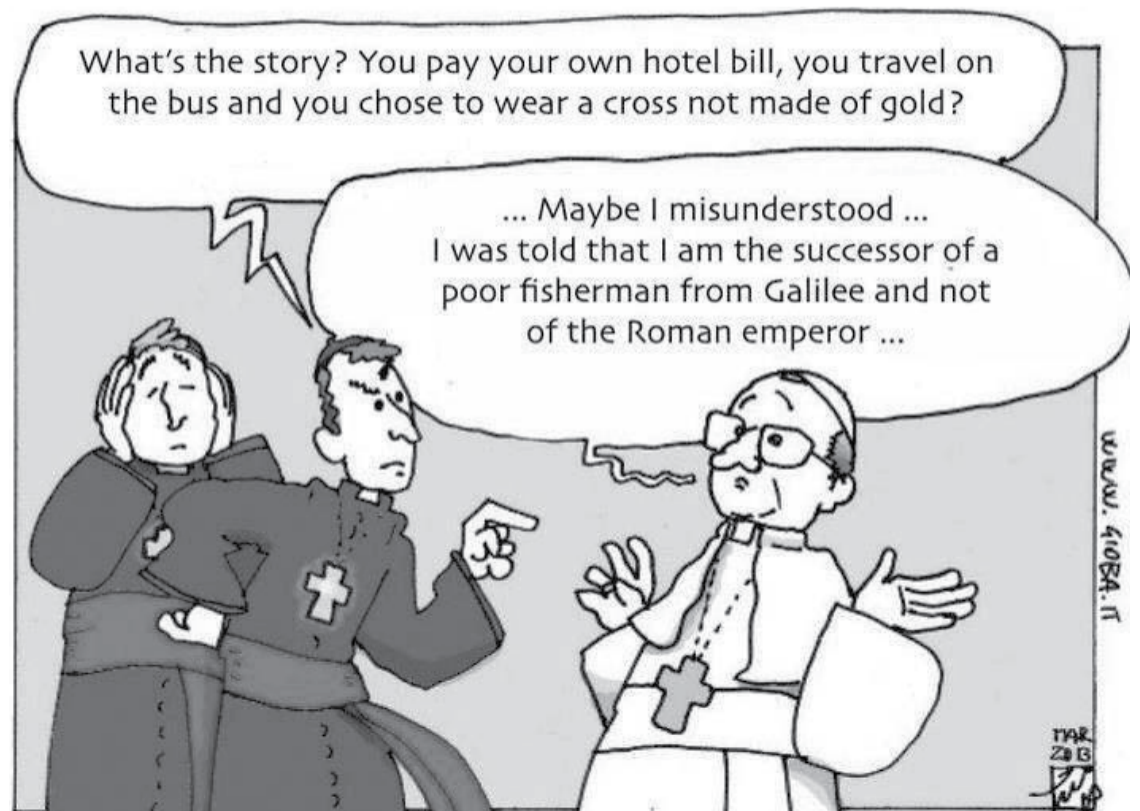
reminded us so many times in his teachings, and at the end by his courageous and humble gesture, it is Christ who leads the Church through his Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church through His life-giving and unifying force: Out of many, He makes one single body, the Mystical Body of Christ. Let us never yield to pessimism, to that bitterness that the devil offers us every day; let us not yield to pessimism or discouragement: Let us be quite certain that the Holy Spirit bestows upon the Church, with its powerful breath, the courage to persevere and also to seek new methods of evangelization, so as to bring to Gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth (cf. Acts 1:8). Christian truth is attractive and persuasive because it responds to the profound need of human life, proclaiming convincingly that Christ is the one Saviour of the whole man and of all men. This proclamation remains as valid today as it was at the origin of Christianity, when the first great missionary expansion of the Gospel took place.

Life's wisdom

Dear brother Cardinals, take courage! Half of us are advanced in age. Old age is - as I like to say - the seat of life's wisdom. The old have ac-

quired the wisdom that comes from having journeyed through life, like the old man Simeon and the old prophetess Anna in the Temple. And that wisdom enabled them to recognize Jesus. Let us pass on this wisdom to the young: Like good wine that improves with age, let us give life's wisdom to the young. I am reminded of a German poet who said of old age: *Es ist ruhig, das Alter, und Jromm: It is a time of tranquillity and prayer. And also a time to pass on this wisdom to the young. You will now return to your respective Sees to continue your ministry, enriched by the experience of these days, so full of faith and ecclesial communion. This unique and incomparable experience has enabled us to grasp deeply all the beauty of the Church, which is a glimpse of the radiance of the Risen Christ: one day we will gaze upon that beautiful face of the Risen Christ!*

I entrust my ministry and your ministry to the powerful intercession of Mary, our Mother, Mother of the Church. Under her maternal gaze, may each one of you continue gladly along your path, attentive to the voice of her Divine Son, strengthening your unity, persevering in your common prayer and bearing witness to the true faith in the constant presence of the Lord.



The Vanity of Worldly Riches

One day, the father of a very wealthy family, took his son on a trip to the village to show his son how poor people live. They spent a couple of days and nights on the farm of what would be considered a very poor family. On return from their trip, the father asked the son, "How was the trip? Did you see how poor people live?"

"Oh yeah," said the son. "So tell me, what did you learn from the trip?" asked the father. The son answered, "I realised that we have one dog and they had four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of the garden, and they have a small stream that has no end. We have imported lanterns in our garden, and they have the stars at night. Our patio reaches to the front yard and they have the whole horizon. We have a whole piece of land to live on, and they have fields that stretch for so many miles. We have servants who serve us, but they serve



others. We buy our food, but they grow theirs. We have walls around our property to protect us. They have their friends, the whole village to protect them.

The boy's father was listening. "Thanks dad," the son said, "for showing me how poor we are."

We often consider richness in terms of financial resources, acquisition of movable and immovable assets, savings and bank balances. However, this form of wealth can easily lure us away from

the lasting riches that Christ advocates us to gather during our life span: Riches gathered through the accumulation of spiritual blessings, self-sacrifice, enrichment of the lives of those who hunger for care and human warmth. We do not live on the principle of providing what people need to live, rather on the creation of demand. Our economy is not concerned with meeting people's needs but to stimulate people's greed. We live convinced that life does

Thoughts that haunt me

consist in abundance of possessions.

In 'Loka Vagga,' the Lord Buddha says that this world is a bubble and what we expected to find is not there. It is because the world we live in, is full of man made imitations. A great majority of us succumb to wrong values. We strongly believe money can buy everything: There are short cuts to knowledge and learning: Noise is more soothing than silence. We forget the fact that we are put on this earth for a short span for a much nobler purpose, the purpose of winning eternal life by following the supreme example set by Our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

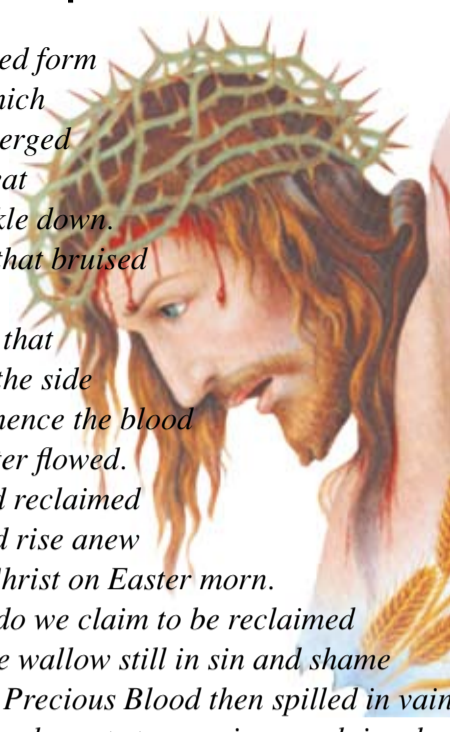
"But seek first His kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Mt. 6: 33)

Ananda Perera

Redemption

A mangled form
From which
Blood merged
with sweat
Did trickle down.
Thongs that bruised
the flesh
A sword that
pierced the side
From whence the blood
and water flowed.
By blood reclaimed
We could rise anew
As did Christ on Easter morn.
Ah! but do we claim to be reclaimed
Or do we wallow still in sin and shame
Was His Precious Blood then spilled in vain
For man who opts to remain unreclaimed.

Jeannette Cabraal



Doctor - Patient

Relationship



Only the truth that in life we have spoken
Only the seed that on earth we have sown.
These shall pass onwards when we are forgotten
Fruits of the harvest and what we have done - 'Bonar'

I am 76-years-old and have been a doctor for the past 48 years. I see an extremely sad relationship between today's doctors and their patients. I was told by my ancestors that if you fail to become the king of the land, be a physician. People look up to us and trust us with their lives. So if one is a doctor, responsibility and honesty is an absolute must.

I know we have to earn a living from our profession but it has to be done with honesty, giving time for the patient to describe his illness so that we gather all the information of the signs and symptoms followed by a proper examination and tentative diagnosis. Instead of immediately ordering a gamut of tests at terrible costs for the poor patient, we should not sacrifice our knowledge and ability to a machine. Doctors should have time to listen and explain to the patient, not summararily discharge them for the next.

Sri Lanka is the only country where we have free medical education and it is from the tax, people have paid. It is not only the rich, but even a beggar has paid tax for sugar in his cup of tea, flour in the bread, and dhal in the curry because everything that is imported is taxed; though not visible even the poorest pay for it. So they have all paid for us to become doctors. We are duty bound to look after them honestly and kindly.

Another sad practice I have come to know is that the consultants do not do their daily ward rounds in many wards. The consultants in my time never missed a ward round in the morning and often in the evening too. So the juniors could learn very well from them as medical studies is an apprentice course in many ways. How can the juniors get a proper training unless supervised and shown how they could do various procedures. The result will be more and more poorly trained doctors.

Drugs are another serious problem. Every one writes one or two antibiotics even for a simple cold and cough. The drug importers often bring mainly antibiotics some of which are of dubious efficacy. There are drugs for gastritis (prozoles) drugs for high blood pressure and cholesterol breaking down ones and also anti-diabetics of which some do not have any action at all. Surely doctors have brains; let's get together and help our own people.

Let us be honest!

Dr. Cynthia Jayasuriya.

Eat that Frog

Brian Tracy is a leading authority on development of human potential in the United States of America. He addresses audiences of tens of thousands of people at a time. He speaks to 250,000 people a year and has written over 25 books. His latest book, 'Eat that Frog' is an international best seller and it has sold over 500,000 copies.

Brian Tracy has found this title from an ancient quotation, "If the first thing you have to do when you wake up in the morning is eat a live frog, then nothing worse can happen for the rest of the day." The moral is to do the worst thing that you have to do first and the rest of the activities that you have to do are going to be easy.

He is the author who was responsible for introducing Pareto's 80/20 Principle to the USA. This principle was

founded by an Italian economist named Vilfredo Pareto who lived in the 18th century. He found that all economic activity revolves around this 80/20 principle. 20% of your activities will account for 80% of your results. 20% of your customers will give you 80% of your profits. The rest will give you only 20 percent of your profits.

This 80/20 principle could also be applied to our daily tasks. If we have ten things to do on our to-do-list today there may be one or two things (20%) that are the most important. They may be the most difficult tasks, like eating a live frog. But once these difficult things have been accomplished, the rest of the tasks will be easily fulfilled.

I know of a director of an organization,



who took over a business establishment that was running at a loss. He did a feasibility study and found that his business was over-staffed. After consulting management experts in the business field he realized that he has to retrench about 30 persons from his staff. This was a difficult task for a new and a young manager. But he "ate the frog." He went through industrial action and labour tribunals and at the end managed to retrench the extra employees and made the organization a profitable venture.

Brian Tracy talks about motivating ourselves not to postpone important decisions that we have to make. "Just thinking about starting and finishing an important task motivates you and helps you to overcome procrastination. Time management is really life management and personal management. It is really taking control of the sequence of events. Time management is

having control over what you do next. And you are always free to choose the task that you will do next. Your ability to choose between the important and unimportant is the key determination of your success in life and work."

The most important task may be the more difficult task such as eating a live frog. If you force yourself to do the hardest tasks, the rest of the duties will be easy to perform. These important tasks may be our duties towards our family, relationships, career or life. It may be getting rid of addictions in your life: Addiction to alcohol, drugs, gambling, money and wealth. These may be holding you back from success in life. People make New Year resolutions. Some people make Lenten resolutions. It is not late to make your resolution to do first the most difficult but most important tasks of your life; even if it means eating that frog.

TAKE TIME FOR A MINUTE OF HUMOUR - SMILE!



Bob took his dog to a vet "Doctor, I think my dog is dead." Putting it on the table, the vet came back with a cat. The cat sniffed the dog's ears, his nose and walked all over him. The vet finally said, "Yep! Your dog is dead." Then he gave him a bill for 535 (dollars); 35 for the office and 500 for the cat scan.

Rev. Fr. Fracxid Anthony Fernando OMI



Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

A tradition, which has come down from the apostolic ages, tells us that the great mystery of the Incarnation was achieved at the hour of midnight, when the Most Holy Virgin was alone and absorbed in prayer, that the Archangel Gabriel appeared before her, and asked her, in the name of the Blessed

Mary's sublime moment of glory

Trinity, to consent to become the Mother of God. We have heard the story so many times its glory sometimes fails us. The feast marks the most sublime moment in the history of time, the moment when the Second Divine Person of the Most Holy Trinity assumed human nature in the womb of the Virgin Mary. This year the Church celebrated the feast of the Annunciation on April 8.

For centuries, artists have attempted to picture Mary at this moment and have adopted a variety of devout settings: Surrounded by angels, dressed in red velvet or standing amid tapestries and silver candles. But sometimes we might feel that these beautiful paintings rob the reality of the situation. We wonder might not Mary have walked barefooted, cooking, attending to the chores around the house and leading a simple life. Might not she have been a young woman of deep faith, probably

dreaming of marriage, raising a family, teaching children the Jewish laws and traditions. The artists would have undoubtedly given much thought to the renditions they were called upon to make.

We produce here some masterpieces found in our local churches. Left to right: Part of a painting at St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Kandy, Richard Gabriel's oil on a wall fitted into a medallion at St. Theresa's Church, Thimbrigasyaya, Dharmasena's indigenized painting showing Mary dressed in the local saree at the Seminary or Our Lady of Lanka, Ampitiya, Kandy, painting of N.S. Godamanne on the high vaulted ceiling at St. Mary's Church, Grand Street, Negombo, stained glass plaque by Nalini Jayasuriya, painting at the St. Anthony's Cathedral, Kandy, stained glass window at All Saints Church, Borella, painting of Mary's submission to the will of the Father also by Nalini Jayasuriya, stained glass window at Pitipana Church, Negombo, a print at St. Mary's Church, Bambalapitiya.



Water For Life

The Thar Parkar Desert District

The Parkari Kohlis are a low-caste Hindu Tribal People whose homeland is located in the south east of Pakistan, in the Thar Parkar Desert, very close to the border with India. Thar Parkar is Pakistan's largest district at nearly 20,000 square kilometres and comprising an estimated 2,350 villages. Its centre is the small town of Nagar Parkar. The area is extremely poor with an estimated population of one and a quarter million people. In Pakistan they are referred to as the "non-scheduled caste," which bears the connotation of "untouchables." This has led to entrenched discrimination and oppression down the centuries.

A Christian Presence

There has been a Christian presence in the town for more than 30 years through the Boys' Boarding Hostel run by the Diocese of Hyderabad. Since the town has the only government high school in the area, if there were no hostel facilities it would not be possible for these children to continue their education beyond primary level. I spend on average 10/12 days a month there visiting the small groups of Christians who live in its many villages. Road infrastructure is slowly developing, which is cutting down the travel time. One reason for the construction of new roads is to facilitate the exploitation of the natural resources in the area. These includes marble in the hills, coal under large areas of the Thar Parkar Desert, and white china clay used in the making of ceramics.



Water: A Life and Death Issue

Thar Parkar is not connected to the massive canal network that covers a lot of Pakistan, so it is dependent on rains during the July and August Monsoon season. To have a fair chance of having a good crop the monsoon rains need to come three times, at intervals of three weeks or so, over a two month period. If only one or two rains come, the crops are stunted which seriously affects production.



What the Church is Doing

It is necessary to introduce low-cost technologies to collect huge supplies of water, which can help meet the needs of the people throughout the year. The Catholic Church seeks to alleviate a little of the suffering. One modest effort is the construction

“**The Catholic Church seeks to alleviate a little of the suffering. One modest effort is the construction of tanks to store water.**”

Water is a life and death issue in Thar Parkar. Women in Thar Parkar, as in many parts of the world, are charged with the task of collecting water. When it becomes scarce they have the even more arduous task of travelling longer distances to collect it from tube-wells. On summer days temperatures can be as high as 48 C. The falling water table means that water needs to be drawn from depths that can reach 200 feet. So it is easy to imagine the consequences for women who may be pregnant or malnourished.

Storing Water

If stored properly the average annual rainfall would be sufficient to meet the domestic needs of the people and their livestock until the next monsoon season. But because

of inadequate water storage and rainwater-collecting facilities, more than 95% of the water is lost under sand dunes or evaporates in the intense summer heat.

The accumulated rainwater in ditches and depressions lasts only for three to four months, so for the rest of the year they depend on brackish water of wells, which results in health hazards among humans and livestock. The links between water quality and health

risks are well established. An estimated 250,000 child deaths occur each year in Pakistan due to water-borne diseases.

In a normal day family members of each household spend around 4-6 hours carrying 4-5 clay pots amounting to 50-60 litres of water from wells.



of tanks to store water. They are built underground with a large concrete area on top to catch the monsoon rains. They are built to a capacity of 2000 gallons. The monsoon rains are so heavy that they fill these water tanks in a matter of hours.

The materials are funded by the Parish thanks to grants from generous benefactors. The people receiving the tanks dig the holes and provide the labour to help the block-layer/plasterer. In a village of 30 families, 30 tanks have just been completed. When the monsoon rain-water is used up, it can be refilled in bulk by drawing water from distant wells by oxen and cart, camel and cart, or donkey and cart. This work is done by men and it saves the women from having to fetch water each day.

In addition to the water tanks water filters are provided. They are made from the traditional clay pots that people use for drawing and storing water. Layers of pebbles, gravel and sand are put into one pot, which is filled with water. The filtered water then drains through a pipe into a second pot and is now safe for drinking. They work effectively and are an example of simple technology appropriate to the peoples' needs and context.

Giving Poor People Hope

The new water storage facilities have transformed the lives of people. They now have a source of safe, clean water and diseases have diminished. It gives more opportunity for children to go to school and women have more time to spend on other activities,



“**The new water storage facilities have transformed the lives of people. They now have a source of safe, clean water and diseases have diminished.**”

and maybe have a little rest!

Indeed, water is life! Without water there is no life. It is the most basic thing for living. It is not surprising that water is a central symbol in several great religious traditions. As Christians it is through Baptism that we enter into the life of the Risen Christ. In the words of Khalil Gibran: *"In one drop of water are found all the secrets of all the oceans; in one aspect of You are found all the aspects of existence."*

(Rev. Fr. Tomás King -
Courtesy: Far East Magazine)

Resurrection

On that glorious Easter morn,
When all my sins are washed away,
I'll stand before my Loving Saviour
And say, "Lord I am here today."

You redeemed me, a great sinner,
you kept me close to You,
For many, many years, and now
Beloved Lord, I come to You.

I shall kneel and kiss His nailed marked feet and say,
"Forgive me Lord, for the many times,
I drifted away from You.
But with you love I conquered
Tis' and all because of You."

So now I humbly bow before you
Give me a little place,
In the Kingdom of Your Love,
In the Kingdom of Your Grace.

Clivee Taylor

Theatre Review

Pasku Natya - 'Premaniyavu yagaya'

(By VAN ARKADIE, Alex. Freelance media correspondent writing from Rome - Italy)



Having in 1977 migrated for employment at the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (UN/FAO HQ-Office Rome) and since then resident in Italy, last Palm Sunday (March 24, 2013), I chanced to witness for the very first time a Sinhala *Pasku Natya*, or Passion Play in the historic City of Rome itself.

After emigrating from my homeland upon completion of a Stage Acting and Direction Course at the Lionel Wendt Kala Kendra, Ranga Silpa Salika (Profs. Ediriweera Sarathchandra, Dhamma Jagoda, etc.), and being actively engaged in acting and directing various theatrical experimentations (Colombo, Moratuwa, Chilaw) centred on Christ the Redeemer, I am moved to share my appreciation and commendation here.



Aptly entitled '*Premaniyavu yagaya*', the play Directed by Rev. Fr. Hemantha Perera, was staged in the cinema of San Timoteo Parish in Casal Palacco, thanks primarily to Msgr. Neville Joe Perera, National Coordinator of the Lankan immigrant community in Italy. Needless to say, the production gained spontaneous applause from not merely our Lankan lay and religious communities in Rome, but also from Italian families drawn from adjacent parishes who literally remained 'spellbound' throughout the '*pasku prasangaya*.'

In strict observance of the revered figure so familiar with the traditional Sinhala theatre, in the opening scene the '*potheguru*' (Henry Mel-



roy) appears on the proscenium to evoke attention in antique verse while chanting the backdrop to the story to be enacted. This 'invocation' I believe greatly helped generate the essential link-up that should exist between cast and audience especially in Lenten exercises of such religious significance.

All of the group actors performed their contributory roles truly well. They comprised the Pharisees, Roman soldiers, Jewish Sanhedrin, Jerusalem women, Maid servants, Apostles and the Mob.

Lead characters merit mention here: Christ (2) - Dinesh Kumar and Ranga Ishara, Mother Mary - Sriya Theres Nirmali, Peter - Elmo Nilantha, Judas Iscariot - Sajit Malaka, Simon - Bernard Obris, Chief Priest - Dilan Silva, Mary of Magdala - Piyumi Madusani, Veronica - Dedunu Kumari, Tempter - Prathiraj, Barabbas - Kelum Sampath, Pilate - Indika Aruna Kumara, and Simon of Cyrene - Jude Fernando.

Compliments also



to all of the child actors and the young adult cast. In spite of limited space on a cinema stage, individual moves and crowd scenes were performed and enacted with disciplined skill and mindful ease.

Whether attired in colourful silken costume, or in simple traditional Jewish style suggesting the era of their

usage, viz, regimental Roman military uniform with plumed head-dress, shining breast-plates and armour,

it was evident that each individual item had received meticulous care with regards to selection and finish. So too with the stage props and utensils which had been creatively designed or handpicked to facilitate easy procurement on stage and instant disposal offstage thereafter, viz. Chamber of the Sanhedrin, Pilate's Court, the whipping column Garden of Gethsemane, and the three crosses on Calvary. Individual manual skills blended with electronic computer techniques, sound control, lighting facilities and other auxiliary instruments did help to amplify the audio/visual effect of the pageant unfolding from one scene to the other.

Our young Director, Fr. Hemantha, in his visionary projection has undoubtedly explored to reap the fullest from



the restricted space by plotting the strategic entries and exits of his players from between the side aisles of the hall, viz. the angry mob giving chase to Mary Magdala and Christ with the cross led by soldiers on His way to Calvary. These I am



a dormant soul and based on the abundant love of God for man and God's immeasurable dispositions for the fallen and abandoned. In earnest fervour combined with purposeful vigour, Rev. Frs. Denington Subasinghe and Prasad Harshana summed up the meditative reflections equally well. They cited everyday examples

(Readers would appreciate that a large majority of these migrants are unskilled daily paid workers).

In truth, we owe these men and women much more than a mere word of gratitude. Let us together recall their generosity and unreserved patronage with a degree of pride and respect that has been gained not merely for themselves but also for the entire migrant Lankan community in this country.

In similar spirit I would like to draw attention here of responsible civil and church authorities upon this valuable community of people who essentially hail from the western coastal stretch of the Island. Surely, it was among

from familiar distractions surrounding the evils associated with an 'immigrant culture' abroad wherein innocent young men and women can become trapped or crushed when distanced away from their homes and loved ones. Their strategic intervention heightened the dramatization of a dying Christ in the crucifixion scene while at the same time enabling therefrom a bright new awakening in the closing scene with Christ's glorious Resurrection from defeat and death.

Presented in association with the Infernetto Parish Group (Rome), the production attracted whole-hearted support from the entire Sri Lankan immigrant community resident and employed in the area including our Buddhist brethren. As later confided in me

by Fr. Hemantha, "none had spared neither sweat nor strain, and not even taken into account the substantial 'economic loss' each participant had to endure toward its final realization."



their ancestral families that the sacred art of the Sinhala *Pasku Natya kalava* became safeguarded and cherished from well over five hundred years ago. Their communities of people deserve appreciation for their talents and a deeper understanding of their cultural richness for the greater flourish of our ancient sacred arts in and out of Sri Lanka. Little wonder then that Rev. Fr. Hemantha Perera's *Pasku Natya* entitled '*Premaniyavu Yagaya*' claimed a well-deserved bagful of success in the historic City of Rome this year.

(Courtesy: Msgr. Neville Joe Perera)



Friendship, the most desirable of all goods: Thomas Aquinas on 'Charity as Friendship'

A book by Rev. Fr. Ajith Wellington, OMI and Rev. Fr. Richard Wolak, OMI

Only a person who could sustain and maintain great friendships could write adequately about friendship. This book is, to a greater extent, a collaborative effort which is born out of a friendship in philosophical apprenticeship between Fr. Ajith Wellington, OMI and Fr. Richard Wolak, OMI. A friendship has finally and filially given birth to this book and in reciprocity, the book has also further strengthened and cemented that friendship. This is an ample proof that true friendship bear fruits, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

A good philosopher always makes distinctions in order to clarify how certain insights are arrived at. Understanding something coherently and articulating it comprehensively is a hallmark of a great philosophical spirit. This is very much needed in the light of the contemporary Sri Lankan tendency to be opinionated about anything and everything. Human beings ought to become intelligent not gossipy or opinionated.

In trying to reach up to the mind of Saint Thomas Aquinas, one also begins to understand oneself with greater clarity. When Fr. Ajith writes and teaches about St. Thomas, he truly becomes himself. Making some fine and refined philosophical nuances, Fr. Ajith leads us through the thickets of Thomistic philosophical tapestry.

The best in Thomism is best for all peoples regardless of their religious background. A retrieval of Thomistic heritage is beneficial for everybody – Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Saint Thomas enjoyed deep supernatural pleasure in continuous learning, reflecting, teaching and writing and shared with us the fruits of his intellectual labour. Whatever is not shared is lost forever. What he understood contemplatively, he lived out actively. Theory and practice were not two separate departments in his life but they were organically and coherently blended and bonded.

In his life time, Saint Thomas formed deep and life-long friendships (for instance, with Reginald of Piperno, William of Moerbeke, etc.), befriended Aristotelian heritage, wrote and encouraged oth-

ers to become good friends for their friends. His friendship with Aristotle's philosophy led to a better understanding of God's friendship with us.

You can befriend this book and then it will also befriend you in return and offer you continuous spiritual nourishment. Reading a book about friendship is to form an intimate friendship with that book. So this book will make you a better friend and train you to form better friendships.

This highly nuanced and technically sophisticated study is distributed amongst five main sections.

In Chapter one, Fr. Ajith reflects about the influence of Aristotle's logical and epistemological structure on St. Thomas' brilliant analysis of the human person as a "compound whose substance is both spiritual and corporeal" (p.18).

To love one's friends is to love oneself as another. When you have become a better friend to your friends, you will have also encouraged them to become better friends to their friends and therefore true friendships are contagious. Life without friends (could there really be such a life?) is an empty life, and aimless life and a useless life. The quality of human life is largely dependent upon the quality of our friendships. The one who truly loves one's friends truly loves oneself too.

Instead of controlling, dominating, manipulating and cajoling a friendship, you should humbly allow it to guide you, deepen you, enrich you, purify you and empower you. Friendship is one's true home. In and through friends, one finds oneself, one finds one's real abode. With friends, one is at home with oneself and when this happens, one also begins to live in God. In actual fact, God helps me to cultivate myself authentically and to find myself divinely and deeply. Only then could I become a blessing to my friends.

As he points out further; "The human being is unique. because he does not belong to the world of purely intellectual beings, nor does he belong to the world of purely material beings. He in fact, occupies the boundary between the purely intellectual and purely material, by the very fact that he has a living body, a body



animated by a rational soul which also contains the faculties or the powers of the sensitive and vegetative souls. Thus, because the human being is an "embodied soul" or a "living body" (a body animated by a rational soul), passions are an integral part of his nature, as they are of the nature of all animals. This is because of the body, the material component, which is the equipment for sensitive or animal life. (pp.20-21).

In the same chapter, there is a dazzling exposition on love as *amor* and its multiple manifestations.

"Love of friendship sees the other (the person loved) as another self. St. Thomas states that our love of friendship for another is an extension of one's love for oneself. One's love for oneself is absolutely basic and primary, and it can be considered as the foundation and archetype of all friendly relations. The extension of one's love for oneself to the other becomes natural and easy when the other, considered as another self, possesses actually our same qualities and excellences, for the love springs from the precise points of agreement. The idea of similitude is best understood in this context, because friendship is not a one way thing, rather it is mutual benevolence, or love of friendship reciprocated." (pp.37-38). Chapter two focuses on different types of virtues and their relation to love as '*caritas*.'

Friendship is a reflection on how God works in our lives. Friendship is the good par excellence that continues to connect

us to God; the way to good God is in and through good friends. When God becomes one's true friend, one becomes a true friend of everybody. One cannot be a good friend of God and not befriend other human beings.

Falling in love with God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our integrity is the ultimate fulfillment of human life. In loving God, we also begin to love those whom God loves and without loving them the way God loves them, we cannot love God.

Let us listen to our brilliant author again; "Friendship, on the other hand, is only possible with people similar to ourselves and those to whom we are bound by good will. St. Thomas, in the *sed contra*, quotes the words of Jesus "I will not now call you servants ... but my friends". The reason the Lord called his apostles "friends" is, according to St. Thomas, purely and simply his *caritas*. Thus *caritas*, as given by Jesus to his disciples, proves to be friendship. (p. 110). Chapter three discusses at length the concept of *communicatio*.

A friend of God, although it is God who makes us his friends, is necessarily a friend of everybody. Human love is not on the same level as Divine love but at the same time, we cannot grasp something of Divine love without an experience of human friendships. God does not bypass or shortcircuit human relationships but works in and through them. God perfects human

Reviewed by Prof. Anton Meemana

friendships. When two people become friends, God is there in the midst of them, ever active and ever encouraging them. As Fr. Ajith discusses; "Thus, there exists a friendship between God and man, and this friendship is made possible by the initiative of God, the superior one, to share his happiness with man, the inferior partner. Therefore, St. Thomas is able to affirm that between God and man there exists a type of friendship because they do have something in common. This *communicatio* removes the disparity that exists between God and man to same measure, and brings about some kind of similitude, and thereby provides the necessary foundation upon which the friendship between these two unlikely partners is founded." (p. 137).

Chapter four elaborates in the complexity of *amicitia*.

According to Albert Einstein, there is only one ultimate question to be asked; that is, 'Is the universe a friendly place?' Everything else in life depends upon how we are going to understand and answer that grand question. Every question we ask is ultimately a question about God. The ultimate ground of all our questioning is our innate and intrinsic yearning to know God. God wants us to ask more and more questions, even about God Himself.

"Benevolence is the first step towards friendship. In fact, friendship adds something to a one-sided love of benevolence, a society of two in their love. What becomes evident in this whole activity is that there can be no friendship until and unless the love of benevolence is consciously reciprocated by the other. Implicit in this discussion is the fact that love of friendship that we extend to another anticipates and seeks a reaction, namely, to love with love of friendship is to will to be loved with love of friendship. Otherwise it remains love of benevolence and never friendship. So, the friendship without any doubt implies reciprocity of well-washings of two subjects." (p. 188).

Human life aims at happiness and a friendship

becomes most promising, most enriching, and most nourishing when it has no hidden agenda. The complete flourishing of friendship happens when it is for its own sake and not for any utilitarian or calculative purpose.

In Chapter five, Fr. Richard Wolak has philologically and philosophically accomplished a virtuoso performance on the parable of the Good Samaritan. His analysis sounds very practical simply because it is philosophically and exegetically very solid and deep. Real practically is never anti-intellectual. Theory is the highest form of practice. This quite inadequate and mistaken dichotomy between theory and practice is not a valid concept at all. One cannot be profoundly practical unless one tries to grasp things theoretically. Theory means, more than anything else, proper understanding, adequate understanding, objective understanding. It also means a closest approximation of truth.

Theory also means objectivity to the best of human intelligence and judgement. The most practical man is the most theoretical man and a deeply theoretical man is also a profoundly practical man. A deeply theoretical man is also a theological man and that man par excellence in history is Saint Thomas Aquinas. The ultimate theory is theology and therefore the ultimate practice is also theology. Christian praxis is knowledge born out of deep contemplation and deep contemplation is the ultimate Christian praxis. We live as good as we think, or better, as good as we contemplate.

Loving one's neighbour is to treat another as myself, that is, to feel what another person deeply feels and to act meaningfully as if it is I myself who is suffering, who is in agony, who is in torment. Each one of us is called to become a good Samaritan to the one who is beaten up, left behind, marginalised and abandoned, to be dear and near to the one who is in dire need.

Real love is hard work, apparent Sisyphean labour, and endless toil. Loving requires the best in us, makes us magnanimous, courageous and generous

(Contd on pg. 14)

♦ *Reactions to the Pontiff's election by International Organisations and Governments*

Pope Francis before the world

In the statements by international organizations and Governments around the world following the election of Pope Francis, among the most recurrent themes are; dialogue, peace and attention to the poor.

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization, said: "I look forward to continuing cooperation between the United Nations and the Holy See under the wise leadership" of Pope Francis. "In the Americas Pope Francis's election has stirred enthusiasm and hope, as various leaders, have said. Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner expressed her hope of good results for "justice, equality, brotherhood and peace in the world."

President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, whose country has the largest number of Catholics in the world, congratulated Pope Francis, the Catholic Church and the Argentine people. She highlighted the election of the first Latin-American Pope to whom Brazil looks forward to offering hospitality for the World Youth Day in July. President Raul Castro of Cuba was, among the first Latin

American Heads of State to send the new Pope "cordial congratulations for the pontificate."

Barack Obama described Pope Francis as "a champion of the poor and the most vulnerable among us. Those of us in the United States share the joy of this historic day," said the President of the United States of America, according to whom his selection as the first pope from the Americas also shows the strength and vitality of a region that is increasingly shaping our world. "I look forward to working with His Holiness to advance peace, security and dignity for our fellow human beings, regardless of their faith," Mr Obama said.

According to the German Chancellor Angela Merkel many people expect Pope Francis to be "not only a guide in matters of faith, but also with regard to peace, justice and the safeguard of creation."

President Francois Hollande of France stressed that the Church stands before the important mission of facing the challenges of the world, adding: "Faithful to her history and to the universal principles of freedom,

equality and brotherhood on the basis of her actions in the world," France "will pursue her dialogue with the Church, with the same confidence in the Holy See that she has always had."

For David Cameron, the British Prime Ministry "the election of Pope Francis marks an important day for the 1.2 billion Catholics in the world." Then "warm congratulations upon the election of Pope Francis to succeed in the Apostolic See" were expressed by President Mariano Rajoy of the Spanish Government.

Giorgio Napolitano, President of the Italian Republic, wrote that the Italian people share in the new Pope's election "in a special way and on their behalf, interpreting the common, profound sentiment, I address my warmest and most sincere congratulations to you." "The extraordinary moral and cultural legacy of Catholicism," the Head of the Italian State continued, "is indissolubly interwoven with our 2,000-year-old history and with the moral values Italy recognizes as its own. This shared spiritual wealth is intrinsic in the figure of St. Francis of Assisi, Patron of Italy,



whom you have chosen, Your Holiness, to inspire you in taking on the new Pontificate."

An official message sent to the Pope from the Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti reads: "The Italian people gather round you, your Holiness, welcoming you with affection and joy, full of hope and trust." Monti added: "The Italians, linked to the Argentine people by a special history, recognize themselves today in the name of their Patron, the Saint of Assisi, united to the whole world in the search for justice and peace."

In reporting the news of Pope Francis' election, Xinhua, the press

service of China, described him as a "strong supporter of assistance to the poor." President Vladimir Putin of Russia sent a congratulatory telegram in which he said he was convinced that cooperation between Russia and the Vatican would continue to develop successfully and wished the Pontiff "fruitful activity for strengthening peace and for furthering the dialogue between civi-

lization and the religious denominations."

A public message of congratulations to Pope Francis was broadcast on March 14, by Shimon Peres, the Head of the State of Israel, in which he mentioned that the new Pope succeeds a Pontiff "who did much to develop relations with us: These relations are now at their best."

(L'Osservatore Romano)



Matrimonial Data Banks at Deanery Level

I am sure that thousands of parents across the country would raise both hands to endorse wholeheartedly the suggestion made by Neomal Perera, that Matrimonial Data Banks should be established in every Deanery, in his letter 'Towards curtailing mixed marriages' (Messenger 10th February) This is really a 'Holy Spirit inspired' suggestion - the urgent need of the day.

As Neomal Perera rightly points out, today's parents are really desperate with unmarried children at home. So as he says they get married to 'who ever comes on their way, any race any religion. Thereafter a few months or years later 'separation' comes along. This often happens in mixed marriages because there is no 'turning to God Almighty' by both husband and wife when problems prop-up.

Neomal is correct when he says that both the 'demand' and the 'supply' are available, but that there is no 'avenue' for them to meet. So the Church could step in and make available the 'avenue' as one of its services to the laity to safeguard their faith. This service could be an extension of the services already rendered through the Family Services arm of the Church. There are counselling services for couples already functioning. There should also be a service to help form Catholic couples.

There are hundreds of middle and lower income group parents who cannot afford 'matrimonial advertisements' and also regular long distance travel. They are all in search of 'partners' closer home, for convenience of regular contact.

I pray and hope that both the hierarchy and the clergy would give this 'Spirit inspired' suggestion their urgent attention realising the gravity of the problem faced by desperate parents with aging children at home and which would definitely be a great boon to them. It will also as Neomal points out, curtail mixed marriages and even separation and help form good Catholic families who would be ever grateful to the Church for their union.

Stanley Perera



Example is better than precept

Criticism is the subject of most conversations when people meet and talk or discuss in the market place, in buses and trains, at home, on the road or in public places. Some people enjoy criticising others. This chronic problem in society is generally taken for granted.

Once I was travelling by train to the Peradeniya University to give a lecture and got in to a semi express train from Ragama. Due to some activity upcountry that day I could not get a seat even in the second class. A gentleman who got in at the Veyangoda Station came and stood very close to me. Since I did not know him we did not speak to each other but before arriving at Polgahawela we happened to start talking and the moment he knew that I was a good listener

he started talking freely and began to criticise the present government and politicians. Although I had a principle of just not criticising others, I was patiently listening to him with an occasional 'Yes' or 'No' as he was after all a stranger to me. After some time I had to tell him that it is useless trying to criticise others as there is always something bad in any ruling government and politician. It is better that as individuals each of us try to correct ourselves thereby setting a good example to others which will gradually correct the society.

During the conversation I came to know that he was a station master. He had by now stopped his criticism and was quiet for a while. He also had a friend who was seated in the next compartment. We reached Polgahawela and a big

crowd got in to the train. The crowd came rushing and we got trampled and pushed a little. Then my neighbour had no patience and told me "See how this crowd is behaving? They have no sense of manners or etiquette towards others" and started criticising the present society. Quickly I reminded him that we should simply stop criticising others, and try to set a good example so that people seeing us will learn from us and imitate us. The station master stopped talking and was looking at me in a strange manner. We reached Kdugannawa when a seat fell vacant close to my neighbour's friend, who was seated in the adjoining compartment. His friend called him and offered him the vacant seat. The station master smiled at me and went and sat in the next compartment. The train started to move again. Occasionally I took a glance at the two friends who

were talking to each other in the adjoining compartment. Whenever I looked at them I noticed that they were looking at me and the moment their eyes met mine they stopped talking. I presumed that the station master was telling his friend about me. Within minutes the station master called me and asked me to take his seat. I refused as both of us were standing throughout the journey and I was surprised as to why he offered me the seat, which he himself had got after standing for so long. The station master insisted that I should sit and I was more or less compelled to do so.

Lesson: It did not take much time for the station master to realise that good example is better than precept and that we can never correct the society by just criticising them and that one should set an example instead of just preaching.

Damascene Abeysekera

The word 'spirit' has different meanings as implied in the scriptures. In the Greek and Hebrew languages which are relevant to scripture, this word primarily means 'breath' or 'wind'. The English term 'Spirit' essentially refers to God as a superhuman incorporeal being and also to the Holy Spirit who functions as the Spirit of God. It also means a person's disposition towards his faith.

The spirit of a human is his soul. Different from animals, who have no soul, the human soul receives something of the Spirit or the breath of God. Scripture says: "Then Yahweh God formed Man, dust drawn from the clay, and breathed into his nostrils a breath of life and Man became alive with breath." (Gen 2:7)

The human soul consists of both the human spirit and the spirit of God as breath and does not die with the death of the body. Scripture affirms: "before the dust returns to the earth from which it came and the Spirit returns to God who gave it." (Ecl 12:7). The New Testament teaching on the destiny of the hu-

man soul is that the sinful soul will not find favour with God and will not return to God. To lose God at death is damnation. (Matt 10, 28)

The existence of the Spirit of God is known from Scriptures throughout the Bible. Genesis 1: 1-2 tells us: "In the beginning, when God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth had no form and was void; darkness was over the deep and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters." To believe in the Spirit of God is to believe that in God there is a third person called the Holy Spirit who proceeds from God and his Son and possesses the same Divine nature and substance with them.

An instance of the work of the Spirit of God can be seen from a text in the Book of Numbers 11, 24-25: "Moses then went out and told the people what Yahweh had said. He assembled seventy men from among the elders and placed them round about the Tent. Yahweh came down in the cloud



and spoke to him. He took some of the Spirit that was upon him and put it on the seventy elders. Now when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But this they did not do again." The first awareness that the Israelites had of the Spirit of God came to them through the deeds of the prophets.

The prophets were those persons who knew something of God's secrets, with whom God had shared some of His wisdom, and who on certain occasions possessed

an irritable power. By the way the prophets acted, the Israelites came to understand that God communicated his Spirit like a violent and sudden wind.

In the same chapter verses 26-27 read:

"Two men had remained in the camp; the name of one was Eldad, the name of the other Medad. However, the Spirit came on them for they were among those who were registered through they had not gone out to the Tent. As they prophesied inside the camp, a young man ran

spiritual benefit.

A text in Acts 8: 14 speaks of Baptism of the Spirit: "Now when the Apostles in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. They went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not as yet come down upon any of them since they had only been Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. So Peter and John laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit." Baptism of water is the renewal of the individual through faith, while the laying of hands expresses the transmission of the Spirit in an uninterrupted way, beginning with those who received it at Pentecost.

The Spirit whom we receive helps us to worship God in truth. Our prayers would mean nothing if not motivated by simplicity, truthfulness and purity of Spirit. The Spirit of God cannot be communicated except to those who seek the truth and live according to truth in a sinful and corrupt world.

E.M. Aldons

Compassion - gift and call of the woman

This vocation to love is inseparable from another specific gift of the woman: A sensitivity for the suffering of others, and a willingness to join in that suffering. In his encyclical on suffering, called *Salvifici dolores*, John Paul II included a major section on the call for *compassion* in the face of suffering. He is clear that every single person whether man or woman - has a solemn obligation to live compassion. But the woman, in virtue of

her gifts, can be a special "witness" to this virtue, helping men to develop compassion within themselves. This is one of the ways that the complementarity between male and female becomes fruitful.

Suffering is a great mystery - we could say that in a way it is the greatest puzzle of human life. It has no natural resolution, and is in itself unbearable. But there is a kind of solution to the mystery, insofar something wonderful happens

"The woman's vocation to an intimate and deeply personal love goes along with her ability to be in this deeply consoling way with and for the one who suffers"

because of suffering. A new intensity of love comes into being, which changes suffering, if not taking it away, surrounding it with its opposite: a deep consolation and even happiness. John Paul II writes, "... We could say that suffering, which is present under so many different forms in our human world, is also present in order to *unleash love in the human person*, that unselfish gift of one's 'I' on behalf of other people, especially those who suffer."

To be compassionate does not simply mean to do something that takes away or makes

the suffering easier; in most cases, We are not able to do that. Compassion is a "suffering with" the one who suffers. What a consolation, when someone in the dark loneliness of suffering suddenly finds with him in that dark place a sensitive heart - a heart that is hurting because he is hurting, and suffering with him, Out of love! As Mother Teresa said, 'suffering is unbearable only when one suffers alone.'

The woman's vocation to an intimate and deeply personal love goes along with her ability to be in this deeply consoling way with and for the one who suffers.

In her receptivity of the other, in her great sensitivity of heart, the woman is able to be a witness to the need for courage in remaining vulnerable to the pain of another; she is a witness to the call for selflessness in taking on another's wounds.

(Courtesy: CTS Publications)

Friendship, the most

(Contd from Pg.10)

like the good Samaritan. To love is to risk, to love deeply is to risk more courageously and therefore only the brave can love.

Love is an ongoing decision, a decision that requires continuous renewal and resolution, followed by commitment. Love dispels hatred, prejudice and darkness and compels and propels us towards meaningful action for the orphan, the marginalised, the widow, the prisoner, the stranger and the beggar.

One can draw much inspiration from the grand themes evoked in this admirable study. Here one insight has been clarified, amplified, magnified and strengthened with the help of another insight. Indeed, the complexity of friendship requires a sophisticated mode of thinking and understanding and the book has done precisely that.

Reading a good book is a great service to humanity and there is no substitute whatsoever for the habit of reading. Reading is a form of therapeutic activity. It is the spiritually healthiest food for the human soul. A nation that does not read good books is a nation that has no soul, no authenticity, no depth and no substance; it is a lost and loose nation.

Is this not the contemporary predicament in Sri Lanka?

Faith

*Faith is a gift of light
And it makes our crosses light
In darkness too it is our light
Thank God for the gift of light
He will make us radiate His light*

Emilda Douglas



May Jesus be seen through Me

*What made the disciples leave their nets?
What made Zacchaeus leave all his wealth?
What made Mary Magdalene humble herself at His feet?
What made the Rich Young Man disturbed inwardly?
What made Matthew leave all the money he had collected?
What made the cripple walk?
What made the blind see?
What ? What ?? What ???*

*Nothing else but,
His gentle voice
His loving gaze
His loving touch
Which changed everything.*

*So then, what made me
What I am
Nothing else but His precious blood
Shed for me on Mount Calvary.
Thats where I received life
Thats where I began my life.*

*Receiving such life in abundance
What should my response be?
There's nothing to think TWICE
I'm called to,
"Love OTHERS as He Loved Me"
I'm called to be another Jesus.*

*Let my kind words
Let my loving touch
Let my listening ear
Let my forgiving heart
Reveal Jesus Through Me to all*

Sr. M. Riana A.C



What it says in the Readings

Lord Jesus, explain the Scriptures to us.
Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us. (Lk. 24:32)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C 14th April - 21st April 2013

Sun: Third Sunday of Easter
Ac 5:27b-32,40b-41; Rev. 5: 11-14;
Jn. 21:1-19 (or 1-14)
Mon: Ac 6: 8-15; Jn. 6: 22-29
Tue: Ac 7: 51 - 8: 1; Jn. 6: 30-35
Wed: Ac 8: 1b-8; Jn. 6: 35-40
Thu: Ac 8: 26-40; Jn. 6: 44-51
Fri: Ac. 9: 1-20; Jn. 6: 52-59
Sat: Ac 9: 31-42; Jn. 6: 60-69
Sun: Fourth Sunday of Easter
World Day of Prayer for Vocations
Ac 13:14, 43-52; Rev. 7:9, 14b-17;
Jn. 10: 27-30

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Lord, hear us in your love.

For Church leaders: That they may rule the Church with love in a spirit of courage and right judgement. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear us in your love.

For our political leaders: That they may fulfil their responsibilities worthily and well, by striving to please the Lord in all they do. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear us in your love.

For all those who have been rejected or written off because of their mistakes, failures or sins: That the love of true Christians may breathe new life and hope into them. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear us in your love.

That, remembering how kind the Lord has been to us, we may in our turn be kind, understanding and forgiving towards all those who disappoint or fail us. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear us in your love.

Sunday Rhythm Third Sunday of Easter

Jesus: "...Do you love me more than these others do?"

Peter: "Yes Lord, you know I love you."

Jesus: "Feed my lambs."

Jesus: "Do you love me?"

Peter: "Yes, Lord, you know I love you"

Jesus: "Look after my sheep."

Jesus: "Do you love me..?"

Peter: "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you"

Jesus: "Feed my Sheep"... "Follow me"

Richest blessing: Do you love me more than these others do....?

Richest result: Feed ... Look after...Feed...Follow me

TO THINK: Have you ever felt that Jesus Loves you.? Or do you love Jesus sincerely more than your secular relationship?

TO PRAY: Dear God of Love, help me to feel that Jesus feeds me, looks after me and loves me everyday. Amen.

TO ACT: Let us feed one another and let us look after one another in the name of Jesus our Greatest Love. Then we can become real partakers of His mission not only as followers but also as sharers of Jesus' Love.

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI

Third Sunday of Easter

First Reading:
Acts. 5:27-32, 40-41.

The Apostles continue to witness to the Risen Lord. The Council of priests and leaders of that time charge them not to do so. But the Apostles wish to obey God. They go on preaching the Good News.

Second Reading:
Rev.5: 11-14.

John describes his vision of the Risen Lord. In the vision he sees the living creatures, elders and angels in their thousands honouring, praising and glorifying the Risen Lord.

Gospel: Jn. 21:1-19.

Jesus reveals Himself to the Apostles through the Resurrection appearances. Here He appears to Peter and the crowd on the shore. He performs the same miracle as that of the great catch of fish. Here Christ gives Peter the mission of feeding the sheep, the people.

Reflection.

Today's Readings remind us of our mission and invites us to put it into practice both by word and deed. Our mission is to thank the Lord. We also should imitate, preach and talk about Him, and if possible, even perform miracles in His Name. The greatest miracle is the forgiveness of one's sins and his conversion. We ought to do it even at the expense of our life. That is the faith that the Apostles had when they preached about the Risen Lord. This is the mission given to Peter and later handed over to the leaders of the Church and according to today's understanding to all the baptized. This is clearly seen when all the Readings are taken together.

In the Gospel, we see the Risen Lord on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius. The Apostles had gone back to their old profession of fishing. Here the Risen Lord performs the miracle of the great catch of fish. As a result the Apostles recognised Him. Peter is questioned three times "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answers "Yes Lord you know that I Love you." Jesus tells him; feed My sheep." This is done as if

to make up for the three denials of Peter on the night of Christ's arrest. With these words a mission is assigned to Peter and the other Apostles. They are to feed the sheep with the Good News that the Lord is risen and that the Risen Lord is their hope and salvation. Hence they are to give thanks, honour and glory to the Lord.

In the First Reading the Apostles have taken up their mission with all responsibility. They go on preaching the Good News to the people. The priests and the leaders of that time want them to stop this, but the Apostles are not ready to do their bidding. Rather they say, "We must obey God rather than man." And they continue their mission. They are brave and strong in their witnessing. They do all this with the sole purpose of honouring, glorifying and thanking their Risen Lord for the salvation that he brought about.

In the Second Reading it is quite clear that even the heavens glorify the Risen Lord. In the vision, John sees the living creatures and the elders, together with the voice of many angels, thousands of them saying with a loud voice "worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour, glory and blessing."

If the inhabitants of heaven glorify the Lord why shouldn't we? Therefore it is an invitation for us who are on earth to stay along with the heavens, "to him who sit upon the throne and to the lamb be blessing honour and glory and might for ever and ever." The only way we could show this honour, glory and thanksgiving to the Risen Lord is by bearing witness to Him in word and deed. Therefore let us take up His mission with all responsibilities.

Aid Story.

During world war two, a certain church in Frankfurt, Germany was heavily hit by bombs. At war's end the parishioners began the repair. One badly broken object was a statue of Christ. They finally found and put



together all the pieces, except the hands. The hands they could not find. After considerable debate and discussion about engaging a sculptor to mould a new pair of hands, the people of the parish decided to leave the statue without hands. Beneath the statue one read these words: "Christ has no hands but our hands. Are you ready to provide Him your hands?" The work of Christ is carried on by those who have chosen to follow Him, and they are the Baptized.

Aid Story 2.

Three kinds of Catholics:

Conservative Catholics believe nothing should be done that has not already been done.

Moderate Catholics believe something should be done, but not quite yet.

Liberal Catholics believe everything should have been done yesterday.

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

'Jesus is Risen Alleluia'

Jesus is Risen as He said
He is in the world today,
And we know that He is living
What ever the people may say.

We see His hand of Mercy
And hear His voice of cheer,
At the time we need Him
Jesus is always near.

We have been to the cross
Where our Saviour died,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
And all our life was made new,
With thorns compose so rich a crown.

A marvellous message we bring
And glorious hymns we sing,
Wonderful word of the Risen King
For Jesus is coming again.

Anton Selemberam

Share Your Faith - During The 'Year Of Faith'

The Holy Rosary Strengthens My Faith

"When you say your Rosary the Angels rejoice, the Blessed Trinity delights in it, my Son finds joy in it too, and I myself am happier than you can possibly guess." (Our Blessed Lady to Blessed Alan de la Roche). It was Our Blessed Lady's request in her well known apparitions at Lourdes and Fatima that we should pray the Rosary. Therefore, it is only right that we should heed the pleas of Our Blessed Mother who has made this request for our own spiritual well being and protection - for it is a powerful weapon against Satan and keeps us close to Jesus.

"The Gospel has a message and the Rosary is its pulpit. The content of the Gospel is the essence of the Rosary and the Rosary is the Gospel cast in prayer. The Mysteries urge the mind to think without thought the Rosary loses meaning." We have to experience the power of the Rosary in our own life, only then, will we appreciate this wonderful prayer and offer it daily to Our Blessed Mother willingly and joyfully. In my own life I have experienced the peace, happiness, and comfort of knowing the presence of God and Our Lady through this prayer. Just pause for a moment and reflect what an incredible fact it is to know that God's own Mother prays for us in all our troubles, sorrows, sicknesses, and needs when we say, "Pray for us NOW". Our Lady truly proves to be our mother and helps us for she will never forsake her children. Then, when we continue the prayer, "and at THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH" - could we ask for anything better when our earthly life is over? Our Lady will surely be there to speak on our behalf before the throne of God. So death holds no fear - and we can always be prepared to meet Our Redeemer when He calls us from our earthly abode.

Our Lady also added the invocation, "O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell and lead all souls to Heaven especially those in most need of Thy Mercy." So, what a great way of winning souls for God and preserving our own soul

from eternal damnation! We need never fear the devil! I remember once I dreamt that the devil came to me looking frightful and hideous, but I was not scared and said, "Look here! I don't have to be frightened of you, YOU have to be frightened of ME!" Then I shouted "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit get out!" whilst making the sign of the Cross - and I awoke!

The devil is a master deceiver and entices souls in the most harmless way. This is why Scripture tells us, "Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." - (Ephesians 6: 11). Here's a story - 'The Great Imposter':

The arctic polar bear feeds almost entirely on seals. To enjoy such a meal, he sometimes resorts to a cunning bit of trickery. If the hole in the ice through which the seal gets his food is not too far from the edge of open water, the polar bear will take a deep breath, slip underwater, and swim to the seal's fishing hole. He will then imitate a fish by scratching lightly on the underside of the ice. When the seal hears this sound, he drives in for a quick supper, only to find himself suddenly caught in the huge, hungry embrace of his predator.

The devil entices us in a similar way. He baits us with some seemingly harmless pleasure and disguises the ugliness of it with something that looks or sounds appealing. Then when we've suc-

cumbed to the temptation, he catches us in the trap.

Sadly, many have ignored Our Lady's request to pray the Rosary daily. Some consider it unnecessary and far too long a prayer and consider it a waste of time; and some consider it just a meaningless repetition; whilst there are others who think that by carrying the Rosary as a good-luck charm that is more than enough! Satan can dupe us into countless ways of thinking - and, even when a sin is committed, he makes us believe it is alright and not at all a sin! He's a master deceiver as is seen in Genesis 3: 1-13. But, remember the one he fears is none other than Our Blessed Lady - for it is Mary who has crushed the head of the serpent as we read in Genesis chapter 3: 15. And so, the Rosary is a powerful prayer to protect us from Satan's cunning and lead all souls to Heaven.

If we love Our Blessed Mother then we will truly love the Rosary which is her favorite prayer, and we can touch the lives of others. Here's an incident in my life:

When I was on night duty as a Nursing Sister in the Military Hospital, Delhi, having just finished administering the medications and injections, and seeing that my patients were comfortable for the night, after I finished entering my records, I began to say my Rosary. I had just begun it, when a doctor walked in unexpectedly. So I kissed my Rosary and placing it on the table, I got up and wished him. There was

no need for him to have come, since I had not called for him as his two operated patients were doing well. He must have read my surprised look for he explained that he had come to see a patient in the next ward and so thought of looking up his patients here. I accompanied him to see them and after he recorded his visit, I noticed he was not inclined to leave! As I wanted to finish my Rosary before attending to my patients again, I told him he can now have a good night's sleep since his patients were alright! So reluctantly he got up to leave, but half way he suddenly turned around and said, "Sister" - and he seemed to find it difficult to speak. Anyway, he continued, "I have been noticing you (much to my surprise!) and I always wondered what it is that makes you so different from the other girls. But, now I know - it is this" whilst he pointed to my Rosary on the table! Then he continued, "Could you please get me one too?" I told him that I'll be happy to do so and asked him to call over the next night. I had a beautiful new Rosary in a box which I had received from the Father who used to send us the Don Bosco Magazines to our home in Madras. Sure, the doctor called over and was delighted to get the Rosary - he didn't ask me how to say the prayers, so apparently he was a Catholic. He insisted on paying me for it, but of course I refused. Then he said, "Sister, who knows, one day maybe I will be like you, and you and I may never meet again, and so I won't be able to thank you." I told him, "when this happens just say a prayer for me! May God and Our Lady bless you and keep you in Their care" - we then parted. And, we didn't meet again, for a short time later my two year contract with the Army finished and I left Delhi.

And so, just as I was brought to know Mother Mary and the Rosary through so many, we too can touch the lives of others and bring them closer to God by our Rosaries!

Lilian Ferdinands

The Power of forgiveness



By forgiving our enemies and those who offended us, we allow God to release His power and grace in us

Forgiveness is one of the most vital topics a Christian will have to deal with on a regular basis. Whether the offender acknowledges his or her part in hurting us, and takes responsibility to apologize or not, as followers of Jesus Christ we must forgive that person who offended us. But why should we forgive? Apart from the therapeutic and cathartic effects, we are sharing in the suffering of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who forgave till his death on the Cross. He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Hence, if we are to be genuine followers of Jesus Christ, we must follow and do what He already has done even when it's difficult to forgive. So what are

the benefits of forgiveness? Certainly forgiveness entails many benefits - emotional, biological psychological, and spiritual. However, let us consider some of the spiritual benefits.

Forgiveness unites us with the suffering and passion of Christ: Each time we get offended, we need to remember, it unites us with our Lord's suffering.

Forgiveness humbles us: It shows us that we can be an instrument used by God to demonstrate Christlike qualities that are difficult to demonstrate in a secular as opposed to a sacred world. Thus, this shows our dependence on Him and; yet our power and potential through Him who, empowers us to do everything.

Forgiveness sets us free: Until or unless we do the right thing and that is forgive the offender, we will remain slaves in a prison of our own choice.

Only by forgiving that person who hurt us do we get to experience great freedom that sets us free from the prison of our own slavery and self bondage.

Forgiveness infuses us with extra enthusiasm and energy: Watch yourself when you have forgiven someone. Don't you notice a release of energy being released from you? Indeed, extending forgiveness and mercy to the offender - whether the person deserves it or not - refreshes, renews and revitalizes self. One becomes childlike, in a way, and a brand new person.

Forgiveness equips us to minister to others: Unless we taste what it is like to be hurt, mistreated, abused, betrayed, persecuted, we will not be able to minister, help, counsel, empathize or sympathize with the sufferings of others. If we always live in a comfort zone where we take ourselves

too seriously or do the convenient and comfortable thing, we will not be able to share with the suffering of Christ and other brothers and sisters.

Forgiveness equips us to develop the fruits of the Spirit: Spiritual fruits like: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control - cannot be developed unless we go through trying times. For instance, the best way to love an unlovable person is to forgive that person and to pray for him or her.

Forgiveness keeps the channel open between God and us: When we forgive, we keep the channel of communication between God and us open, our prayers go up to be accepted according to His will. Conversely, when we withhold mercy toward our enemy, we block the route of contact between God and ourselves.

Forgiveness allows God to use you as a witness: By forgiving our enemies and those who offended us, we allow God to release His power and grace in us. People around will see and believe in the power and fruitful impact of forgiveness.

Forgiveness is the best demonstration that

we are the Children of God: The Bible says that we are known "by our fruits." Therefore, the best way to demonstrate ones spirituality, is by watching what kind of spiritual fruits one produces.

Forgiveness takes place as the result of God's grace working through us: Forgiveness does not mean letting the offender off the hook, or becoming a doormat and allowing others to walk over us by taking advantage of our "too nice, submissive or meek conduct." In fact, there are situations where one needs to set boundaries and avoid the offender, especially if it is an abusive relationship, or continuous misconduct pattern. God enables us through His grace to extend forgiveness to the offender even when they refuse to take responsibility for hurting us.

Forgiveness makes us more Christlike: If there is any innocent sinless person in the world's history who suffered unreservedly, our Lord Jesus Christ would score in first place. Nevertheless, despite all the injustices He suffered, He chose forgiveness. When we go through His passion, we become more like Him. Our behavior,

words, reaction to events around us will mirror His actions. People should be able to see Him through us.

Forgiveness paves the road to Sainthood: Anyone who strives to be a saint will have to lead a saintly life. This includes forgiveness. No matter what happens in our life, how difficult the road, God will give us the help we need to forgive. We have to be willing to do our part so that He can fashion us into His image.

Since we live in a sinful world, we will have to suffer offenses and lack of forgiveness on a regular basis. So, we should be prepared to forgive and to endure those who offend us remembering that we are doing so for the Glory of God. Therefore, no matter what happens in your life, how much someone has hurt or harmed you, always choose to forgive. It is the best and surest way to get back on track in your spiritual journey and become more empowered, saintly, and Christlike. Remember by forgiving your enemy or offender, you are not letting them off the hook; rather, you are showing love, reverence, and obedience to the Lord!

By Melody Brown



by Emilda S. Douglas

My first appointment as a young teacher was to a government school in the suburbs of Colombo.

I was the teacher of English for the primary classes. When ever I went to Grade 5, I noticed that a boy in Grade 4 being pulled up or often caned for not getting his sums right. The boy was too big for the class. He was big in size end advanced in age I used to feel sorry for him. I prayed for him

One day in the absence of their teacher I was asked to take up that class . I went happily. and put up some additions on the board. The sums were so easy that even the Grade 2 children could have done them. But I said "Pencils down please. I want all of you to get all these sums correct so listen to me carefully. If you don't understand you can ask me again and again." I went round the class, naturally all were doing well. Next I put

up some substractions. When I collected the books for correction I was naturally more interested in the weaker one, specially the big boy. True enough all had done well. I spoke to the Lord. Then I quietly called the big boy and spoke gently to him and said, "You are a clever boy. see! you have got all your sums correct. Why is it you don't pay attention in class? Why is that you are caned practically everyday. Will you promise me that

you will do better? "He promised. God answered my prayer."

He did study. He did so well. Even the other teachers noticed the change in the boy and were surprised.

**Strong Faith
Sees the invisible
Believes the incredible.
and Receives the impossible**



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

EPISODE FIVE : "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried"

In His human nature, Jesus died with great suffering,
His life was ended for us in a perfect offering,
He redeemed and saved mankind once and for all,
Salvation, His gift, despite our many falls.

Redemption might have come about in some other way,
No blood or suffering; Jesus could have prayed.
Of infinite value was everything Jesus did,
More than enough, the sins of a million worlds to rid.

We ask why did God show absolute concern,
When little was needed to give us all we yearn?
The answer is found in the love of God for all,
He loves us just as if there was only one to call.

No need to ever feel that you are of little worth,
God loves you so much as if you're the only one on earth,
Forgive them, His desire, for His enemies He prayed,
Though they did not know their confessions should be made.

One thief on a cross showed a little sympathy,
He would earn heaven, the other showed apathy,
His mother stood below with a sword in her heart,
She knew that her role was to say 'yes' from the start.

The soldier's spear to Jesus' heart brought forth water and blood,
A sign that Baptism and Eucharist would come like a flood.
The pierced heart of Jesus remains open for all time,
His love is never-ending despite all of mankind's crime.

Courtesy- Canadian Messenger

Craving for IPL - Is it for Lucrative Gains?

Is it right or wrong to take part in the Indian Premier league, is a question that needs an answer.

Can political intervention disturb the rights and freedom of our cricketers, one might think?

On the other hand, if some extremist group of politicians reject us in some part of India, should we forfeit our acceptance within the rest of India.?

A few may accuse and condemn us, if the majority do not, should we be guilty of accepting the blame in order to withdraw.

These crickets who have signed contracts with the authorities are legitimately permitted to withdraw only on two reasons. It could only be possible if their services are needed by the national team or the governing cricket body disapproves their availability. If the withdrawal is made otherwise for any flimsy reason, the cricketers run the risk of being sued. The damages would be as high as their contract values.

Angelo Mathews, Thisara Perera, and Ajantha Mendis are Catholics, who are involved. Should we as Catholics accuse them for their avaricious inclinations? We should be more broadminded!

If the IPL authorities have ranked and valued them as outstanding players, why not live up to that standard? It is heartening to note that the IPL authorities have not succumbed to the influence of the corrupt politicians, to



deny the Sri Lankan players. Instead they have upheld nine of our players as the best in the world. That alone proves that the hue and cry of the corrupt politicians have been just a voice in the wilderness. Let us cheer our players as the spectators of India so vibrantly do. More so specially for the bravery of fighting against injustice and for basic human rights.

RodeZo.

National Small Christian Community Sunday 2013

Teach your child Christianity with the Alphabet

Theme: "Joyous Rediscovery of Faith by encountering Christ and living it and sharing contents with SCCs."

Today is National Small Christian Community (SCC) Sunday, the day the faithful are called to celebrate the joy of the Resurrection of Jesus in their small communities and proclaim their Faith in Life through his Paschal Mystery. As we recall and recollect the Life giving death and the Power of Resurrection of our Lord, Our chief Pastor Pope Francis urges the faithful in general to let the power of Christ's Resurrection enable them to work for peace. The Holy Father who moved away from tradition became the first Pontiff to celebrate Easter Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square. In his sermon Pope Francis emphasized, Christ is our Peace and in HIM and through HIM we implore peace for all the people in the world. He expressed his joy of announcing that Christ our Lord is Risen.

Our Holy Father conveys that our mission today is to be with the people and proclaim this Mystery of Resurrection amidst them irrespective of cast, creed and social status. He clearly conveys that this Good News of Risen Lord be taken to the marginalized, poor and those who suffer. He took the initiative to set an example by moving away from tradition by celebrating Easter Mass with the faithful in St. Peter's Square, where the people flocked. Our Holy Father's example of integrating his belief with his action shows the way towards a new approach of bringing Good News to the people. If I am to summarize what our Holy Father tried to communicate through his Easter Message to the whole world it would sum up this way.

1. Go out to the people, be with them, gather them together...
2. Nourish them with the Word of God, share with them the life giving word of Jesus...let it become the daily bread of the faithful
3. Get them involved in the Mission of Jesus through the concrete expressions of love and services
4. Boldly proclaim the Love of God for all the people specially for the marginalized and work towards the Kingdom of love which embraces the

whole universe. Let the whole world be under the influence of God's Love.

The above key elements are the basic foundation of the Vision and Mission of Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA) through which we try to promote a Church of Communion by building small neighborhood communities in our Parishes today. This is what we try to promote and celebrate through National Small Christian Community Sunday. We encourage Parish Leaders to form small communities (consisting of 15-25 families) who often gather in their neighbourhood, they together read, listen, and respond to the Word of God (usually coming Sunday text is chosen as a preparation) while trying to own it with a WORD of Life chosen for the group, they also act together responding to the needs of the members in the group as well as of their neighbourhood, while remaining deeply united to the Universal Church through the live link provided by their Parish Pastor and the Diocesan Pastor.

For this we need to form small groups/units/clusters consisting of a manageable size. Not only forming but also consolidating and constant maintenance of these groups are very essential and also a challenging task. Such groups cannot flourish and grow without the proper aid of Directive and Servant Leadership. A clear Vision with a Passion for this Mission is a must for the successful implementation of this Pastoral Process. Above all the practice of proper Bible sharing methods where the Biblical foundation of our Faith is transmitted in a very simple form, must be carefully carried out with apt discipline and would be a healthy start for this process. So it is a challenging but worth attempting pastoral endeavour which will really give deep satisfaction to those involved. However one must not make the mistake of misjudging this



truly Valuable Pastoral Process as one of many Charitable associations. This is a pastoral process, where people and leaders come together to reflect and search the will of God in their daily activities so that they could decide together the way towards a truly Participatory and Communion Church. This new way has been defined by the Asian Bishops this way..

Vision of the New Way of being Church...

Witness to the Risen Lord Jesus..

Based on Word of God...

A leaven of transformation in this world....

A participatory church where the gifts of the Holy Spirit gives to all the faithful-lay, Religious and Cleric alike are recognized and activated.....

A Communion of Communities where laity, Religious and Clergy recognize and accept each other as sisters an brothers

(Asian Bishops' Band-ung Statement-1990)

Our Mission....

We Become Christ-centred

We build our Community

So as to continue His Mission in this world

So with these reflection in a day like this we also need to look into ourselves and ask the following questions..

1. How many of our ordinary faithful know how to use the Holy Bible? Its content, its structure, how to turn to its different books...How can we give this knowledge to these faithful?
2. How deeply are we aware of our Baptismal call, its responsibility and accountability?
3. How far are we convinced and knowledgeable of the Communitarian aspect of our baptismal call?

4. How many of our associations, small communities, groups are Christ centred and Community centered ?

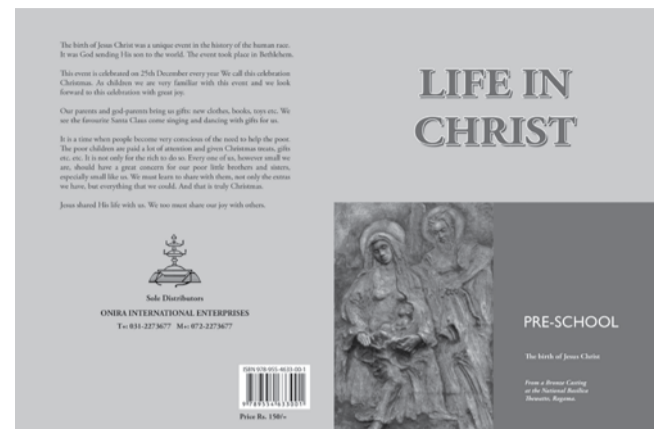
So let us take up the today's theme of "Joyously Rediscovering of our Faith by encountering Jesus and living and sharing its contents in our small communities." Let us do what we could in our own neighbourhood, and let us not be ashamed and afraid to be witnesses to Jesus.

Let us follow our Holy Father Francis and try to roll away the stones in our own tombs...because

"My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but that all times, and specially right now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die."

(Philippians 1:20)

Nimal I. Perera
National Small Christian Community Team
National SCC Secretariat
Balcombe Place, Colombo 08



The latest book in the "Life in Christ" series of Catechisms, is a book for the Pre-School child. This book, which could be considered the first in the series, is a book to introduce the child to the English alphabet. With each letter the child learns a Bible story to be narrated by the teacher, parent or guardian.

With the letter "A" the child is introduced to the story of Adam, with the letter "C" to the story of Cain and Abel and with the letter "D" to the story of David. Similarly, the stories run through the whole alphabet up to "Z" concluding with the story of Zacchaeus.

The children are also introduced to the simple letters of the alphabet at the end, with the 26 pictures they have to colour, as practical work in the class.

Finally, the book concludes with a set of basic prayers they have to memorize. These include the Our Father, the Hail Mary, Glory be, prayers before and after meals and the ancient prayer to Our Mother Mary "We fly to thy patronage."

The book has been prepared by Archbishop Emeritus Oswald Gomis. Titled "Life in Christ - Pre-School." It is now available in bookshops in Colombo, Dehiwala, Nugegoda, Wattala, Nayakakanda, Mahabage, Kandana, Jaela, Seeduwa, Raddolugama, Negombo, Kochchikade, Gampaha, Moratuwa, Kandy etc.

Korean Poetry

Rev. Fr. Kevin O'Rourke translates this poem by O Seyong written in 1942. This poet writes in lyrical mode of the pain of modern life. Concerned always with time, life's loneliness and inevitability, and the threat posed to our world by one-sided ideology, he approaches his themes from the perspective of balance and transcendence.



Flux

Time like everything else in the world, may have solid, liquid and gaseous states. Set memory - the past, time's ice; stream of consciousness - the present, time's water; dream fantasy - the future, time's mist. Perhaps it's the same with language? Ideology, love and belief may be solid, liquid and gaseous states of mind. I hate frozen ideology. Look at running water. If it runs and runs toward love, perhaps it finally reaches absolute freedom?

Poet, translator and author of numerous books, Fr Kevin O'Rourke has spent almost fifty years in Korea. He has received awards for his services to literature in both Korea and Ireland.

(Courtesy: Far East Magazine)

