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Pentecost Sunday
19 May

Messenger

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Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue

Christians and Buddhists: Loving, defending and promoting human life

*Message for the Feast of Vesak
2013 A.D./2556 B.E.*



Dear Buddhist Friends,

On behalf of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, I would like to extend my heartfelt greetings and good wishes to all of you, as you celebrate the feast of Vesak which offers us Christians an occasion to renew our friendly dialogue and close collaboration with the different traditions that you represent.

Pope Francis, at the very beginning of his ministry, has reaffirmed the necessity of dialogue of friendship among followers **(CONTD ON PG. 4)**

Resting in the Lord



Rev. Fr. Lazarus Boniface Patrick Bastian OMI, Parish Priest, Rakwana was called to eternal rest on Friday, May 10. Funeral Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Fatima, Maradana on Monday, May 13, after which his mortal remains were laid to rest at the Borella Cemetery, Kanatte.

Fr. Boniface, affectionately addressed as Fr. Bonnie was born on June 5, 1947 and hailed from Ampitiya, Kandy. After his early education at St. Mary's College, Ampitiya he entered the OMI Sacred Heart Novitiate in Bandarawela and then the Oblate Scholasticate in Ampitiya. He was ordained in July, 1978.

During his ministry,

(CONTD ON PG. 4)

Be alert and alive to the signs of the times

The Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith has made an appeal to priests in the Archdiocese especially the parish priests, to be sensitive to the needs of their flock by receiving their concerns with kindness like an anointed servant of the Lord and "do a paradigm shift away from the governing type of relationship."

His Eminence was addressing the Presbyteral Meeting of the Archdiocese of Colombo, held last Monday and Tuesday at the Blessed Joseph Vaz Centre, in Borella.

Stating that the Archdiocese has been able to work towards some of the goals it had set like the regionalization

programme, the establishment of the eleven Archdiocesan Commissions for the smooth running of the different apostalates, among others, His Eminence also spelt out the challenges posed to the Mission of the Church today.

His Eminence named 'four trends' which he said caused difficulties to the smooth existence of the Church as a community. They are:

- The strongly secularizing tendency which starting with the city parishes is extending to rural areas and is lessening the enthusiasm for the faith traditionally



associated with our Catholics. The reason for this is the open market economy and its tendency to usher in moral and spiritual degradation.

- The strong resurgence of majoritarian religious dominance in every sphere of social and political life and the

constant search that goes on in various sectors especially in the sphere of education, media, public sector employment of Catholics and in politics, in order to deprive us of our rights as Catholics and citizens of the country.

(CONTD ON PG. 4)

Soup Kitchen Opening at Kochchikade



The Home for Feeding of the Poor and the Candle Lighting Hall at St. Anthony's Shrine in Kochchikade, were blessed by the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, and was declared open by First Lady Shiranthi Wickremasinghe Rajapaksa on

Saturday, May 11, 2013.

The Candle Lighting Hall was constructed with the assistance of Sri Lanka Navy. Both are built on the land gifted by Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) under the direction of Defence Secretary Gothabaya Rajapaksa.

Pilgrimage to Madhu gathers momentum

The annual pilgrimage to the hallowed Shrine of Our Lady of Madhu, organised by the Archdiocese of Colombo as one of the special events in this 'Year of Faith' is gearing up positively with enthusiastic active participation being indicated from several parishes.

Scheduled for May 24 and 25, 2013 services that need priority such as potable water, sanitation, transport and shelter have been assured with the cooperation of relevant Government officials together with members of the clergy at the Madhu Shrine and Colombo South Region

- Madhu Pilgrimage Committee.

Programme on the On-Going Formation for Priests - 2013

The above Programme conducted by the Catholic National Commission for Seminaries, Clergy and Religious will be held at the National Seminary Ampitiya from Monday July 29, to Thursday August 1, 2013.

The target group this year will be Priests ordained between the years 2007 to 2009.

Please keep the dates free. We will be in touch with you.

Rev. Fr. William Evans
Vice - Rector
Coordinator of the Programme

A Farewell and a Welcome

elcome

The characteristics of a great man is his power to leave a lasting impression on the people he meets. So said Sir Winston Churchill. This is the characteristic of Rev. Fr. Prasad Ponnampereuma. He will never be forgotten among the hearts of parishioners of Kurukulawa, St. Lazarus Church.



A Thanksgiving Mass was held recently to appreciate and honour the service rendered to the parish by Fr. Prasad who devoted himself to uplift the spiritual standard of the people. He also renovated the Church and beautified the environment which the parishioners are very appreciative of.

The New Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Francis Fonseka who assumed office on that day was welcomed by Rev. Fr. Prasad Ponnampereuma along with the parishioners. The Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Francis Fonseka, assisted by Fr. Prasad.

81st Birthday of Rev. Fr. Oscar Abeyratne

*Text: Padminie Nanayakkara
P.A. Caldera*



May 5, marked the 81st birthday of Rev. Fr. Siri Oscar Abeyratne who in 1971 started 'Kithu Dana Pubuduwa', the first Charismatic Renewal Movement in the whole of Asia.

May he be blessed to render many more years of fruitful service in the Vineyard of the Lord!

A. J.

Haldanduwana Daham Pasal teachers take oaths



Daham Pasal teachers of St. Mary's Church, Haldanduwana took oaths before the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Francislaus, recently.

Picture shows the Catechists posing for a picture with the Parish Priest.

Teckla Caldera

Parish Sons Concelebrate at Feast of St. Joseph's Church, Wennappuwa



The feast of St. Joseph's Church, Wennappuwa was celebrated recently with the Festive High Mass presided by priests from the Parish of Wennappuwa.

Together with the Vicar General Very Rev. Fr. Peter Charles and Procurator General Very Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson, fifteen other priests concelebrated the Mass.

All arrangements were made by the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Eric Fernando and Assistants Rev. Frs. Sujana Nishantha and Janaka Nishantha

Priyantha Peters

Scripture Courses at Aquinas University College

Aquinas University College will be conducting Short Courses on the Sacred Scriptures commencing:

17th May, 2013 at 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm

PSALMS. AN INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Claude Perera

18th May, 2013 at 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

GOSPEL OF MARK. AN INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

20th May, 2013 at 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm

PROPHET ISAIAH. AN INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

01st June, 2013 at 8.00 pm - 12.00 pm, followed by Holy Mass at 12.15 pm

WISDOM LITERATURE. AN INTRODUCTION

Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

Venue: Theology Lecture Hall, AUC

EACH COURSE FEE: Rs.500/-

For further details contact:

Rozaine: 071 5300 185/ 077 3688 329

Parish Sports Meet at Mulankavil



The Parishes of Mulankavil and Kumulamunai in the Diocese of Jaffna held a Sports Meet recently for the 'Year of Faith'. Those who took part in the Meet were catechetical students and catechists of the two parishes.

The Chief Guest on the occasion was Rev. Fr. Aruchelvan the Parish Priest of Iranapalai, and Rev. Fr. Sebastian (Salesian) and Rev. Bro. Justin OMI were welcomed as special guests.

The event was organized by the Parish Priests of Mulankavil and Kumulamunai with the support and coordination of Rev. Sisters of the Holy Family.

(Website)

Catholic Half Hour

The Special Pentecost Catholic Half Hour Radio programme will be presented by Priyanthi Seneviratne VanDort on Sunday, May 19, at 8.00 p.m. on SLBC English Service on 97.4 FM and 97.6 FM.

Staff of Galle Bishop's House celebrate May Day



The Supportive Staff of the Bishop's House in the Galle Diocese, celebrated 'May Day', with the participation of the Bishop of Galle, His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickremesinghe. Picture shows His Lordship blessing a staff member.

(Website)

Workshop on Positive Thinking at Matara Parish



A workshop on positive thinking and good attitudes for youth and teachers was held at the Shrine of Our Lady of Matara recently. Picture shows a section of the participants.

(Website)

Spread the message of peace to all

"Peace was the message Christ bought to this world. In His life and work, Christ lived this message of peace. The important component for peace is unity and without unity there is no peace."

So said Rev. Fr. Pius Nihal Fernando, Parish Priest and Administrator of the Shrine of Talawila, at the awarding of scholarships to children in the village of Nachchikelli in the Diocese of Chillaw.

Under this Scholarship Fund each child is given a sum of Rs. 1000/- for the purpose of education.

Present on the occasion was Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Wijesinghe, Episcopal Vicar, Chilaw Diocese.

Francis Shelton Fernando

News from Rome

Pope Confirms Lankan lads in Rome



Two Sri Lankans received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Holiness Pope Francis on April 28, celebrating the annual 'Year of Faith' organised by the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization in the Vatican. The two young candidates were Flavio Nelumdeniya and Hirosh Malan Fernando from the Rome Catholic Community of Infernetto. Holy Mass was concelebrated by Msgr. Neville Joe Perera, Rev. Frs Hemantha Perera and Prasad Harshan.

Rev. Fr. Hemantha Perera - reporting from Rome

Pontifical Swiss Guard's gift

A Strawberry Cake for Pope Francis



At the end of Holy Mass in the Pauline Chapel, the Pope received the Pontifical Swiss Guard who wanted to celebrate with him his nameday and entertained him briefly with some music. With the cardinals who concelebrated the Mass present in the Courtyard of Sans Damso, the Corps' band performed a musical piece. At the end the Chaplain, Msgr. Alain de Raemy, offered the Holy Father a strawberry cake prepared by one of the guards.



No place for Christians who are sad or fast asleep

Pope Francis asked more than 100,000 faithful in St. Peter's Square who were taking part in the General Audience on Wednesday April 24, "not to fall asleep, so as not to forget God," because "the life of Christians who have nodded off is a sad life." (*L'Osservatore Romano*)

SUNDAY PUNCH

by Camillus



Gloria Estefan on Christ and peace

VATICAN CITY: When she was first invited to appear on the Vatican version of TedX, people wondered what on earth the popular Cuban-born singer, Gloria Estefan, could have to say that was worth hearing.

Well, now they know. On April 23 Estefan addressed the forum at the Vatican on the importance of the teachings of Jesus Christ to ensuring peace in the world.

She told CNA she believes it is important that the basic teachings of Jesus Christ be passed on to young people.

"It is about treating other human beings like you want to be treated and, if we did that, there would be no conflicts or difficulties in life," she said.

She arrived in Rome with her husband, Emilio Estefan, and during the conference, she performed a song and shared her experience with the hundreds of people present from all parts of the world.

"Each religion has love as its foundation," Estefan, who was born in Cuba and grew up in Miami in the United States of America, said.

"We have differences that are more cultural, although religious as well, but I think that it is important that we try to understand each other and stop trying simply to change each other's faith."

She stressed, "I think we need to be in communion with others and I believe a lot in the power of prayer."

Estefan said that she has tried to live that truth even with her music, calling it her catharsis and support, which has helped her get through difficult times. "Having the blessing of my music, being heard in other places is a responsibility and a privilege that I take very seriously," she explained.

Estefan said that faith has been a pillar in her life. She recalled a bus accident in 1990 that left her unable to walk and unsure if she would ever sing again.

"When I was in that huge accident I received a lot of prayers from around the world," she explained.

"I believe in God and I will never be an atheist. The world is too beautiful to think that God does not exist."

Estefan composed the song, 'Coming Out of the Dark', which became a worldwide hit dedicated to God. She said that she wanted to thank all those who sent her their prayers and helped her recover.

"That song has a very religious meaning for me," she explained. "It signifies the power of prayer and that we all have to help each other."

Observing that people from all over the world and of different faiths prayed for her, Estefan said she believes that religious freedom means achieving the goals that all religions share, which are respect for the human being, respect for women, respect for the family, the values that elevate us and that bring us spiritually to choose the right things.



US Grammy Award winner singer, Gloria Estefan and husband Emilio Estefan, were invited to a private Holy Mass with Pope Francis at the Vatican. Estefan is the first international recording artiste to meet the Pope. The Estefans are very proud that the new Pope is from Latin America and have asked the Pope to pray for human rights in their native homeland, Cuba.

Month of May is the Month of Mary Our Mother

The month of May calls to our mind the sweetest thought of our Heavenly Mother Mary. Fondly we remember how even as little kids our parents and grandparents led us to the figure of Mary, often times showing us a holy picture or statute of the Madonna, and introducing Her to us as our own Mother. The Church from very early times cultivated a great sense of devotion to Her and considered Her very special not only as a central figure in the history of salvation, but also as the Heavenly intercessor before Jesus and the mother whom Jesus gifted to the community at the very moment of His supreme act of self offering on the Cross.

The Second Vatican Council declared "Mary was involved in the mysteries of Christ. As the Most Holy Mother of God she was, after Her Son, exalted by divine grace above all angels and men. Hence the Church appropriately honours Her with special reverence. Indeed from most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been venerated under the title of "God-bearer." In all perils and needs, the faithful have fled prayerfully to Her protection" [LG 66]. The divine mother became our mother because Jesus gave Her to us and us to Her. He must have wanted His own precious mother to help us in this vale of tears and to guide us to Him as She guided Him to the Father standing by Him and encouraging Him lovingly in fulfilling His very own mission. This tender relationship which the Church fosters is something that is unique to our Catholic identity. And we know how much our flock loves to gather around the Virgin in our own Marian Shrines like Madhu, Tewatte and Matara. It is a lovely tradition which, our parents have given us: To join enthusiastically pilgrimages during Marian feasts.

Let us then make it a special point to encourage devotion to Her among our faithful at parish, family and cottage group levels during the month specially dedicated to Her. The daily recitation of the Rosary at home, in the Cottage Groups and in the Parish would be most appropriate. I too encourage you to personally organize such devotion. Along with this effort a meditative reading of the texts of the Scriptures on the Blessed Mother, the reflected praying of the Rosary on the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious mysteries, exemplifying important events in the life of Jesus and of Mary would be helpful for the deepening of the faith.

The Archdiocesan Office for Liturgy has prepared a beautiful little leaflet for use during the month of May with all the prayers normally recited with the Rosary.

*Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith - Archbishop of Colombo
Koinonia - May 2013*

Christians and Buddhists: Loving, defending and promoting human life

Contd. from Pg. 1

of different religions. He noted that "The Church is [...] conscious of the responsibility which all of us have for our world, for the whole of creation, which we must love and protect. There is much that we can do to benefit the poor, the needy and those who suffer, and to favour justice, promote reconciliation and build peace" (*Audience with Representatives of the Churches and Ecclesial Communities and of the Different Religions, 20 March 2013*). The Message of the World Day of Peace in 2013 entitled "Blessed are the Peacemakers," notes that "The path to the attainment of the common good and to peace is above all that of respect for human life in all its many aspects, beginning with its conception, through its development and up to its natural end. True peacemakers, then, are those who love, defend and promote human life in all its dimensions, personal, communitarian and transcendent. Life in its fullness is the height of peace. Anyone who loves peace cannot tolerate attacks and crimes against life" (*Message for the World Day of Peace in 2013, n. 4*).

I wish to voice that the Catholic Church has sincere respect for your noble religious tradition. Frequently we note a consonance with values expressed also in your religious books: respect for life, contemplation, silence, simplicity (cf. *Verbum Domini*, no. 119). Our genuine fraternal dialogue needs to foster what we Buddhists and Christians have in common especially a shared profound reverence for life.

Dear Buddhist friends, your first precept teaches you to abstain from destroying the life of any sentient being and it thus prohibits killing' oneself and others. The cornerstone of your ethics lies in loving

kindness to all beings. We Christians believe that the core of Jesus' moral teaching is twofold; love of God and love of neighbour. Jesus says: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." And again: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (Catechism of the Catholic Church n. 1823). The fifth Christian Commandment, "You shall not kill" harmonizes so well with your first precept. *Nostra Aetate* teaches that "the Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions" (NA 2). I think, therefore, that it is urgent for both Buddhists and Christians on the basis of the genuine patrimony of our religious traditions to create a climate of peace to love, defend and promote human life.

As we all know, in spite of these noble teachings on the sanctity of human life, evil in different forms contributes to the dehumanization of the person by mitigating the sense of humanity in individuals and communities. This tragic situation calls upon us, Buddhists and Christians, to join hands to unmask the threats to human life and to awaken the ethical consciousness of our respective followers to generate a spiritual and moral rebirth of individuals and societies in order to be true peacemakers who love, defend and promote human life in all its dimensions.

Dear Buddhist friends, let us continue to collaborate with a renewed compassion and fraternity to alleviate the suffering of the human family by fostering the sacredness of human life. It is in this spirit that I wish you once again a peaceful and joyful feast of Vesak.

Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran
President -

Be alert and alive....

Contd. from Pg. 1

- The challenge to our mission that comes from the very aggressive proselytism practiced by the fundamentalist Christian sects who by dumping unlimited financial resources are carrying on a rather misleading campaign against the Church by misleading the Catholic faithful.

- The last trend is our own lethargic and disinterested attitudes which often influence negatively the common pastoral effort of the diocese. A non cooperative or disinterested attitude is worse than one of criticism or even attack.

Calling for the revival of Development Com-

mittees in parishes His Eminence said that parishes should give more focus to issues of Justice, peace and the poor.

He also expressed concern at the attempts being made in the traditional Catholic belt to weaken the Catholic voice and to subtly change the physiognomy of these traditional Catholic areas. Along with this His Eminence said comes the sad plight of our Tamil brethren in the faith with regard to their civil and political rights and their geographical identity.

As a final word of advice His Eminence told the gathering of priests, "Let us examine our conscience then and see if we are the reflection of an anointed one set apart for our people or just officials who wish to lead a happy and contended life for themselves."

Resting in the Lord....

Contd. from Pg. 1

During his ministry, Fr. Bonnie was Hospital Chaplain and was also associated with Rev. Fr. Tissa Balasuriya OMI at the Centre for Society and Religion in Maradana. He served as Parish Priest in Kochchikade and at Thop-

puwa. He also served as bursar at Nazareth, Wennappuwa and at the Pre Novitiate in Maggona, where he was a staff member and bursar.

At the time of his death he was an active pastor in the parish of St. Anthony's Church, Rakwana.

May his Soul Rest in Peace.

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando



**'The red dragon, I bind him not by a great chain, but by a very frail cord'.
—
Rosary**



The Splendour of Catholicism and poverty of Fundamentalism - 3

Prof. Anton Meemana

Now let us examine how Catholicism handles sublimity, complexity, nobility and majesty of the fullness of Christian faith. Catholicism always emphasises both sides of a truth. Truth is never one dimensional or unipolar. Every Catholic teaching possesses two sides. One side of the truth should not be emphasised at the expense of the other side of the truth. Then it becomes a heresy. Heretics are not totally wrong, nor are they totally right. They are right only partially. When you put forward part of a truth as the whole truth, then you certainly become a heretic. In this sense, every fundamentalist could fall into this category. Let me elaborate this fact by giving you some examples from the Catholic Tradition.

God is with us, in us, deep within us, beside us, surrounding us, enveloping us, embracing us now (Immanence of God)

and at the same time, God is actively in his heaven now (Transcendence of God). In other words, God is both immanent and transcendent. Now which of these two premises is theologically true? Is God really with us now or in His Heaven now? What is really the truth? A fundamentalist will in all likelihood settle for one premise and declare happily that he or she is presenting the right answer for the benefit of the whole humanity.

But Catholicism teaches that both premises are entirely, absolutely and simultaneously true. God being God, He is and can be present on earth as well as in heaven at the same moment, and earth and heaven are not two separate realms for God; that is, how He operates and behaves in heaven is also the way He operates and behaves on earth. Although it looks like a real contradiction to our limited intellectual comprehension, there are no contradictions in God. The best and most accurate approach to make sense of the Divine Mystery is through paradoxes (A statement containing two opposite ideas that make it seem impossible or unlikely, although it is probably true; Oxford Dictionary). Clarity in God appears to be a paradox to human beings.

2000 years ago in Bethlehem, the Saviour and the Redeemer of the entire humanity and the whole creation was born of a very ordinary, low-key and unassuming rural Galilean girl named, Mary of Nazareth and at the same time, that Saviour and Redeemer had exited from all eternity; He had been with God from the very beginning and He was not created. He could be born amongst us humans precisely because He was uncreated.

Promptings and strivings of the mystery cannot be, adequately comprehended through human rationality and at the same time, it is not anti-rational, theological, irrational or anti-intellectual. For instance, let us

take the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception (That Mary was born free from the stain of original sin and this was a result of Christ's grace and never outside His saving grace. This dogma does not mean that Mary does not need Christ for her salvation).

This dogma may not appeal to some fundamentalists or they may find difficulties with it. But this fact should not surprise us Catholics. Through this doctrine, we are grappling with the mysterious workings of the Divine Mystery and we must be open to the ongoing revelatory potential of the Mystery.

If it is the will of God to make Mary the Queen of Heaven or the Queen of Peace, why must fundamentalists object to it? What is really their problem? They must do some through self-examination and be able to detect as to where this psychological and theological reluctance comes from. The one who has an issue with Mary

"The only way to become human is to strive to become holy and sinless. To be truly human is to be sinless. Christ is the sinless, guileless and guiltless one par excellence and therefore He is Divine through and through. Through one's completely purified humanity, one's divinity begins to shine."

has an issue with oneself. It may be a projection of one's personal inadequacies and lack of self-awareness.

Christ is the Saviour of the whole universe and Mary is the mother of that Saviour. What hinders us from appreciating, honouring, recognising and venerating Mother Mary? To neglect and ridicule Mary is to insult Jesus. By insulting Mary, one cannot give honour to her son. We venerate Mary in order to better worship Jesus.

The truth is this; that Mary played a very decisive role in the economy of human salvation and her salvific contribution should not be underestimated or downplayed. Even by a simple logic, this can be argued. Whose flesh and blood did Jesus take? Jesus took the flesh and blood of Mary. Jesus took His genetic code from Mary. So how can you separate Jesus from Mary and Mary from Jesus? So how can you honour Jesus while dishonouring Mary?

Why are the hearts of fundamentalists full of malice, envy, hatred, resentment, viciousness, apprehension and vexation. To hate Mary is to hate oneself. To hate Mary is to suppress the most sensitive, caring and loving part of oneself. By insulting Mary, fundamentalists unknowingly express their self-hatred, their inner wounds and deep-seated brokenness. As Bishop Julio Xavier Labayen, O. C. D., one of my spiritual mentors, used to tell me; "There is no salvation without Jesus and there is no Jesus without Mary and therefore there is no salvation without Mary." Mary is the Mother of all lovers of Jesus.

Christ is deeply

Divine and at the same time truly human. Divinity and humanity are not diametrically and logically opposite realities. They are organically, ontologically and intimately blended and bonded. (Jehovah's witnesses have absolutely misunderstood this truth). The only way to become human is to strive to become holy and sinless. To be truly human is to be sinless. Christ is the sinless, guileless and guiltless one par excellence and therefore He is Divine through and through. Through one's completely purified humanity, one's divinity begins to shine. He was so close to God, as if they were one, as if they were the same. There has never been a person in human history who had been closer to God the way Jesus was.

Can both of these theological claims be true? They are both absolutely true. If one claim is not true, then the other claim is also not true. Both must be true at the same time or both are false at the same time. If we think that one theological premise (e.g., Jesus's Divinity) is true and the other one (e.g., Jesus's Humanity) is false, then we have not grasped the nature of Christian faith at all. Grand truths usually appear paradoxical and at times contradictory.

We also become divine and holy through continuous purification of our human nature. The way to God of Jesus is through our humanity. If Jesus is not fully Divine, He is also not truly human. If He is not really human, He cannot be totally Divine. To be human is to be holy and divine. We cannot become real human beings unless we continue to grow in holiness. Humans are created for complete union with God. Our true vocation is to become divine-human persons.

Heaven opens when you say: Hail Mary

(The following extract is taken from the books of "The secret of the Rosary" and "Our Lady speaks to her Beloved Priests.")

It is really pathetic to see, how most people say the Holy Rosary. They say it astonishingly fast and mumble so that words are not properly pronounced at all.

In the beginning we may find it difficult to say the Rosary devoutly, reflecting on the mysteries, because of our habit of saying prayers in a hurry. However if we can make a beautiful robe of glory for Our Lady out of a decade that we say recollectedly in a proper way, it will be worth more than a thousand Rosaries said in a rush without any pause or reflexion.

Our Heavenly Mother says, "I want you to know that no one can please me more than by saying the salution which the most Adorable Trinity sent to me and by which He raised me to the dignity of Mother of God.

By the word 'Hail' I learned that in His infinite power God had preserved me from all sin

and its attendant misery which the first woman had been subject to.

The name 'Mary' which means 'lady of light' shows that God has filled me with wisdom and light, like a shining Star, to light up heaven and earth. The words, 'full of grace' remind me that the Holy Spirit has showered so many graces upon me, that I am able to give these graces in abundance to those who ask for them through me as Mediatrix. When people say 'The Lord is with thee' they renew the indescribable joy that was mine when the Eternal Word became incarnate in my womb. When you say to me, 'Blessed art thou among women' I praise Almighty God's divine mercy which lifted me to this exalted plan of happiness. And at these words - 'Blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus' the whole of heaven rejoices with me to see my son Jesus Christ adored and glorified for having saved mankind.

While this prayer is despised by the great and the proud, it is recited with so much love and so much joy by my little

ones, by the humble."

Why is the Holy Rosary so efficacious?

"It is a prayer that you say together with Me. When you invite Me to pray for you, I accede to your request and mingle my voice with yours, and I unite my prayer to yours. Consequently it always becomes efficacious, because your heavenly Mother is suppliant omnipotence.

What I ask for I always obtain, because Jesus can never say 'no' to what His Mother requests of Him.

The Holy Rosary is a prayer that unites the voices of the Church and of humanity, because it is said in the name of all, and never exclusively on behalf of a single person. Satan's pride will again be conquered by the humility of little ones, and the Red Dragon will find himself decisively humiliated and defeated when I bind him not by a great chain but by a very frail cord; the holy Rosary.

Today your heavenly Mother asks you to make use of the Holy Ro-



sary as the most efficacious weapon for fighting in the great battle, under the command of the Woman clothed with the sun.

Give your support to my invitation; multiply your cenacles of prayer and fraternity; consecrate yourselves to my Immaculate Heart; frequently recite the Holy Rosary. Then the powerful Red Dragon will be shackled by this chain, and his margin of action will become ever more restricted. In the end he will be left impotent and harmless.

The miracle of the triumph of my Immaculate Heart will be made manifest to all."

Rohan Goonatilake

Man's Life is a Voyage in Self-Fulfillment

Man in his own limits, is born whole. Job, the wise man of old said, "I was born naked, with nothing and naked I will return to the ground." (Job 1)

When a child grows, he begins the journey that takes him from across the thresholds of life, laid with thorns into unexplored territories.

According to psychologists, there are three stages in the development of man.

- 1. Departure:** We grow with limitations and various needs which are met only partially, thus falling short of integration. As a child, we may be allowed to challenge and fall out of place. This childish behaviour shows that we are already losing ground.
- 2. Struggle:** As we grow in manhood, we become aware of our limitations. We struggle for wholeness. We attempt to take responsibility for our feelings. We build our identity and self-esteem, however we tend to hang onto unhealthy habits



which we think make us happy.

- 3. Return:** It is difficult to return to true self. The path is at times arduous and painful. However, the struggle paves the way for integration. It helps us to discover our destiny and leads us towards a stable relationship with God. We achieve psychological health which helps us to handle our responsibilities well and establish lasting relationships.

The basic laws of human existence are: Find yourself, Know yourself, Heal yourself and Be yourself. Everybody yearns for a better state of being. They are well aware that they are made for a more perfect state, that the Creator destined them for the fullness of life. It is the longing for bringing the 'wholeness' into one's very being. In the 'Promise of a new day,' the author writes: "It is not unusual for us to want an

easier life, one free from turmoil and pain. We'd rather not know that a life with no bumps falls short of the fulfillment we desire. But it does. We need struggles to stretch our capabilities. We need sorrow to appreciate the laughter. We need boredom to discover joy in small blessings."

However, there cannot be well-being and peace in us unless we realize that life is not primarily dependant on what we do, rather on what God does for us. We are weak when we fully rely on ourselves. Occasionally, we need to take an analytical assessment of ourselves and conclude whether we are growing or degenerating. Negative attitudes such as resentment, ill-will, jealousy, worry, fear and depression give rise to ill-health. These symptoms,

if not restrained, reach disastrous proportions and destroys man.

From the fathers of the desert, comes this story. One day, a brother found that rats had gnawed a hole in his sleeping blanket. So he wanted to keep a cat to chase them away. Now the cat drank so much milk given by the neighbours, that he decided to buy a cow. But the cow ate so much straw that he had to cultivate the land close to his place to provide for it.

The cow had calves. So he needed to engage labourers to look after them, to work in his fields and to build barns for his produce. He became a rich and wealthy farmer. One day, a brother from the desert came and enquired about this brother.

The labourers were puzzled. They said, "There is no one here as you describe. Your former companion traveled on. Here, there has been a big change."

And all because, a blanket had a hole.

Put yourself in a positive frame of mind.

Devote time for yourself For a heart-to-heart talk with yourself.

Do you follow your conscience always? Or on some issues, do you close the lid on your conscience?

Do you follow the herd, the majority without rhyme or reason?

Are you flexible enough to be humble

And strong-willed enough to reject what's harmful?

Are you a man of your word and action or do you dilly dally?

Are you a man of integrity, dependable upon?

Are you the person anyone can turn to, in their hour of need?

If not, do a thorough soul-searching

You're perhaps wearing a garment that's not proper to be worn

At the wedding feast of the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew. 22)

Ananda Perera

Born for God

Every life born on this earth is not accidental every person is born for God Yes we are convinced of it, "Human beings are made in God's image and likeness. So no doubt in every human heart there is a deep thirst for God a deep desire for God All our longing is for this deep union with Him. But unfortunately, we are caught up In the the world's concerns consciously We are busy bodies always in hustle and bustle of life. Modern technology, materialism, Secularism control our lives. So, our consciousness of God is blurd in our life And we have ready answers on the tip of our tongues. "Because of work, there is no time for God" There won't be a time without work in this fast moving world, So, am I going to wait, for the work to end to give time to God? It will never happen. So let me start today to give Some time to God At least ten minutes to be with Him consciously Because the time, being with the Lord will change us, will show us the correct path to interior happiness More than anything Let us be conscious of God because All of us are not born for work, but are Born for God.

Sr. M. Riana A.C.

A Reader writes:

Matrimonial Data Banks at Deanery Level

Thank God for Neomal Perera. All my relations and friends who read Neomal's suggestion of 'Matrimonial Data Banks at Deanery Level' in his letter 'Towards curtailing mixed marriages' (Messenger February 10) are unanimous in their opinion that it is really a Holy Spirit inspired suggestion and also that it is the best suggestion made by a layman towards the advancement of the Church for a very long time, because the advancement of the laity is the advancement of the Church.

Stanley Perera correctly says that 'thousands of parents across the country would raise both hands endorse wholeheartedly the suggestion. (Messenger April 14).

As Neomal says, present day parents especially the poor Catholics are confronted with many problems regarding their children. Finding a school, thereafter employment and finally a suitable Catholic partner which has now become the biggest headache for the parents. Most 'prayer sessions' receive many 'petitions' or 'requests' for a 'suitable partner in life', which confirms the magnitude of the problems. Many suffer mentally on their 'death bed', 'what will happen to my unmarried daughter.' He correctly states that the plea of most parents is 'please find a partner for my son/daughter, any race any religion.' Thereafter they get married to 'whoever comes on the way' resulting in misunderstandings, discord etc. and ending in separation. There are very many 'husbands and wives' who are enduring and tolerating each other without any happiness especially in mixed marriages.

There are unmarried girls in their late 30's and unmarried boys who are also in their late 30's and even early 40's in large parishes or adjoining smaller parishes: - the 'demand' and the 'supply', but they are unaware of each other and do not meet. So as Neomal suggests, the Church could step in and supply the 'avenue' for them to meet through Matrimonial Data Banks.

Neomal very correctly admits that the majority of Catholic parents are unable to meet the



"The Church could step in and supply the 'avenue' for them to meet through Matrimonial Data Banks...A few nuns and senior laymen from the Deanery could form a committee to maintain the correct data"

high expenses involved in Matrimonials advertisements and long distance travel and that most prefer partners from closer home. He also emphasises that his suggestion does not in any way suggest that the Church play the part of a Marriage broker. As he suggests it only involves maintenance of personal data to be made available to 'genuine' parents for selection. A few nuns and senior laymen from the Deanery could form a committee to maintain the correct data.

As Stanley Perera points out in the Messenger of April 14, this service could be an extension of the services rendered by the Family Services arm of the Church. He correctly emphasises that whilst there are counselling services for 'problem couples', there also should be a service to form Catholic couples.

I am also sure that the hopes and prayers of Stanley would have been heard by God by now and that the minds of 'those who matter' the hierarchy and the clergy would have been stirred by now and that some 'plan' is already in their minds, which when implemented would be great boon to thousands of desperate parents and also that many on their death bed could take their last breath thanking the Almighty Lord for everything without any regrets.

Matrimonial Data Banks would also definitely curtail mixed marriages and prevent Catholics from gradually drifting away from the Church.

Suresh Fernando

Oh come Holy Spirit we pray!

Pentecost or Whitsunday, with Christmas and Easter, ranks among the great feasts of Christianity. It commemorates not only the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and Disciples, but also the fruits and effects of that event: The completion of the work of redemption, the fullness of grace for the Church and its children, and the gift of

faith for all nations. The picture here shows the main stained glass from the Church dedicated to the Risen Lord at Kadolkale- Negombo. It reminds us of Christ's Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost. The latter is seen at the bottom of the picture.



Mary fills the world Month of May devotion Part 3

Continuing from last week we journey to more countries that have honoured Mary with postal stamps. Many of the African countries have issued Marian postage stamps to honour Mary. In an internet research I found an amazing collection of Marian stamps from these countries. Many had used the paintings of the classical masters. They were an impressive, very large and beautiful collection.

In Africa, there is no shortage of shrines dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Some of these places have even been rewarded by apparitions of the Virgin and are pilgrimage destinations renowned throughout Africa.

Many of these countries were evangelized by the Spanish, Portuguese, German, French missionaries who carried with them their love and devotion for the Virgin Mary . The Marian devotion once introduced grew and developed like everywhere else in the world into a special devotion fitting the local conditions and developed their own Marian Shrines. Some noted Marian Shrines, Cathedrals, churches in Africa include: Our Lady of Ngome and Our Lady of Ntshongweni (Shongweni) both in South Africa, Atakora, Dassa, Porto Novo and Ouidah all in Benin, Our Lady of Bam and Our Lady of Yagma in Burkina Faso, Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro in the Ivory Coast. Further at Nsimalen in Cameroon, at Zeitoun in the suburbs of Cairo, at Kibeho in Rwanda the apparition of Our Lady is supported.

The Marian history of these countries is interesting. Let us consider here at least one of these African countries.

Our Lady of Africa

Algeria was a Christian and Marian country as early as the second century A.D. Numidia (Berbers are Numids), was colonized long before the Christian era by the Phoenicians who settled along the coasts while the Berbers held the centre of the country. In 200 BC the kingdom passed under the dominion of the Roman Empire for nine centuries.

The region was deeply romanized and had a flourishing Christian community. The conversion to Christianity of Roman Emperor Constantine in the 3rd century increased the Church's influence in northern Africa. Carthage became important as the city of Saint Augustine a Berber Christian and one of the most universally known Doctors of the Catholic Church.

At the time of the Muslim invasion, the Church of North Africa (in today's Algeria) was one of the biggest communities of the Latin Church in the world and the Algerian soil was covered with basilicas and other Christian shrines. The Arab invasion and the spread of Islam, from the seventh century, were done by force. Within a few centuries, the Church of Africa was decimated. It was not until the conquest of Algeria by France, in 1830, that the Church was able to re-implant in this region of North Africa.

Although Islamised and shaken by bloody violence, it has never ceased to respect the Virgin Mary. Algeria is devoted to Our Lady of Africa. Muslims too respect the Blessed Virgin Miriam. Even today along with Christians many Muslims come to pray and lay flowers in front of her statue in the great Basilica dedicated to Our Lady of Africa where this prayer can be found over the main altar of the Basilica of Our Lady of Africa in the hills of Algiers:

“Our Lady of Africa pray for us and for the Muslims.”

Never have these words been erased by either time or by the events that have shaken the country.



ABSORBED IN AN HISTORIC DREAM

Contemplative Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Sri Lanka

In the year 1829, the idea of creating the "Contemplative Order" in Angers, France, by Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, the Foundress of the Good Shepherd Congregation might have been a dream, but then it was not just a mere dream. The creative nature and the apostolic zeal of Saint Mary Euphrasia which embraced the whole world, moved her to absorb in that historic dream, until she founded the Contemplative Order of the Good Shepherd, known in the past as Sisters of Saint Magdalene in 1831.

Let us go back to the early history of the Contemplative mission in Sri Lanka, which paved the path to a life of prayer, penance, silence and hidden life in our country. "Why can't we have the Sisters of St. Magdalene in Ceylon?" This was a question posed by gentle-hardworking Sister Dolorosa of the Auxiliary Sisters in Nayakakanda from their mistress Sister Mary Therese Daly RGS. "Better pray harder" was the reply of Sister Mary Therese. Finally, Mother Good Counsel Mills, then the Provincial Superior arranged Hilda Rodrigo to enter the Contemplative Novitiate in Bangalore, on April 17, 1958. At her clothing she received the name Sister Magdalene of the Holy Redeemer. She made her first Religious Profession on July 22, 1961, and she was the first Sri Lankan Sister to join the Contemplative Order.

Encouraged by Hilda's success, Charlotte Fernando and Dorothy Silva too joined the Novitiate in Bangalore, but when Visa problems arose they had to leave India by May 31, 1963. Arriving at the Indian Port they found there was no ship to sail home and no Visa to stay in India either. There was no news about

the three Sisters and Madras said, that they left and Colombo said, "No. They have not arrived."

In the meantime there was consternation in Colombo. Three days had passed. Tired, dirty and desperate, the three Sisters arrived again at our Convent in Madras. Mother Mary of St. Matilda hugged them and having solved the Visa problems, sent the Sisters by plane to Ceylon. Sr. Mary Euphrasia O'Connor and Sister Mary Francis de Sales Veale met them at the Ratmalana Airport and brought them to Bolawalana. It was on June 5, 1963.

From Bolawalana, the Contemplative Community was transferred to Halgashena Estate, Hanwella in 1975 where there was a more calm and quiet environment. Then in 1989, a permanent house was built for them in Nayakakanda, and the house at Halgashena was closed down. In 1992, another house was opened at Niripola, Hanwella and in 2006, a house in Kalamulla was opened in the Tsunami affected area. At present four of the Sri Lankan Sisters are missioned in Angola, France, Ireland and Italy.

Withdrawn from the world for the sake of leading a more intense life of prayer they live in solitude and in silence. In a world of noise and turmoil they establish an oasis of peace. Contemplative Sisters of the Good Shepherd are the sharers of the apostolic mission of the Good Shepherd Sisters. They are the signs of God's merciful love and intermediary persons before God for the work of pardon and reconciliation.

There are many who are stressed and lonely who come to the Contemplative Sisters for prayer and consolation. With such people who greatly experience



loneliness, spiritual dryness and pain, these Sisters pray together and illuminate their lives with gentle advise.

Therefore as our Contemplative Sisters traverse a golden path this year in June, by celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of their Order in Sri Lanka, we thank God for His saving plan in the past fifty years. Their ministry has several phases of history which affected their journey of faith and silence and also their apostolate of evangelizing life-activity of people who come to them for prayer and guidance. We hope and pray that many girls will respond to the call of God, in order to become the sharers of the apostolic mission of the Good Shepherd Sisters, by their ministry of prayer and silence.

*Compiled by Sr. Frances RGS
St. Joseph's Convent, Grandpass.*

Preamble

1. We firmly believe that this mission is the will of God for us, through Jesus Christ His Son in the Holy Spirit, aided by the powerful prayer mediation of Mary Our Heavenly Mother and the example of Blessed Joseph Vaz, the Apostle of Sri Lanka.
2. We thank and congratulate Your Eminence for stressing the need for a more concentrated and coordinated effort on the part of the Archdiocese to solidify the faith of our people in this 'Year of Faith' which has resulted in the formation of this Faith Animation Mission. Your Eminence is very keen to revitalize our faithful in the uniqueness of the Catholic faith we have inherited from the apostolic Church, and is eager to address the issue of our sheep who abandon the flock.
3. This is not the first ever effort in the Archdiocese which addresses some of these issues; but this perhaps is a more concentrated, focused and urgent wake-up call. We gratefully acknowledge all the previous efforts in this regard; be they by officially assigned bodies, various clergy, religious and lay groups or even by individuals. More importantly, we learn much from them and emulate some strategies adopted by them which have proven effective.

1. Spiritual Vision

Those with us, let us make them stronger (Matthew 21:21-22). Lukewarm hearts, let us "make them glow" brighter. (Revelation 3:16) Shepherds, in search of the lost sheep, let us go farther. (Luke 15:4-6)

2. Objectives

1. Animation of the faith of the laity and the religious in the parishes of the Archdiocese of Colombo.
2. Assisting the Catholics to appreciate the uniqueness of being Catholic in the Roman Catholic Church.
3. Animation of the Parish Pastoral Council members and lay leaders of the parish to take stock of the current situation of their parishes.
4. Formation in small groups of Catholics to animate fellow Catholics.

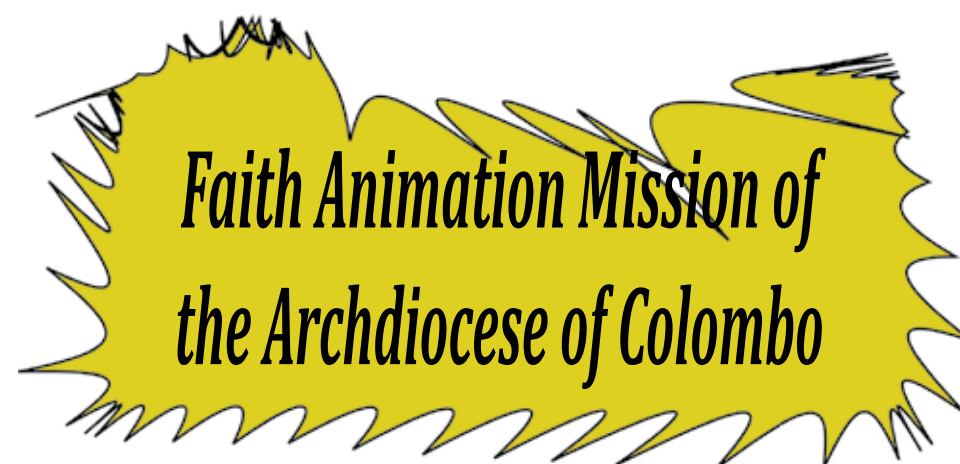
3. Methodology

1. Visiting parishes to discuss with the parish priest and the Parish Pastoral Council together with

4. Organization of special programs (of a more dynamic nature) for selected groups at deanery or archdiocesan levels, especially for young people.
5. Developing simple forms of e-Catechism.
6. Visiting schools to address Catholic teachers and Catholic children of upper grades [in small groups].
7. Strengthening Catholic Associations in Government and Private work places.
8. Providing inputs for special groups of Catholics like the professionals, artistes, sportsmen and women etc.

achieve the stipulated goals and targets.

2. The need to be invited by the parish priests, first to sit with the Parish Pastoral Council and other lay leaders to take stock of the current situation of their parishes if this has not been done recently. In such meetings, the parish priest will be the chairperson. Accordingly, remedial measures could be worked out with the help of the laity at parish level.
3. Parish Pastoral Visitation by the parish priest needs to be reiterated, revitalized and supported with emphasis on personal pastoral care of the faithful.
4. Our preaching has improved a lot of late. However, things can be further improved. Many people seem to go elsewhere to listen to more effective preachers.
5. In order that we utilize more time for preaching, we need to cut down time on distribution of Holy Communion. Since lay EMHC are not supposed to be trained anymore, we earnestly propose that the Archdiocese thinks of even married deacons to help administer Holy Communion, visit the sick more often and assist in the pastoral care of our families.
6. We would be grateful if we are not made use of to preach church novenas, and not invited to conduct First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes. However, if time permits we may take up a few days of church feasts within the deaneries we reside and address the parents of First Holy Communicants and Confirmation candidates.



other lay leaders the current situation in their parishes with regard to faith animation.

2. Encouraging the efforts of the parish priests in parish pastoral visitation and supporting surveys at parish level to ascertain the status quo, if this has not been done as yet.
3. Visiting parishes to address people before/after Holy Masses on the uniqueness of being Catholic aided by multi-media presentations and handouts.

9. Providing a few Faith Kits for Catholics.
10. Formation of a team of religious and lay faithful to assist the Faith Animation Mission.

4. Success or failure of this venture depends on a number of factors:

1. We all need to be convinced about the need for a more concentrated and coordinated effort towards Faith Animation of our faithful. We need to own this vision and mission and be committed to

(Contd. on Pg. 9)



'the first day of the week' (Jn 20:1). It is because of this that we call Sunday the 'Lord's Day' and set aside time for Him.

2. It reminds us of God's gift of creation and our New Creation through baptism

Because Sunday (not Monday!) is the First Day of the week, it reminds us of the very beginning when God created everything out of nothing. It is a special day for us to give thanks to God for this gift. We also give thanks for our being made a 'New Creation' through baptism; through baptism we share in Christ's victory over death and in his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

3. It is the day when we look towards the Second Coming of Christ

Sunday is not only the first day of the new week, but also the 'Eighth Day' of the previous week! In the Book of Genesis, God created the world in



Come Sunday!



seven days. So on Sunday, the eighth day, we look beyond creation to the end of time when we hope to share fully in the new life of Christ, victorious over sin, fear and death.

CTS Essential

Why a special day?

The First Commandment which God gave to His people was to 'have no other gods before me' (Ex. 20:3)- The third says 'Observe the Sabbath day and keep it holy' (Dt. 5:2). As Christians we are called to give God first place in every aspect of our lives. We are given a special day each week to help us to do this, and to help us to keep all our worries and troubles in their true perspective: The perspective of our life with God.

Why keep Sunday special?

For many people today, Sunday is no different from any other day. As Catholics, however, we try to keep Sunday as a day set aside for the Lord for several good reasons.

1. It is the Day of the Lord's Resurrection

Ever since the earliest times Christians have understood Sunday to be the day on which Jesus rose from the dead, named in John's Gospel as

Faith Animation....

Contd. from Pg. 8

7. Above all else, we need to sincerely rethink our life style as priests. With all the good things we do; which are always appreciated, there are also occurrences which cause irreparable damage and scandal to the Body of Christ. The result is, people lose trust in us, their faith is weakened, and at times they decide to leave our flocks. We need to be extra sensitive to the current socio-economic and political situation in our country. Spending lavishly on socializing when right under our nose many are struggling to make ends meet, has caused limitless scandal of late.
8. The success or failure of this effort depends more on the support, understanding and encouragement we receive at the grass roots' level; namely that of our parish priests, school principals, coordinators of apostolates etc. for whose sheep we expend our time, energy, resources and talent.

The above was a presentation by Rev. Fr. C. Joy Perera at the Archdiocesan Presbyterial Meeting held on the 13 & 14 May 2013

Faith Animation Team:
Rev. Fr. C. Joy Perera,
Rev. Fr. Udayadas Arulanandam,
Rev. Fr. Anton Dinesh Priyasad

A Saint for Sri Lanka

This year too, May 21 marks the feast of a Saint who loved Sri Lanka and was closely related to her history. Charles-Joseph Eugene de Mazenod, Bishop of Marseilles (France) and the founder of the Congregation of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (known as OMI) could change the history of the Sri Lankan Catholic Church, through the decision he made to send his missionary Oblates to this Island.

Born in the year 1782, he came into a world that was destined to change very quickly. Though he had been assured of wealth and position, by his noble birth, everything changed with the outbreak of the French Revolution, which made this young boy, Eugene to flee for life leaving behind all that was his. The Mazenod family which came close to destitution during this exile fell from bad to worse as the parents wanted to be separated. Thus, his dysfunctional family intensified Eugene's suffering. After his return to his motherland, one Good Friday, he had a supernatural experience, which made him cry immensely in the understanding of his unworthiness before the Saviour who gave His life to save him. This mystical experience changed Eugene's life and led him towards priesthood.

Returning to his own town after his Ordination, he started to exercise his priesthood in the care of the truly spiritually needy-prisoners, youth, poor workers and villagers. Though he faced opposition from the local clergy, Eugene pursued his course unwaveringly. Soon he was able to seek out other equally

zealous priests like him who were prepared to step outside the old, even outmoded, structures and reach out to the poor and the needy who needed spiritual enlightenment. Walking from village to village these priests instructed the poor illiterate masses in their local language Provencal instead of the 'educated' French. This group of priests who rallied around him lived an intense community life of prayer, study and fellowship and preached in parish missions. This was the humble beginning of the OMI Missionary Fathers (Oblates of Mary Immaculate), founded on January 25, 1816.

Though Eugene de Mazenod founded the Congregation primarily to serve the spiritually deprived people in the countryside of Southern France his ardent zeal for the Kingdom of God and his devotion to the Church moved the Oblates to the advancing edge of the apostolate. And in the year 1847, Bishop Orazio Bettachini, the Apostolic Vicar of Jaffna, was searching for missionaries to work in Sri Lanka. He was told to meet this extraordinary missionary (who was now the Bishop of Marseille), who's "heart is as big as the world" and would do anything for the poor. Proving this true, Bishop De Mazenod accepted this request as he wrote: "I have therefore accepted this new mission, one of the most beautiful in the world. I foresee that one day this great Island will become an endowment which our Congregation will sanctify entirely."

Today, we recall with gratitude all that was done by the Oblate Mission-



aries who were known as "Kurusu Suwamila" (Bearers of the Cross) who heeded the call of their founder, St. Eugene de Mazenod to steadfastly carry a mission in this island.

On his death bed St. Eugene left his Oblates a final testament, "Among yourselves-charity, charity, charity: in the world-zeal for souls." The Church in declaring him a saint on December 3, 1995, crowns these two pinnacles of his living: Love and zeal. His life and his deeds remain for all a window unto God Himself. And that is the greatest gift that Eugene de Mazenod, Oblate of Mary Immaculate, can offer us.

Let us, therefore, praise God for this beautiful saint, who is now also known as the patron of dysfunctional families. People now gather every first Friday to the Church of Our Lady of Fatima, Maradana, to ask for the intercession of this Saint especially for the sake of dysfunctional families.

Rev. Fr. Shivantha Waas OMI

Father Leonard Ranasinghe ... a diamond cut to perfection

Having to pitch our tent in different countries from the time we got married in 1979 has been an enriching experience, albeit difficult when goodbyes had to be said and loved ones left behind.

But I had no time to say goodbye to Father Leonard. Like Prophet Elijah in the Bible, his passing from this world to the next was instantaneous. Most of us doubt he would have realised that this transition was even occurring, as the timeframe was altogether too minute.

My family returned to live in Sri Lanka in 1999, renting a home in Nawala and making Sacred Heart Church, Rajagiriya our parish. Father Leonard welcomed us and thus began a friendship that, over the years, grew with God's grace into something beautiful. Every one of my family, including my soon-to-be, 99-year-old mother, experienced warmth, love and sincerity of a magnitude that only someone who truly loves God could give.

I cannot count the number of times that Father Leonard has been there in those moments when I truly needed his presence. He turned up at Rajagiriya when I desperately wanted to make my way to the throne of God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Father Leonard was a Confessor par excellence. Many others, including myself, can testify



to this. A priest that prays during the Hour of Mercy each day, reverently meditating on Christ's Passion, is surely graced to experience and understand God's mercy for even the most hardened sinners. Father Leonard's commitment to dwell on Divine Mercy in prayer, and to dispense it with love, was the basis of all other actions that encompassed his priestly ministry.

He consulted his Maker at every level of decision with such fervor and humility. One of his favourite passages (which I can still hear him singing) was: "Unless the Lord builds the house, in vain do the builders labour" (Psalm 127:1) It was evident

that Father Leonard believed this with all his heart. He knew with certainty that he could accomplish nothing without God, and this humility remained his hallmark to the end.

Father Leonard lived an austere life, simple and happy with the least of possessions. He used public transport, travelling from one destination to another to serve people from all walks of life. He ignoring the physical tiredness he often experienced, and found true joy

in his acts of service to others. He was a priest always available, understanding deeply his call to follow the Master's footsteps, and always went where he was needed most. I know Father Leonard fasted for long periods, but he always had a cheerful smile and a childlike giggle that filled our hearts with delight.

His concern, love and tenderness for each of the Confreres in the Sylvestro Benedictine Order in Sri Lanka as their Prior were evident in his constant call for prayer for them

Marianne Johnpillai

A bright boy on earth, now an angel among the Heavenly Host

• Rashida Perera

Rashida was a 13-year-old boy with an innocent smile and a thick black head of hair. He was the much loved only child of Malin and Ruwini Perera of Kotte.

On April 15, he suddenly took ill and was admitted to hospital. Within a short period he passed away without a single word to his beloved parents, his dearest punchi (Achini), mahappa (Surin, Naomal, Anil) and loving grandparents (Ernest and Chandra). His demise left all his relatives, neighbours, and friends in school, and staff at St. Joseph's College shaken and grief stricken. What followed was a vale of tears. A sea of grief enveloped everyone. Being a much loved God fearing boy with pleasant manners, he won the hearts of all whom he met. He excelled in studies, sports and music.

We witnessed a touching scene at St. Joseph's College, Colombo on April 17. At the main gate of the College his coffin was taken from the hearse and was carried by prefects along with the Western Band (of which he was a member) with great honour to the Chapel. On either side his schoolmates stood, each carrying a white daisy. A mass of floral wreaths adorned Rashida's

coffin. The Service was conducted by Rev. Fr. Rector and the College priests.

Speaking to the congregation one of the priests said, "God bestows many talents to human beings. Some live for 50-80 years, but seldom make use of them and fade away without any service to their community. But little Rashida, in his short span of life achieved his best in every field he was blessed. Thereby his life was complete by leaving an example to others."

His assignment on this earth was over. He went to meet his Creator; the Mighty Lord. We believe now he is an angel in the presence of the Heavenly Host.

Dear little Rashida putha, you may not be with us physically but the memory of you will always live in our hearts forever. Send blessings from Jesus to your beloved parents and loved ones to bear their grief. We humans cannot understand God's ways.

Until we meet you on that beautiful shore beyond (where there is no pain or sorrow) in that sweet bye and bye. You are safe in the hands of Jesus.

Affectionately yours,
Berney acha and family

It's time to Review ... the Prevention of Terrorism Act

The recent arrest and detention of opposition politician Azath Salley under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) has once again drawn the critical scrutiny of human rights organizations. The PTA was enacted in 1979 as a temporary measure to last for 3 years. But it was amended subsequently to make it a permanent measure. It is a measure that is rather inconsistent with contemporary human rights standards as promoted by the United Nations and incorporated in the International Human Rights Law monitored by the UN Human Rights Council. So it needs to be reviewed in the light of modern International Human Rights Law.

Human rights law requires the State to take steps to protect the right to life - which includes measures to prevent terrorism. Security of the individual is a basic human right and the protection of individuals is, accordingly, a fundamental obligation of Government. States therefore have an obligation to ensure the human rights of their residents by taking positive measures to protect them against the threat of terrorist acts and bringing the perpetrators of such acts to justice. However, any measures taken to counter terrorism must be proportionate and not undermine our democratic values. In particular, laws designed to protect people from the threat of terrorism and the enforcement of these laws must be compatible with the people's rights and freedoms as enunciated in our Constitution and in International Human Rights Law.

Several countries including the USA have used the risk of terrorism as the basis for eroding human rights and civil liberties. President Obama although he promised to close down Guantanamo prison owing to allegations of torture, has not succeeded in doing so and recently the prisoners staged a hunger strike there.

The maximum period of detention without charge for most criminal suspects is 24 to 96 hours. But under our PTA they can be detained for 30 days without charge. The PTA allows people to be stopped and searched without suspicion. This overly broad power may be used against peaceful protesters and disproportionately against ethnic minority groups; Broad new speech offences impact on free speech rights and Azad Salley seems to have fallen foul of this provision. The view of the UN Human Rights Council is that terrorism can and must be fought within the rule of law and the human rights framework.

The measures adopted by States to counter terrorism should not themselves pose challenges to human rights and the rule of law. Some big powers have permitted torture and other ill-treatment of suspects to counter terrorism. They have disregarded the legal and practical safeguards available to prevent torture, such as regular and independent monitoring of detention centers. In some State the independence of the judiciary has been undermined, with the use of exceptional courts to try civilians which has had an adverse

impact on the effectiveness of regular court systems. Repressive measures have sometimes been used to stifle the voices of human rights defenders, journalists, minorities, and civil society in general.



These practices, particularly when taken together, have a corrosive effect on the rule of law, good governance and human rights. They are also counter-productive to national efforts to combat terrorism. They also undermine the values that separate us from the terrorist, the very values we should be fighting to protect. Respect for human rights and the rule of law must be the basis for the fight against terrorism. National counter-terrorism strategies that seek to prevent acts of terrorism, also requires measures to address the under-lying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including the lack of rule of law and violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, and socio-economic marginalization of groups in society.

It is in the interests of a democracy to foster the active participation and leadership of civil society; to

Current Affairs

condemn human rights violations by whoever it be, whether belonging to the majority ethno-religious group or a minority, investigate and prosecute them, and prevent them in engaging in violating the law and to give due attention to the rights of victims of human rights violations, through restitution.

Human rights are universal values and the law must protect individuals and groups against actions and omissions whether by the agents of the State or violent groups in society that interfere with fundamental freedoms, and human dignity. The full spectrum of human rights involves respect for, and protection and fulfillment of, civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as the right to development. Human rights are universal-in other words, they belong inherently to all human beings and are interdependent and indivisible.

International human rights law is reflected in a number of core international human rights treaties and in customary international law. These treaties include in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols.

Freedom is Golden but Freedom misused can be Disastrous

A Random Reflection



Children today are usually guided and directed by their parents or teachers at least until they reach the age of about 18 years. Children need guidance from elders with regard to educational, religious practices, social behaviour which is very important in their formation as adults, etc. The Freedom enjoyed by children is to a large extent restricted until they come to an age of understanding. In Sri Lanka it is 18 years of age. This is also the age of voting. In the Western World, majority of children leave their parents and live independently after the age of 18 years. In Sri Lanka this practice is not strictly adhered to. A student counsellor from an Australian University once told me that students between the ages of 18 and 23 years become vulnerable to strange

behavioural changes as they become free to take decisions on their own and plan their future. With this newly acquired freedom most youngsters are able to make decisions regarding their future in the field of education, job preferences, starting a love affair or choosing their life partners or changing their religion, etc.,

During this vulnerable age chronic habits like resorting to drugs, alcoholism, smoking, inborn habits such as homosexuality and other bad addictions such as anorexia, bulimia, etc., can prop up. Some qualities as described above can lead these youngsters to suffer from depressions which may result in suicidal tendencies. Therefore although children after the age of 18 years to a great extent enjoy freedom and independence, however

it is advisable for parents to keep a watchful eye on them for their own good and that of their children.

When parents get old and retire they lose the freedom they enjoyed earlier. They are then directed and guided by their grown up children and some parents are even looked after and financed by their children.

I happen to know of a Sri Lankan old couple who lived separately in a rented house in Sri Lanka. They had two married sons and a married daughter. The daughter was living with her Sri Lankan husband in the United States. After several invitations from their daughter to come to the USA and live with them the parents agreed to go and experience luxury living (as they thought) with their daughter in the the USA. They were given a bedroom next to the bath and toilet and on the other side of the toilet the daughter and her husband's bedroom was situated. The young couple also had two school going kids. After a couple of weeks, the daughter advised her parents to re-

frain from using the toilet when her strict husband was still sleeping. According to the daughter the use of the commode flush disturbs her husband. In other words the old couple was deprived of their basic freedom to use the toilet (had to endure even a call of nature) when their son-in-law was still asleep. During the daytime the old parents had to look after the kids and sometimes for long periods. After some months the old parents disgusted with life in the USA which curtailed their basic freedom, returned to their old life in Sri Lanka.

My son who is a Director of a school once saw an old man who was a virtual beggar and who lived on the road near the school. The homeless man depended on food received from begging and sometimes was seen to eat the left overs from a trash bin. He was also seen to wash himself using water from the nearby drain. Due to such deplorable living conditions the old man was taken by my son and placed in a nearby Elders' Home where the man was given a bedroom

to share with another, a bed to sleep and a fan over them. Each room in the home had an attached bath and toilet. The inmates received three meals a day, a medical check-up off and on, and freetime to watch TV or stroll in the home garden. Inspite of all these comforts to live, the old man ran away from the home after tolerating his new life for one year.

The old man found it difficult to cope with institutional living with time schedules which deprived him the freedom to take alcoholic dinks before meals. Probably

his loss of freedom had a greater impact in his life than the new life comforts and regular meals he had received in the Home. It is rather difficult to think how important the old man valued his freedom.

Lessons:

- i. Beware of the chronic addictions, strange behaviours, actions, and decisions made by grown up children during the so called vulnerable years
- ii. Try to understand the sort of freedom which the old people want to have.

Damascene Abeyssekera

Holy Spirit - Family Divine

A divine trio
Memories
Descends
Passing Words
They recalled
Today hear
Spirit holy
Unity divine
Epitome
Abundance
Showers love
Blessings
Relief, Comfort
They bring



Holy family
Beckons all
Towards peace
Love on call
Miran Perera

In the Christian way of life, we live our lives objectively in preparation for what follows death. It is clear in the scriptures that death is not an end in itself. Death takes us to a life in eternity. Humans are born only once and enjoy the experience of one life in this world. Hebrews 9: 27 says: "As humans die only once and afterwards are judged." Our eternity after death is determined in this one life.

Some of the books of the Old Testament contain references made at that time about life after death. Old Testament believers only spoke of a sad and strange survival in a place called *Sheol*. This was the name the Jews (Israelites) gave to the abode of the dead. It was imagined as a dark place where the dead were like shadows, forgotten by God and without hope. Isaiah 38: 10 reads "In the noontime of my life I go; I am sent to the land of the dead, for the rest of my years." To them dying meant losing everything.

Scripture tells us that the fierce persecution of the Jews by the Antiochians caused an uprising of the Jews headed by the Maccabean family. The mortality that resulted among the Jews was high. This predicament forced the Jews to reflect on the fate of the martyrs

who died and it became obvious to them that there would be no justice of God if he did not raise them to share a happy life with him. Since Jewish culture did not make the distinction between body and soul, they said that people would emerge from dust or that they would have life again in the kingdom of God. Daniel 12, 2 reads: "Many of those who sleep in the Region of the Dust will awaken, some to everlasting life but others to eternal horror and shame."

During that time, Greek culture influenced the Jews. The Greeks saw in each person something material, the body, and the spirit or soul which gives life to the body. For this reason, the Book of Wisdom in the Old Testament says that the Spirit or the soul is immortal and it meets God at death. (Wis 2 and 3). This connection became the teaching of the New Testament. (Mt 10, 28) 2 Cor, 1-8).

Unauthorodox teaching differs on this scriptural conception. They say: "The Bible clearly teaches that the dead are unconscious and lifeless in the grave. Note that Ecclesiastes 9: 5-10 says regarding the condition of the dead: "The living at least know they will die but the dead know nothing; neither do they await anything; the memory of

them has vanished..... Fulfil your projects while you are able, for among the dead where you are going there is no work, no planning, no knowledge, no wisdom." This means that the dead cannot do anything." The essence of this passage clearly shows that they are foolishly lagging behind New Testament teaching.

The teaching of the New Testament what our fate will be after we die is clear. The soul does not cease to exist. 2 Corinthians

5: 6-8 reads: "So we feel confident always. We know that while living in the body, we are exiled from the Lord, living by faith, without seeing; but we dare to think that we would rather be away from the body to go and live with the Lord." This text is an excerpts from Paul's teaching to the Corinthians that at death, the human soul will make its exit from the body and go at once to be present with the Lord. This is the new dispensation after Christ.

It takes us away from any view to the contrary.

No one can approach God unless he has been cleansed of all sin and impurity. Scripture teaches us that purification takes place before death by repentance and confession of sin or after death by fire; "but if you work becomes ashes, you will pay for it you will be saved, but it will be as if passing through fire." (1 Cor 3: 15)

Our destiny therefore is to be with Christ

after death and for our bodies to be resurrected when Christ comes to judge the living and the dead.

What seems obvious is that unauthorodox teaching, in its own planarity, does not conform to precise scriptural views and, in its totality is lop-sided and damaging to the Christian faith. It seeks to present Christ as a "liar" and take people away from the objective of genuine worship. Their teaching unavoidably stands against it them.

E.M. Aldons

Our Destiny

Church Service - 2015?

PASTOR. Praise the Lord.
CONGREGATION: Hallelujah!

PASTOR: Can we please turn our tablet PC, i-Pad, cell phone, kindle Bibles to 1 Cor.13:13. And please switch on your Bluetooth to download the sermon.

PASTOR: Let us pray, committing this week into God's hands. Open your Apps, BBM, Twitter and Facebook and chat with God.

PASTOR: Please have your credit and debit cards ready as we shall now take tithes and offerings. You can log on to the Church Wi-Fi using the password Lord909887.

Ushers circulate mobile card swipe machines among the worshipers. Those who prefer to make electronic funds transfers are directed to computers and laptops at the rear of the Church and those who prefer to use i-Pads are allowed to flip them open. Those

who prefer telephone banking are allowed to takeout their cell phones to transfer their contributions to the Church bank account. The holy atmosphere is truly electric as the cell phones, i-Pads, PCs and laptops beep and flicker!

Announcement by the Secretary:

This week's cell meetings shall be held on the various Facebook group pages where the usual group chatting takes place. Please don't miss out.

Thursday's Bible teachings will be held live on Skype at 1900hrs GMT. Please don't miss out.

You can follow your Pastor on Twitter this weekend, for counselling and prayers.

God bless you and have a wonderful week !

(Courtesy: Among Ourselves)



What it says in the Readings

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C 19th May - 26th May 2013

Sun: Pentecost Sunday
Ac. 2:1-11; 1 Cor. 12:3-7, 12-13 or Rm 8:8-17; Jn 20:19-23 or Jn. 14:15-16, 23-26

Mon: Memorial of St. Bernardine of Siena, Priest
Sir. 1:1-10; Mk. 9:14-29

Tue: Memorial of Ss Christopher Magallanes, Priest and Companions, Martyrs.
St. Eugene de Mazenod, Bishop
Sir. 2:1-13; Mk. 9:30-37

Wed: Memorial of St. Rita of Cascia, Religious
Sir. 4:12-22; Mk. 9:38-40

Thu: Is. 6:1-4, 8; Heb. 2:10-18; Jn. 17:1-2, 14-26

Fri: Sir. 6:5-17; Mk. 10:1-12

Sat: Memorials of St. Bede the Venerable Priest & Doctor, St. Gregory VIII Pope, St. Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi Virgin
Sir. 17:1-13; Mk. 10:13-16

Sun: Trinity Sunday
Prov. 8:22-31; Rom. 5:1-5; Jn. 16:12-15

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Response: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

For all Christians: That the Holy Spirit may gather all the followers of Jesus into the unity of the Body of Christ and help them to be his witnesses in the world. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

For all rulers and leaders: That the Holy Spirit may guide and enlighten so that the earth may see the coming of justice and peace. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

That the Holy Spirit may dry the fears of all those who mourn and may turn their sorrow into joy. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

That the Holy Spirit may teach us wisdom and simplicity of heart, and help us to care for one another. Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us.

FEAST OF PENTECOST

First Reading: Acts. 2: 1-11.

The First Reading describes the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and they began to speak in different tongues. People from different countries who gathered found the Apostles speaking in their own language.

Second Reading: 1Cor. 12: 2-7, 12-13.

There is only one spirit that is Holy. There are a variety of gifts that are given by the Spirit but there is only one spirit; like in the body there are many parts; by one spirit we are all baptized into one body.

Gospel: Jn. 20: 19-23.

Jesus' first appearance after the Resurrection is given. Jesus confers the Holy Spirit on the Apostles so that they may forgive the sins of the people.

Reflection.

Today is Pentecost Sunday and we celebrate the feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. With the descent of the Holy Spirit; the Apostles began to speak in tongues. It is a clear sign of the universality of Christ's doctrine. The people began to understand everything that was spoken in their own language. It is the sign of the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit.

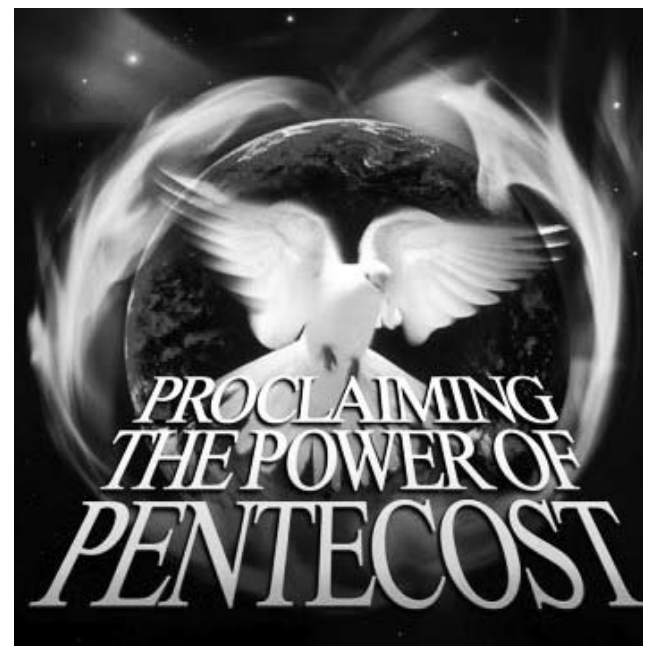
We see the Apostles hiding in the Upper Room, through fear of the high priest and the soldiers. Suddenly the Apostles are seen preaching openly and fearlessly and with much courage. The question arises as to what happened in between. They had received the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus who promised to send an advocate once He descended into heaven; Keeps to His promise, As a result we have the Holy Spirit with us to guide us through our lives. The Holy Spirit is there to guide, direct, govern and to protect us in our day to day lives, and this enables us to live a faithful life in the Lord. Once people progress they tend to look down on those who are of the lower ranks. It is very rarely that a person who progresses in rank looks on those that are below. But Christ is the most exemplary person who even from such heights looks on the people below.

Christ was raised up on the Cross of oppression, suffering and death. But He never looked down on those who were below. He looked at them and simply said. "Father forgive them for they do not know what they do." Also when He went up to heaven He never looked down on people. Instead He saw to it that the Holy Spirit is sent as an advocate to help them in their daily struggles.

It is this life example and this love that the Lord wants us to preach to the world. This is to be done both by word and deed and the spirit is sent as an advocate to help them in their daily struggles.

It is this life example and this love that the Lord wants us to preach to the world. This is to be done both by word and deed and the spirit is given to us in order to help and guide us in the task.



Therefore on this day of the feast of the Pentecost let us bring our lives anew and be humble enough to serve the Lord in all humility and love and our neighbour in all sincerity.

Aid Story 1.

Jack had received a small electric train for Christmas. Several of his friends gathered in his basement to set up the track and cars and watch them move. At last everything was ready. The cars were coupled together and Jack pushed the electric button, but nothing happened. Something was wrong. The boys checked every section of the track. They took each car and inspected it closely. Again Jack pushed the button and again no action, Jack ran to call his father who discovered that the main plug had not been screwed far enough into the light socket. There was no current.

The actual grace is the current of God's help given to us through the Holy Spirit.

Aid Story 2.

A lady who was a great admirer of a so called spirit led preacher took Bishop Junius Ralph Magee with her to hear him, and asked him afterwards what he thought of the sermon.

"It was a very long and an emotional one," said the Bishop. "Yes," said the lady, "but there was a Saint in the pulpit." "And a Martyr in the pew," rejoined the Bishop.

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

Sunday Rhythm - Pentecost Sunday

Jesus: If you love me you will keep my commandments.

Jesus: The Father will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.

Jesus: The Holy Spirit... will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.

Richest Blessing: If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him...

Richest Result: And we shall come to him and make our home with him.

TO THINK: Do you want God to come to you and to make a home with you...? If you really want it to happen, then let us start believing in His words and loving Him daily and steadfastly.

TO PRAY: Dear Holy Spirit, strengthen me and guide me in order to offer my life fully to your care and to build a home of love in me. Amen.

TO ACT: Let us show concern in making the lives of others a dwelling place for God while welcoming God into our life as the Living God.

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

Synchronized Holy Hour

The Holy Father Benedict XVI, speaking of the reasons that led him to institute the *Year of Faith*, noted, among other considerations, that this time would provide the opportunity "to intensify the celebration of the faith in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist, which is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed and also the source from which all its power flows" (*Porta Fidei* n.9).

Due to this link between faith and the Eucharist, the calendar of the major events of the Year of Faith, approved by Pope Benedict XVI, includes **Sunday, June 2, 2012. On that day, at 5:00 p.m. Rome time**, the Holy Father will preside at an hour of Eucharistic Adoration in St. Peter's Basilica in

the Vatican, in communion with all Bishops and with their local diocesan communities around the world. The universal scope of this moment is to be a gesture of spiritual sharing. For this reason, it is asked that all Bishops join with the **Holy Father by celebrating in their own cathedrals an hour of Eucharistic Adoration, synchronized with the Vatican Basilica.** It is asked that this initiative be extended to as many parishes and ecclesial realities as deemed appropriate by the Ordinary. This event will provide many of the faithful with an opportunity to join with their local Bishops and with the successor of Peter in the prayer of adoration to Jesus alive in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

*Synchronizing with the above invitation, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith wants all the parishes of the Archdiocese to join the Holy Father on the **2nd of June at 8:30 p.m. (Sri Lankan time for the ceremony in Rome)**, by celebrating an hour of Eucharistic Adoration. Those who organize Eucharistic processions on the same day may be exempted from it or may shorten or adjust these in a way that the Holy Hour may be celebrated as the conclusion of the Eucharistic procession.*

*Rev. Fr. Indrajith Perera
Archdiocesan Coordinator
for Liturgy*

'Year of Faith' and Social Legacy of World Youth Day Rio - July 23-28, 2013



The Church is preparing itself to welcome thousands of young people coming from the whole world to celebrate World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro in July 2013. An intense program has been created to keep alive the concern for our youth. A concern that has been an issue for some time already. Even at the close of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI affirmed the trust and love that the Church had always felt for youth. Now we must, among so many legacies that WYD entrusts to the youth in each global encounter, also leave a legacy that is called Social Charity.

Actually, since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI, continuing the reflections of the Magisterium of the Church, emphasizes the profound relation between the reality of faith and human action. In the recent document '*Porta Fidei*,' this relationship is once again brought to our attention. There is a single interwoven path: Living the Faith and the Practice of Charity. This is a long path that runs through the whole history of Salvation and manifests itself in an extraordinary form in the life and message of Jesus

Christ. The practice of charity is, so to speak, a bridge that indelibly joins our world, the world where the voices of death want to eliminate life, with eternity in God. And, because of this, we get attacked in every area, from violence and war to carelessness with the environment, passing through into the greed of the eco-



open those same hearts and minds to live out charity. Presented with the lives of so many youth who are becoming familiar with the experience of suffering, loneliness and abandonment, we want to be the consoling voice of Christ for them. We need to be the Cyrenean who helps to bear the weight of everyday crosses. In this way, the social legacy of

(WYD - 30 - 05 - 2012)

nomic market, and in all forms of destruction that wars against human life since its origin. The Holy Father tells us that we cannot become indolent in faith because it is life's companion that allows us to realize the wonderful things that God wants to do for all of us. Faith helps us to identify the signs of the times in the today of History and impels us to recognize the living sign of the presence of the Risen One in the world.

Today the world has a particular need for the vigorous witness of those who, illuminated in heart and mind by the Word of God, are able to

WYD points in the direction of one of the plagues that afflicts our youth: The world of drugs. We want to be the Good Samaritan that gets closer and makes himself available to help and make sense out of life. Prevent, lift up, help to recover for a better life: That is our mission. Society needs the witness from people that, illuminated by the Word of the Lord, become living signs of the Resurrected One in the world.

Let's get to work!!!

Rev. Fr. Manuel Manangão
Episcopal Vicariate
for Social Charity
(courtesy / The Internet)

A Spiritual Reflection Sycamore leads to House



Jesus - J ---- 10th letter in the alphabet...

Zacchaeus - Z ---- 26th letter in the alphabet...

Between J - Z, there are 16 letters

The 16 letter gap was filled by the Sycamore tree

Sycamore has 8 letters

Zacchaeus climbed up to see Jesus using the 8 letters (Sycamore)

Jesus also used the 8 letters (Sycamore) to bring Zacchaeus down

So within Jesus (10th) and Zacchaeus (26th)

The gap was covered by the Sycamore twice (8 x 2 = 16)

Jesus was generous

Zacchaeus was selfish

Yet Jesus foresaw the generous qualities in Zacchaeus

What Zacchaeus was not aware of himself

Jesus had US and Zacchaeus had US too

The realization of generosity [US] was felt in his house

So let US become a Sycamore tree from which many can see Jesus

And Jesus can use US like the Sycamore to make many like Jesus

Let US also become a House where many

will realize that they are generous like Jesus

Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI

Two Basketball titles for Holy Family Convent



Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya emerged All-Island champions at the recent Under 17 All-Island Basketball tournament, with a 52-39 win against Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena.

Minelle Fernando was adjudged the Best Defensive Player and Sanuri de Silva was selected as the Most Valuable Player.

The Under 15 title was also secured by the Convent.

Seated left to right: Sanuri de Silva, Mr. Shane Daniel (Junior Coach) Ms. Randima Jayasinghe (Teacher in charge) Rev. Sr. Charitha (Sr. in Charge of Games) Mr. Roshan Randima (Senior Coach) Minelle Fernando. Standing left to right: Shashini Moraes, Lukshala Fernando, Sanara Premaratne, Dilumi Goonawardena, Manthila Gallassage, Anne Fernando, Serena Wanakula, Janali Manamperi, Gavinya Cooray, Shamalka Fernando

Kishani Fernando



De La Salle College - Day of Glory

De La Salle College, Mutwal emerged champions of the All Island Under-17 'B' Division Basketball Championship when they beat St. Anne's College, Kurunegala in the grand final worked off at Mutwal recently.

The exchanges were even in the first quarter as St. Anne's took a slender three point advantage, but in the second quarter De La Salle tightened their defence and led 38-23, and the four months of intense training by De La Salle was reflected in their resounding thumping win with a final score of 78-41.

Anushka Dilan, was unstoppable throughout the tournament and his netting of 33 points during the final gave him the award of Most Valuable Player of the Tournament. Captain Nimseh Fernando contributed with 22 points and was named the Best Offensive Player.

Shanuka Mevan and Denver Peiris of St. Anne's scored 18 and 13 points respectively and Mevan was named the Best Defensive Player.

On their way to the final of the championship, De La Salle beat Nalanda College, Carey College and Christ King College in the first round prior to trouncing Ananda College in the quarter-finals and Royal Institute in the thrilling semi-finals.

Rev. Bro. A.E. Tarcisius (FSC), the Director of St. Anne's College was the Chief Guest during the final. Bro. Tarcisius was the Director at De La Salle College for 17 long years before being transferred to Kurunegala early this year and his dedication to revive basketball at De La Salle was one reason for the school's recent success in the game.

Rex Clementine

MAN WITH A MISSION

THE STORY OF PAUL

(.... from last week)

courtesy : C. B. S. Publications

SAUL WENT BACK TO ANTIOCH WITH BARNABAS.

SAUL, THESE ARE SIMEON, LUCIUS, AND MANAEN -- OUR FELLOW WORKERS.

BARNABAS AND SAUL STAYED IN ANTIOCH AND TAUGHT THE BELIEVERS. THE CHURCH CONTINUED TO GROW THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD'S SPIRIT. IT WAS AT ANTIOCH THAT THE BELIEVERS WERE FIRST CALLED CHRISTIANS.

SAUL SHARED THE GOOD NEWS WITH EVERYONE.

WE ARE ALL PUT RIGHT WITH GOD THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, AND NOT BY OBEYING THE JEWISH LAWS.

MANY GENTILES BELIEVED WHAT PAUL AND BARNABAS WERE SAYING, AND THE WORD OF THE LORD SPREAD EVERYWHERE IN THAT REGION. BUT THE JEWS STIRRED UP THE LEADERS IN ANTIOCH, AND PAUL AND BARNABAS WERE FORCED TO LEAVE.

GET OUT AND STAY OUT!!

OKAY, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT, YOU'VE HAD YOUR CHANCE!

THEY WENT ON TO THE TOWN OF ICONIUM, WHERE THE REACTION WAS THE SAME. MANY GENTILES BELIEVED THE GOOD NEWS, BUT THE JEWS WHO REJECTED THEIR MESSAGE STIRRED UP THE PEOPLE. PAUL AND BARNABAS HAD TO ESCAPE.

ONE DAY, AS THE LEADERS WERE FASTING AND PRAYING, GOD'S SPIRIT SPOKE TO THEM.

YOU MUST SEND OUT BARNABAS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK I HAVE CALLED THEM TO DO.

AFTER MORE FASTING AND PRAYING...

THESE MEN, LORD, ARE YOUR SERVANTS. GO WITH THEM AND PROTECT THEM. AMEN.

THEY WENT ON TO LYSTRA AND PREACHED THERE. AND THEY ALSO HEALED PEOPLE.

STAND UP STRAIGHT ON YOUR FEET!

PRaise GOD? THESE MEN MUST BE GODS!

THE GODS HAVE COME DOWN TO US!

THE BIG MAN MUST BE ZEUS!

AND THE OTHER ONE MUST BE HERMES.

THE PEOPLE SPOKE IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE, ZEUS WAS KING OF THE GODS, AND HERMES WAS HIS MESSENGER.

SOON AFTERWARDS...

MAY GOD GO WITH YOU, BROTHERS?

WE WILL PRAY FOR YOUR SAFE RETURN.

THE LORD WILL LEAD US.

AND YOUR NEPHEW, MARK, SHOULD BE A BIG HELP.

WHEN PAUL AND BARNABAS FOUND OUT WHAT THE PEOPLE WERE SAYING AND DOING...

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WE ARE NOT GODS!!

WE ARE HERE TO TELL YOU THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE LIVING GOD WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.

LATER, SOME ANGRY JEWS FROM THE TOWNS WHERE PAUL AND BARNABAS HAD BEEN, FOLLOWED THEM TO LYSTRA.

WE CAN EASILY TURN THE PEOPLE AGAINST PAUL AND BARNABAS.

THIS TIME THEY'LL STONE THEM FOR SURE.

SOME STILL WANTED TO OFFER A SACRIFICE TO THEM, BUT OTHERS LISTENED TO THE GOOD NEWS AND BELIEVED.

SO PAUL, BARNABAS, AND JOHN MARK, HIS NEPHEW, SAILED TO THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS. THEY WENT ALL ACROSS THAT ISLAND PREACHING THE WORD OF GOD TO THE JEWS IN THE SYNAGOGUES. FROM THERE THEY SAILED ON TO THE PROVINCE OF PAMPHYLIA. FROM THAT TIME ON, SAUL WAS KNOWN AS PAUL.

I THINK WHAT WE DID IN CYPRUS IS THE BEST WAY TO CONTINUE OUR MISSION.

I WISH I WERE HOME.

I AGREE, BUT MARK WANTS TO GO BACK HOME.

WHEN THEY REACHED THE TOWN OF PERGA, JOHN MARK LEFT THEM AND RETURNED HOME TO JERUSALEM.

THE JEWS EVENTUALLY WON THE PEOPLE OVER TO THEIR SIDE.

KILL HIM? HE'S A FAKE!

LORD GOD, SAVE HIM!!

THEY PRAGGED PAUL'S BODY OUT OF THE TOWN, THINKING HE WAS DEAD. BUT BARNABAS AND THE BELIEVERS GATHERED AROUND PAUL AND PRAYED FOR HIM. AND PAUL GOT UP AND WENT BACK INTO TOWN.

THE NEXT DAY...

I STILL THINK WE SHOULD HEAD BACK HOME.

NO! I WANT TO VISIT THE TOWN OF DERBE FIRST. THEN WE'LL GO BACK THE WAY WE CAME, TO MAKE SURE THE BELIEVERS ARE ALRIGHT.

PAUL AND BARNABAS THEN TRAVELED INLAND TO ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA. IN THE SYNAGOGUE...

MY FELLOW JEWS AND ALL OTHERS WHO ARE HERE TO WORSHIP GOD, I AM SAUL OF TARSUS, ALSO KNOWN AS PAUL.

WE ARE HERE TO BRING YOU GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH: WHAT GOD PROMISED TO OUR ANCESTORS HE HAS NOW DONE FOR US.

YOU MEN ARE INVITED TO SPEAK, IF YOU HAVE ANY WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

CAN YOU TWO COME BACK AGAIN NEXT WEEK?

WE WANT TO HEAR MORE ABOUT THESE THINGS!

BUT THE FOLLOWING SABBATH DAY...

SAY NO MORE!! YOU ARE CONFUSING OUR PEOPLE WITH THIS NONSENSE!

IT WAS NECESSARY FOR THE WORD OF GOD TO BE SPOKEN FIRST TO YOU. BUT SINCE YOU REJECT IT, WE WILL LEAVE YOU AND GO TO THE GENTILES!

THEY PERSUADED MANY PEOPLE IN DERBE TO BECOME CHRISTIANS, AND THEN THEY HEADED HOME TO ANTIOCH IN SYRIA. ON THEIR WAY, THEY VISITED THE TOWNS WHERE THEY HAD BEEN AND ENCOURAGED THE BELIEVERS TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO JESUS.

(contd next week....)

Stories from the Bible

Moses

wives were God-fearing. God was good to them and gave them families of their own. And the Israelites continued to increase and become strong. Finally the king issued a command to all his people; "Take every newborn Hebrew boy and throw him into

the Nile, but let all the girls live."

(Exodus 1:9-22)

The Birth of Moses

During this time a man from the tribe of Levi married a woman of his own tribe, and she bore him a son. When she saw what a fine baby he was, she hid him for three months. But when she could not hide him any longer, she took a basket made of reeds and covered it with tar to make it watertight. She put the baby in it and then placed it among the reeds at the edge of the river. The baby's sister stood some distance away to see what would happen to him. The king's daughter came down to the river to bathe, while her servants walked along the banks. Suddenly she noticed the basket in the reeds and sent a slave woman to get it. The princess opened it and saw a baby boy. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said. Then his sister came up to her and asked her, "Shall I go and call a Hebrew woman to feed the baby for you?" "Please do," she answered so the girl went and brought the baby's own mother. The princess told the woman, "Take this baby and feed him for me, and I will pay you." So she took the baby and fed him. Later, when the child was old enough, she took him to the king's daughter, who adopted him as her own son. She said to herself, "I pulled him out of the water, and so I name him Moses.

(Exodus 2:1-10)

courtesy : C. B. S. Publications



The second in a series of popular Bible stories with Scriptures taken from today's version of the Bible.

(Exodus 1:9 - 2:10)

The story of Moses tells us what happened when the king of Egypt became very angry with the people of Israel and ordered to kill all the boys of the people of Israel as soon as they were born.

We are going to see how God gave intelligence to a mother to save the life of her baby boy.



The king of Egypt ordered his people to throw all the baby boys of the people of Israel into the river Nile as soon as they were born.

One day, a baby was born to an Israeli woman and she saw that he was very fine. So she hid him for three months.

The mother could not hide the baby any longer. So she got a rush basket, made it watertight, laid him in it and left it by the bank of the river Nile. The baby's sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of the king of Egypt was bathing in the river and saw the basket. When she opened it, the princess saw in it a baby who was crying. She saw that he was an Israeli boy and this touched her heart.

The baby's sister came up to speak to the princess. She asked the princess whether she should fetch an Israeli woman to nurse the baby and look after him.

Then she went and fetched the baby's own mother.

Thereupon the mother took the baby home and brought him up.

When the baby had grown, the mother took him to the princess and handed him over to her.

The princess adopted the boy as her own son and gave him the name of 'Moses'. It meant: 'rescued from water.'

The Decree of the King of Egypt

He said to his people, "These Israelites are so numerous and strong that they are a threat to us. In case of war they might join our enemies in order to fight against us, and might escape from the country. We must find some way to keep them from becoming even more numerous." So the Egyptians put slavedrivers over them to crush their spirits with hard labour.

The Israelites built the cities of Pithom and Rameses to serve as supply centres for the king. But the more the Egyptians oppressed the Israelites, the more they increased in number and the further they spread through the land. The Egyptians came to fear the Israelites and made their lives miserable by forcing them into cruel slavery. They made them work on their building projects and on their land, and they had no pity on them. Then the King of Egypt spoke to Shiphrah and Puath, the two midwives who helped the Hebrew women. "When you help the Hebrew women give birth," he said to them, "kill the baby if it is a boy; but if it is a girl, let it live." But the midwives were God-fearing and so did not obey the king; instead they let the boys live. So the king sent for the midwives and asked them. "Why are you doing this? Why are you letting the boys live?" They answered, "The Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they give birth easily, and their babies are born before either of us gets there." Because the mid-



QUIZ

On Catholic Themes

(..... from last week)

QUESTIONS

1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

Nature of the Church

34. What is the Church?
35. Who is the source of the Church's authority?
36. What are the four marks of the Church?
37. With reference to the Church, what does the word "Catholic" mean?
38. Why do we hold that the Catholic Church is universal?
39. Why is the Church apostolic?
40. Who are the successors of the apostles?
41. What are the three pillars on which the Catholic Faith is founded?
42. What is Sacred Tradition?
43. What do we mean by the Magisterium of the Church?
44. What is the three-tier hierarchical structure of the Roman Catholic Church?
45. Who are the laity of the Church?
46. What does the Communion of Saints mean?
47. How do the members of the Communion of Saints help one another?
48. Can the souls in purgatory help the living? How?
49. Why is the Catholic Church called the Mystical Body of Christ?

(contd next week.....)

courtesy : Clare Ukken fsp

49. Because its members are united by supernatural bonds with one another and with Christ, their Head, thus resembling the members and head of the living human body
48. Yes, by interceding for the living
47. By prayer and intercession, and by the merits of their good works
46. The Communion of Saints means the union which exists between the members of the Church on earth with one another, and with the blessed in heaven and with the suffering souls in purgatory. The Church is united in the Eucharist by which we form one Body in Christ
45. All the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church
44. The pope is the head of the Church. After him there are bishops over dioceses and priests over parishes.
43. The Magisterium of the Church means the teaching authority of the Church, found in the pope and the bishops of the Church in communion with him. It teaches the faithful the truth to believe, the charity to practise and the beatitude to hope for.
42. Sacred Tradition refers to the oral teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles that have been handed down through the centuries from one generation to the next.
41. Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church
40. The bishops
39. Because the Church holds and maintains the doctrines and traditions of the apostles and because through the unbroken succession from those same apostles the bishops continue to teach, sanctify and guide the Church
38. Because the Church was established by Jesus for all ages, for all peoples and is the means of salvation for all
37. "Catholic" means "Universal"
36. One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic
35. Jesus Christ
34. The Church is the People of God, the Community of all the Baptized in which the Christian fulfils his/her vocation.

Nature of the Church

1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

ANSWERS

A CALL FROM JESUS



Our Saviour is calling us
So we must follow Him today,
When His tender voice is pleading
How can we delay.

When peace and love flow like
A winding river on our way,
And sorrows like sea billows roll
Jesus has taught us to pray.

It is well, with our soul.

Jesus like a shepherd leads us
As much, we need His tender care,
His pleasant pastures feed us
For our use His folds prepare.

Anton Selemberam

As God Enters the Soul

Precious, are Your Hands, that leads us upto Your Throne
I am weak and sinful, unable to reach on my own
Bless and help me hard, as I gasp for your mercy alone
My faith, and trust, will show me how to be prone

Every moment of my life, You have guided and provided
Your Holy Spirit within me, is a living testimony rewarded
Make me Behold all Thy favours, so generously You have granted
I am so unworthy I plead, to admit your graces and be conceded

Make me Your servant, of all Your actions given to perform
In Your Mighty Presence, all seem simple making me belong
Meritorious are the results, I offer Your flames of love to prolong
O God my sin betrayed Thee, to sacrifice Your life on a cross so forlorn

Oh God your solitary power, demolishes all records of history
Truth is doubtful when God is not present, to cause a perpetual mystery.
Passing through fire, God shows permanent desirability
Who can challenge God's infallible-Divine Supremacy

Francis



'Bring Joy to the Children' -SALANI



Living up to the motto of 'Bring Joy to Children', Avurudu Celebrations were held recently at the Thummodhara home of St. Anne's Lama Niwasa in the Chilaw Diocese. Rev. Fr. Frank Tissera, Parish Priest of Thalwila and Administrator of SALANI made all the necessary arrangements to keep the children smiling, while managing the childrens homes at Lunuvila and Demanhandiya too.

Picture shows the bun eating competition.

Kumara