



*Marian
Year*

"Such is the greatness of Mary such the favour she has with God, that he who when in need of help would not run to her, would wish to fly without the aid of wings"
- Pope Leo XIII

Messenger

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World Food Day: Words cannot be eaten



Jesus gave us His living bread as the Holy Eucharist, promising that those who eat this Bread will live forever. But He was also concerned about our daily bread or rice as it may be for us. That is why Jesus included in the greatest prayer He taught, "Give us this day our daily Bread." Jesus was also concerned about the thousands of people who came to remote areas to hear His teachings. He therefore took the five loaves that were available and multiplied them to feed thousands of people.

Thursday, October 16 was World Food Day - a time for deep reflection in Sri Lanka as to whether we have allowed transnational companies (TNC) to change the food and nutrition diets that have sustained us for thousands of years. As a result most of us including our children have been misled by unethical marketing practices of the TNCs and we have become a dumping ground for substandard imported foods and processed rubbish.

On such a day we need to reflect on whether

and why we have allowed transnational food giants, milk food companies and agrochemical companies to control our food and nutrition. Independent food analysts say most of the imported food items we eat contain preservatives, flavour enhancing substances, artificial sweeteners and colouring substances most of which are toxic, that may be the main reason why most of us are falling sick more often and private hospitals have become big business with some specialists becoming multi millionaires. In the case of milk foods we are importing them mainly from New Zealand at a staggering cost of about Rs 140 million a day.

Scientific investigations have revealed that some, if not most of these milk foods are imitation milk. The cows there, are given growth hormones and genetically modified foods to produce milk fast and in bigger quantities. Reports say the New Zealand cows produce about 50 litres a day largely because of unnatural methods while Sri Lanka's cows produce only about 10 litres a day.

Contd on Pg. 14 >>>

Synod Interim Report: The Church must renew commitment to family

(CNA / EWTN News).- The approach to irregular unions must start from positive aspects and stable couples should be accompanied in a development toward the Sacrament of Marriage, the Synod of Bishops said in a midterm report issued last Monday.

"We have gathered together the results of our reflections and our dialogues in the following three parts," reads the October 13 "relatio post disceptationem," the interim document which the Syn-



od Fathers will consider in small groups during the remainder of the meeting.

The three parts are listening to the complex situation of the family today; "looking - our gaze

fixed on Christ, to re-evaluate with renewed freshness and enthusiasm what the revelation transmitted in the faith of the Church tells us about the beauty and dignity of the family" and; discussion "in the light of the Lord Jesus to discern the ways in which the Church and society can renew their commitment to the family."

The *relatio* is a summary of the state of discussion at the Synod thus far and at the same time is the basis for further discussion.

Remembering Rev. Fr. Peter Pillai



A Thanksgiving Mass for services rendered to the nation by the late, Very Rev. Fr. Peter A. Pillai, OMI will be celebrated at Aquinas University College, Chapel at 5.00 p.m on Saturday October 25.

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Holy Father's Visit to Sri Lanka

'Abide in Love'

Facebook account:

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Spiritual preparation
for the forthcoming
visit of our
Holy Father,
Pope Francis to
Sri Lanka.

Special intentions for the Sunday Liturgy

SEE Pg.15 >>>

26th Death Anniversary Thomas Cardinal Cooray OMI

A Thanksgiving Holy Mass to commemorate the 26th death anniversary of the Servant of God, His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Cooray OMI, will be held at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Lanka Tewatte, at 9.00am on October 29, 2014. The Holy Mass will be presided by Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith.



The Service is organised by the Administrator of the Tewatte Shrine, Rev. Fr. Priya Jayamanne and His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo, who is also a member of the Thomas Cardinal Cooray Memorial Committee.

The faithful from the Kagama and Alagollawa parishes in the Diocese of Anuradhapura and in the Negombo area who greatly benefited from the services of Cardinal Cooray are also expected to participate in the memorial service.

At the end of the Holy Mass there will be a special service at the crypt of the Basilica where the body of the Servant of God was laid to rest. The memorial committee requests all the faithful participating to bring white flowers to be placed on the tomb.

C.R. Dickson Anthony

Youth reunion of Colombo Junior Curia Legion of Mary

The Colombo Junior Curia, Legion of Mary, Youth Reunion will take place on October 22, from 9.00 am - 3.30 pm at St. Joseph's College Chapel, Colombo 10.

There will be prayer, reflection, fun and games. (Lunch and Tea - Rs 150/=). Please confirm your attendance before October 20.

For details contact: 0715363703, 0775788241

Gold Mass and AGM 2014

The Annual Gold Mass of the Guild of Saint Luke Saints Cosmas and Damian, will be celebrated on Sunday, October 26, at St. Peter's Chapel, National Hospital, Colombo at 8.30 a.m.

The Chief Celebrant will be His Excellency Pierre Nguyen Van Tot, Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka. The traditional breakfast for the members and their families will be served and the AGM of the Guild will follow. All members and their families are invited.

The Dr. M.P.M. Cooray Memorial Oration, will be delivered by Dr. Gamini Goonethilake, Consultant Surgeon on the topic: "Christianity the Guiding Spirit - Experiences of a Surgeon," on October 26 at 7.00 pm at Sri Lanka Medical Association (SLMA) Auditorium, No. 6 Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7.

Dr. Carmel Fernandopulle
Secretary



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Visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka and the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz

TOPICAL SHORT MOVIE COMPETITION

To commemorate the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Sri Lanka and the Canonization of Blessed Joseph Vaz, SIGNIS Sri Lanka is organising a 'Short Movie Competition' based on the theme, 'ABIDE IN LOVE'.

Your audio visual productions limited to a maximum of 3 minutes must be submitted on a DVD. Entries must be submitted before October 30, 2014 by mailing them or delivering personally to the address below.

Conditions for the competition:

- One person can submit only one entry
- Productions may be submitted in Sinhala, Tamil or English
- Once submitted, the productions become the property of the Catholic Church of Sri Lanka

All entries will be judged by a panel of judges comprising specialists in the field of Short Movie Productions who will select the productions that best depict the theme 'ABIDE IN LOVE'.

The best productions will be awarded prizes as follows: 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed entries will be awarded prizes of Rs.100,000/-, Rs.50,000/-, and Rs.25,000/- respectively. The 4th to 8th placed entries will be awarded consolation prizes of Rs.5,000 each. In addition 'Certificates of Excellence' will be awarded to the next 7 best entries.

While the winning entries will be broadcast over the TV they will also be shown at the Short Film Festival that will be held to cover this event.

Address: Pope's Visit 2015
Information and Media Secretariat,
45, Kynsey Road,
Colombo 08.
Sri Lanka.

E-mail: lankacathcom@gmail.com
Web: www.popefrancissrilanka.com
Very Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini Fernando
Director



Beloved Brethren,

Anyone walking into the large square in front of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome cannot but notice the two large statues found at the side of the main flight of steps leading to the Basilica. One statue has a set of keys on the right hand and a scroll on the left and the other a sword and a scroll. These are the statues of St. Peter, the first disciple of Jesus and of St. Paul whom the Lord chose as His missionary taking the message of the Gospel to the far off nations. Both are Martyrs whose bodies are buried in Rome. St. Peter was crucified on Vatican Hill while St. Paul was beheaded on via Ostiense. These two apostles symbolise the Church of the apostles, martyrs and saints whose faith and life witness nourished and strengthened its mission. The faith of the Church thus is what is accumulated over the centuries through the heroic witness of the faith of these and other disciples of the Lord, many of whom paid the ultimate price in witnessing to Him. They are so numerous that we cannot even count them. And so what we believe in is essentially not just a set of dogmas invented or created by a group of Theologians with impersonal concepts but a relationship of love that had been generated between the Lord and His disciples down the centuries yielding to a new language of love. The Credo is not just a set of empty formulae to be memorized but express a living and loving relationship between men and women of all ages and the Lord Himself. They are the language of that love and trust.

These men and women make up the Church, the chosen assembly of God's people and they have given it the expression of its identity, its vision and mission in that common faith which is also the very reason for its existence. The Church exists to be God's chosen vehicle of salvation for humanity and in and through its members, its saints and witnesses and the faith they profess serves humanity.

And so it is not just a structure marked by efficiency nor is it just a philosophy of good living or a system of principles for uprightness. It is these and much more. It is the extended presence of Christ in history as the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, of the Second Vatican Council stated: **"As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ" (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12); [LG 7].**

Besides, the Church is not made up of angels but rather of the saints and sinners, dead and the living and their faith becomes the living faith of the community. It may have certain shortcomings but it is the language of that dialogue between Christ and His disciples. In the Credo we call this common bonding of faith and love, the "Communion of Saints." It is the living link that we have with those in Heaven, those in purgatory and those living on earth, our brothers and sisters. It is a most joyful and even meta cosmic belonging, a belonging of faith and communion with so many all over the world and beyond too. It is animated and sustained by Christ, the Head of the Church, His Body. It is a limitless experience of infinite joy. What a great privilege, then, that we carry being part of the Church of the apostles, the martyrs, the saints, those who have gone before us and those who will follow us, a Church that supersedes time and space – the Church founded by Christ Himself and on the foundation of those who followed Him closely, the apostles and martyrs? How could we leave all of that behind just because someone appears on the horizon and tells us "come I have a new formula to help you." Jesus too warned us not to be lost by such "false teachers": "Take heed that you are not deceived; for many shall come in my name saying, 'I am Christ; the time has come'; do not go after them" [L. 21:8]. Let those who have ears, listen!

May God bless you!

Your Archbishop

* **Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith**

"Singing in God's Ear"

Calling all Choristers to be trained in Choral Singing at MUSICAM SACRAM

This call goes out to all choristers who are members of Parish or School Choirs of the Archdiocese of Colombo (and beyond), to participate and gain from a full-day training programme scheduled for Poya day - November 6, 2014, at St. Joseph's College, Auditorium, from 8.00 am to 5.30 pm.

The event is organised by the Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission and sponsored by the Joseph Vaz Trust. In addition, St. Joseph's College, as the head of Sri Lanka Pueri Cantores, will manage the event. Veteran Choral Director Francis D'Almeida, together with several well experienced choral experts will conduct the training.

The key aspect of this full day session is to teach and promote Latin sacred songs including the incomparably beautiful Gregorian Chants and exquisitely charming Latin Polyphonic Hymns and An-

them. The objective is to revive Latin liturgical choral music which has tragically gone into disuse among us during the past four decades. This is also in response to a great desire for the discovery of the lost treasure of the Latin Rite Church.

The training session, which will commence with a Marian procession and end with the solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, will give over 2000 participants expected to attend, a unique and memorable day-long choral experience. There will be much learning and sharing.

The training will cover the modern vocal techniques needed to become excellent singers, learning to sing in four-part harmony, expression, modulation and choral balance. Also included is the training in Bel Canto style of singing. The leadership qualities required to become excellent choral directors will

also be explained and reinforced.

All who wish to participate in this rare event should contact the choir leaders/ teachers/ priests of parishes or schools. Those who belong to open choirs need to submit their group entries directly to the organizers. Individual choristers too could submit their application direct - before October 25, 2014.

All participants will be awarded certificates. The much needed training manuals could also be purchased at the venue at discounted prices.

"Musicam Sacram" as the event is titled, will give all participants a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Contact details:

Rev. Fr. Indrajith Perera,
Archdiocesan Liturgy Commission Office,
Archbishop's House, Colombo 8

Silver and Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession



Rev. Fr. Eric Madurawala, Provincial Superior TOR and Rev. Bro. Anuradha Vincent, Director, Children Development Centre, Maggona celebrated their 25th Anniversary and Rev. Fr. Bernard Kurera TOR and Rev. Fr. Jerom Fernando TOR celebrated their 50th Anniversary of their Religious Profession recently.

The celebrant on this occasion was Rev. Fr. Eric Madurawala, Provincial Superior TOR. A Jubilee Mass was celebrated at the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi Church, Maggona.

D. Anselm Fernando

Right to Food for All

The Catholic National Commission for Justice, Peace and Human Development in a statement issued for World Food Day, which fell on October 16, has said that while World Food Day is an occasion to reflect on the right to food, which is an important right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Even though in this world there is plenty of food to go around, many poor people have no access to it due to their abject poverty. Therefore, our challenge is to find ways of making basic food items available at affordable prices.

The statement says, the time is right to begin an educational campaign among children, youth and adults to make them aware that the right to food is a right to be enjoyed by all.

Donation of Plastic Chairs

A stock of plastic chairs was donated to the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Balagala by courtesy of former Minister of Western Provincial Council, Lawrence Madiwala recently. The chairs were handed over by Mr. Madiwala to the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Thusith Pradeep.

Secretary of the Parish Council Benjamin Alagama and Treasurer Meril Wickramasinghe were also present.

Nimal Perera



Church in the Modern World

EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2016

Theme: "Christ in you, our hope of glory"

Pope Francis has approved the date and theme of the 51st International Eucharistic Congress which will take place in Cebu, Philippines in 2016. The Pontifical Commission for the International Eucharistic Congresses stated that they were informed by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican Secretary of State, on the Holy Father's approval.

The international event will be held on January 25th-31st under the theme "Christ in you, our hope of glory" which is taken from the Letter of St. Paul to the Colossians. The choice

of the Philippines as the next venue for the Congress was announced by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI during a video message at the conclusion of the previous Eucharistic Congress held in Dublin in June 2012.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines expressed their desire that the upcoming Congress will deepen Eucharistic devotion in the country as well as prepare for the 500th Anniversary of the evangelization in the Philippines.

"The celebration of the 51st International Eucharistic

Congress in this country, the only one with a Catholic majority in Asian continent, is an important challenge to strengthen the missionary/evangelizing perspective as well as for identifying new ways in celebrating the Congresses themselves," stated a communique by the Pontifical Commission for International Eucharistic Congresses.

The Pontifical Commission also stated that the theme of the Congress wishes to underline the "inherent eschatological tension in the Eucharist



offers an impulse in the historical path of Christians."

Within the theme of hope, the announcement of the gift of God to the young, of

which Asia is very rich, will be recovered as well as the commitment to the ranks of the poor of the continent," the commission stated.

FAMILY SYNOD PROPOSALS

• St. Joseph as Patron Saint of the Family

(CNA/EWTN News).- The Archbishop of El Salvador's capital city, who is in Rome for the October 5-19 Synod on the Family, has proposed that St. Joseph be officially named patron saint of the family.

"May God grant us this grace, as he is a model spouse, father and teacher of young people," Archbishop Jose Escobar Alas of San Salvador told Vatican Radio in a recent interview.

"We should also see him now as a defender of the rights of women and children. It was he who protected the Sacred Family and the Holy Infant in the flight to Egypt and at all times."

The Salvadoran Archbishop said he also made the proposal during his intervention at the Synod of Bishops taking place at the Vatican.

St. Joseph has already formally been named patron of the Universal Church, and is popularly regarded as a patron of both fathers and families.

"Love for St. Joseph is present throughout the Church - he is the patron saint of the Universal Church. He is also the patron saint of workers," Archbishop Escobar noted.

He also thanked Pope Francis for organizing the Synod of Bishops, and said it is an assurance of the Church's concern for families in Latin America "who are suffering so much from poverty."

• Revamp in Church language

(CNA/EWTN News).- The need to develop a new way of communicating Church teaching in contemporary society emerged in Synod discussions last week, with specific emphasis given to expressions regarding 'life' and 'moral' issues.

In a press conference, Fr. Thomas Rosica, who is auditing the Synod sessions as an English-language spokesman, said Synod participants have called for a new language that speaks more directly to Biblical truths, rather than concepts that are often not understood

outside the academic realm.

"There is a problem with language with civil society (particularly) in terms of abortion and euthanasia," he said, as well as homosexual partnerships and divorced and remarried persons.

While the doctrine itself is not in question, the priest noted that Synod participants spoke of the need to form a "language that invites," rather than suggesting "moral judgement."

Just as Pope St. John XXIII affirmed the immutability of Church doctrine at the start of the Second Vatican Council while calling for a "re-packaging" and "re-presenting" of how that doctrine was conveyed to the world, this Synod is asking for the same thing, Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York said.

Cardinal Dolan said a change in language to make Church teachings more approachable does not mean a push to "soften" or "dilute" Church teaching, but is rather an effort to present the same teachings in a way that is "more credible and more cogent."

Iraq has done 'absolutely nothing' for displaced Christians

(CNA/EWTN News).- An Iraqi bishop whose community is hosting more than 70,000 Christians who fled violence in Mosul and its surroundings has expressed dismay at the national government in Baghdad for failing to offer assistance.

"The reality is that Christians have received no support from the central government. They have done nothing for them, absolutely nothing," Archbishop Bashar Warda of the Chaldean Archeparchy of Erbil told Christian charity Aid to the Church in Need.

"The central government is to blame. It has not fulfilled its commitment to the people. The government in Baghdad received a lot of help from the international community for the displaced people from Mosul and Nineveh - but there has been no sign of it here."

Archbishop Warda added that the regional government of Iraqi Kurdistan - of which Erbil is the capital - had made it clear that it is unable to offer financial assistance because it had ceased receiving subsidies from the national authorities.

Workshop on 'Lectio Divina'

Rev. Dr. Claude Nonis will deliver a lecture on "LECTIO DIVINA," on Saturday, October 25, at the Theology Lecture Hall, Aquinas University College, Colombo 08.

Contact : 0777749019/ 0715300185 / 0773688329

John Amaratunga's Statement on Pope Francis Visit

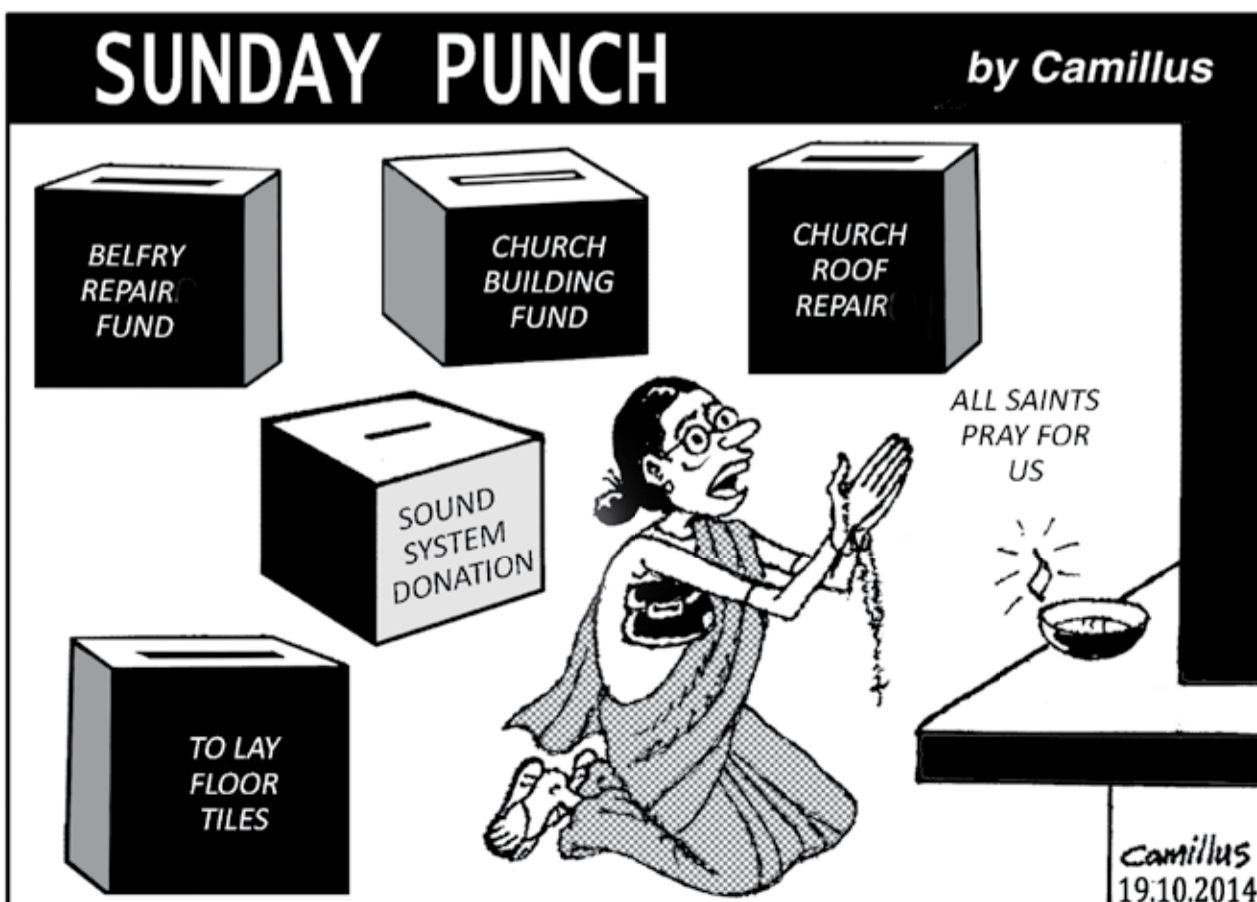
United National Party gladly and with deepest reverence welcomes His Holiness Pope Francis, which is a joyful occasion for the Catholics of the country. It is pertinent to mention that it was the United National Party in 1994, when I was the Minister-in-Charge of Christian Affairs, that initiated the invitation and prepared early groundwork of the visit of Pope John Paul II, which resulted in the Beatification of Venerable Father, Joseph Vaz.

On behalf of the Party as a Senior Member of the Party and a Catholic close to the Church, the UNP approved my participation to proceed with the Delegation selected to extend the official invitation to His Holiness to visit Sri Lanka, at the Vatican in Rome.

At a critical juncture in the history of the country where amity and cohesion are national priorities, the United National Party believes that the blessings of the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis will pave the way for a realistic change in the country heralding a new and purposeful beginning towards national reconciliation, a just society and shared prosperity.

John A.E. Amaratunga

Member of Parliament (Gampaha District)
Chief Opposition Whip in Parliament



THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY SRI LANKA
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EDITORIAL

October 19, 2014

Mental disorders: The need for more compassion

With the Health Ministry's latest surveys showing that as many as 2.3 million Sri Lankans are suffering from mental disorders, mental health experts, religious leaders and others are calling for a major change of perception whereby people of Sri Lanka would give more care and compassion to people suffering from such disorders.

It was in this spirit that we joined the World Health Organisation in marking World Mental Health Day from Saturday October 11 to October 13.

The Angoda-based National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH) conducted a mental-health walk on October 11 from 7.00 a.m. at Diyatha Uyana in Battaramulla. From October 11 to 13 the institute conducted an exhibition significantly titled Mindful Creations -- feelings, art, crafts and photographs by those recovering from mental disorders. The institute says it is inspiring to see how much people with mental health problems could achieve by rebuilding their self confidence by giving them a sense of value, opportunities and hope. The NIMH has invited the people to join it to value the creativity of people recovering from mental disorders and helping them to live an independent life with dignity and self-respect.

According to the WHO, World Mental Health Day is observed every year with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilising efforts in support of mental health. The Day provides an opportunity for stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work and on what more needs to be done to make mental healthcare a reality for people worldwide. The theme for this year is, "Living with schizophrenia." The focus will be on living a healthy life with schizophrenia - a severe mental disorder affecting more than 21 million people worldwide. People living with schizophrenia or other severe mental disorders die on average 10-25 years earlier than the general population, the WHO says. This year the WHO is calling attention to steps that could be taken to help people with schizophrenia and other severe mental disorders to live longer and healthier lives.

The NIMH says at least one in ten Sri Lankans suffer from some type of mental illness or trauma. This startling figure came from a study done by the WHO in 2011 and the figure now may be much higher with the Health Ministry planning to conduct a full-scale survey next year.

The WHO study found that the causes for Sri Lanka's mental illnesses were varied and complex, though most professionals believe that the 30-year ethnic war and the 2004 tsunami were among the main causes. This is broadly known as the post-conflict trauma syndrome with superpowers such as the United States suffering heavily from such ailments in the aftermath of the wars in Vietnam and more recently in Afghanistan and Iraq.

According to national mental health data, two in every 100 Sri Lankans have or are experiencing a serious mental illness ranging from schizophrenia to bipolar disorder.

However mental problems can be treated so that people can recover from them in full and hopefully lead normal lives. Nearly 80 percent of these patients, once treated, will go on to make a full recovery. NIMH specialists say the social stigma is one of the biggest barriers faced by such people.

"The stigma faced by mental patients can make it awfully difficult for them to motivate themselves to get better. Everyone has a role to play to end discrimination against mentally ill people," a NIMH official said.

Major mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression and bipolar disorder require medication to restore the imbalance of chemical substances in the brain. A helpline has also been set up for people having mental health problems. They could call 1333 for a confidential, anonymous counselling service that provides guidance and emotional support to people facing such challenges.

On such occasions we need to remember that all people suffer mental injuries much more regularly than physical injuries. Therefore in different degrees everyone is mentally hurt and we need to change our attitudes, approach and even words like, 'Pissa' or 'Angoda cases'. If we are caring and compassionate towards people suffering from physical ailments like cancer or heart disease then Jesus would tell us to be more compassionate, as He is towards those suffering from mental illness.

Clarification

In our Editorial last week the headline should have read "It is more honourable to fail than to cheat." The error is regretted.

Blessed Joseph Vaz - Missionary Apostle to National Saint

On Mission Sunday Catholics all over the world pray for the missionaries and missions all over the world. The Catholic missionaries such as Fr. Joseph Vaz has spread the gospel, the message of Christ in far distant lands. Due to the pioneering efforts of these missionaries Catholicism took a firm root in Sri Lanka. During the Dutch persecution of Catholics in Sri Lanka it was Blessed Joseph Vaz from our neighbouring country India, who came to Sri Lanka under the guise of a coolie who revived the Catholic faith in Sri Lanka.



In regard to the birth of Blessed Joseph Vaz people say that such was revealed in a dream to his father Christopher Vaz, a premonition of a glorious destiny for his child. An inscription was found in a diary belonging to Christopher Vaz where he used to enter the chief events connected with his family life. Christopher writes; On the 26th of April 1651, a son was born to me who was baptized on the octave of his birth and they gave him the name of Joseph. In the course of time he will become a great man. In reality he became much more than that, by becoming a devout Catholic, to priest, then a missionary apostle, to a national saint.

Oriental forms of Worship

Blessed Joseph Vaz was a missionary who was sent on a religious mission from Goa, India to Ceylon and an apostle, a person who strongly supported the need to spread the Catholic religion. When in Sri Lanka then Ceylon introduced oriental forms of worship, prayers and Catholic drama. He himself composed a catechism, a summary of Catholic doctrine, meditations on the way of the cross and devotions and litanies to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Sinhala and Tamil. He also introduced traditional passion plays with images of sacred personages on the models of religious puppet drama he had witnessed in Goa.

Blessed Joseph Vaz organised Catholic feasts and processions with a national outlook. At the feast of St. Anthony in Kandy under the patronage of Fr. Joseph Vaz during the reign of King Wimaladharmasuriya II there were dancers with sticks and traditional music. Fr. Joseph Vaz was entrusted with the major tasks of providing prayers, hymns and Catholic literary works to his assistant Fr. Jacome Gonsalves who like Blessed Joseph Vaz was a Konkani Brahmin.

The pastoral letter of the Catholic

Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka once stated that the inter Church rivalry that marked European Christianity in the pre ecumenical days of the 17th and 18th centuries tainted the mission of evangelization and quite understandably though not justifiably it presented a dismembered Christ to the non-Christians some of whom protected Blessed Joseph Vaz and his flock from the hostility of Dutch Calvinists who had by then wrestled political power from the Catholic Portuguese in the maritime provinces.

Kandy was the centre of Joseph Vaz's mission and the place where he worked the miracle of rain and nursed the sick who were caught in the small pox epidemic. Disguised as a labourer the late Fr. Joseph Vaz came to Sri Lanka in 1687 and worked among the poor for 24 years. He brought back many Catholics to the Church from Dutch persecution and restored a church that was fast disintegrating. Fr. Joseph Vaz was credited at that time for forming a truly local church with a rich Catholic literature and liturgy with prayers and hymns composed by the great genius Fr. Jacome Gonsalves and also adopting the customs of the local people both Sinhalese and Tamil. A missionary has to know the language of the people and Fr. Vaz even before he landed in Sri Lanka had picked up Tamil in South India and studied Sinhala during his two years imprisonment in Kandy.

Many people think that Blessed Joseph Vaz is the greatest missionary Asia has produced. This is indeed very true for the missionaries who came to Sri Lanka before him came from Europe and they were accompanied by the - colonizers and had the consent and support, patronage of the Kings and their governments. Fr. Joseph Vaz died on January 16, 1711, and was buried on the compound of the church he had built dedicated to Mary. His companions continued his mission after his death. Despite several persecutions the Catholic Church was able to revive because of the dedicated service of Fr. Joseph Vaz and the enormous tasks he had done by building a network of lay leaders who looked after the Christians in the absence of priests.

Thus the Church we have today owes a great debt of gratitude to Fr. Vaz and his companions. On January 14, 2015, the Holy Father will elevate Blessed Joseph Vaz to Saint-hood and he will be the first national saint of Sri Lanka. This zealous missionary apostle undoubtedly deserves this rightful place in the hearts of all Catholics in Sri Lanka.

Miran Perera

Pope Francis charges Christians - lose comfort, go to peripheries

Pope Francis has said that God does not discriminate about who is invited to His banquet and called on Christians to abandon their comforts and go toward the marginalized.

"We are all called not to reduce the Kingdom of God to the confines of our 'little churches,' but to dilate the Church to the dimensions of the Kingdom of God," the Pontiff said. "The goodness of God has no limits and discriminates against no one. Because of this, the banquet of the Lord's gifts is universal, for

everyone...Everyone is given the possibility of responding to his invitation, to his call; no one has the right to feel themselves privileged or (to have) an exclusive claim."

With this knowledge in the back of our minds, we can overcome the habit "of comfortably placing ourselves at the center, like the chief priests and the Pharisees," he explained. Instead, we learn to place ourselves "on the peripheries, recognizing that also those on the margins are the object of God's generosity."

"God is good to us, he

freely offers us His friendship, His joy and salvation," the Pope noted. However, often-times we don't accept His gifts because we place our material concerns and our own personal interests first. "Faith requires the witness of charity, (which) should be manifested in concrete attitudes of solidarity and of service to our brothers, especially the most vulnerable," the Pope explained, pointing to those who are persecuted as prime examples of the weak and vulnerable.

Teresa, the Gigantic Saint

As we prepare ourselves to celebrate the feast of St Teresa we always look at her as the gigantic woman saint who was a Spanish mystic. Next year in 2015 we will remember the 5th centenary of the birth of her, whose fame has never faded away. After her death Teresa's body was wanted by the nuns of the Convent of the Incarnation at Avila. It was buried at Alba where she breathed her last. With great secrecy the incorrupt body was taken to Avila where she was born, such was the demand, but it did not end there. Since Teresa was a woman who was journeying all her life time it continued even after her death. At the request and demand of the Duke of Alba with permission from Rome, her body was taken back to Alba.

The story does not end there. Her spiritual value was such that all wanted some part of her body for veneration; her body was actually dismembered and given to different places. Her right foot and a piece of upper jaw is in Rome, her left hand in Lisbon, her right hand, left

eye, fingers, fragments of flesh are found all over Spain and indeed all over Christendom. Her right arm and heart are in a reliquary at Alba de Tormes, with what remained of the perfect and incorruptible body. This is St. Teresa of Avila. She is the Carmelite who reformed the Order of Carmel. She never sought for mystical experiences, but resigned herself to God's will and considered the experiences a Divine blessing.

We look at Teresa the Saint, for her many virtues, for her determined character and for her spirituality. She developed mental prayer, nevertheless she had given it up due to various reasons. She was accused of being a Jewish convert, and as a woman to nourish such prayer was not accepted and welcomed by the then society. Her father's death in its way, freed her from a sense of guilt. She became fascinated at this time with the lives of Saints Mary Magdalene and Augustine as penitents who had gone on to achieve great things in the spiritual life, and she returned to the practice of mental prayer

that she had for several years abandoned.

As Christians our primary duty is to enjoy prayer whether it be mental, contemplative or vocal. During our life time we grope in the dark to understand what prayer is. The definition of prayer is, "The raising of the mind and heart to God." Of all the definitions of prayer that have come down to us through the history of Christianity, the simplest and the basis of all other definitions is the one many of us learned in the Baltimore Catechism, a standard of teaching since 1885. The newly revised Catechism of the Catholic Church published in 1992 maintains this definition that is withstanding the test of time. While it is the simplest it is also the broadest, setting the parameters into which all authentic prayer must fit. Yes, St. Teresa says, it is a loving conversation with the 'Friend' who loves us. To have a conversation it presupposes that we need to focus our mind and heart to the one who is present. Only the raising of mind and heart will not come to comple-

tion unless there is a change. It is so and this conversation, this relationship this connectedness should make a difference in our lives. Then we can truly say or believe that we are on the right path of prayer. The friend who makes His abode with us will make a difference to the extent that we open ourselves to Him. We can pray in silence or in the market place or on a mountain top or in a lonely place. We can use any method given by any saint, but the ultimate goal should be union. According to St. Teresa it is a Spiritual Marriage. Through this Union God reveals to us where we need to change, what we need to drop, and how we should be like Him, compassionate, forgiving and other centered. This is growth in prayer. St. Teresa had this growth, therefore we accept her theory. At the beginning she had no taste for prayer but later she became a great contemplative and was able to leave behind, her experiences for our growth.

Through experience we know that love and pain motivate us to pray. Most people learn to pray not through semi-



nars, conferences, and books, but in the school of pain, anxiety and suffering. Teresa learnt to pray with many difficulties. Unless we are poor in spirit we will not learn to pray. When we look at the Psalms, we realise that they are the cry of people, addressed to God, to thank, to praise, to beg, to ask for forgiveness and cure. Prayer is like that, simple in words, realistic and authentic. No matter what the origin, simplicity or complexity of a method, the object is the same. This focus should enable us to overcome the distractions that assail the mind and heart as we attempt to pray. It should help us to focus on God, we should not complicate prayer and should not complicate it for others too. Let us grow in simple ways of prayer to reach the heights of contemplation.

Rev. Sr. M Sunitha A.C.

Pope's visit will be healing to Sri Lanka

By Jehan Perera

The visit of a Pope to any country is a rare occurrence. The Holy Father Pope Francis is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka on January 13-15, 2015. This will be the third Papal visit ever to Sri Lanka. Previously Pope Paul VI visited Sri Lanka on December 4, 1970 and Pope John Paul II visited on January 20, 1995.

The last Papal visit saw hundreds of thousands of Catholics flock to Colombo from all parts of the country to participate in the religious service that took place on Galle Face Green overlooking the sea. The government of the day spared no effort to make the Pope an honoured guest. When Pope Francis visits Sri Lanka he can expect an even warmer and more effusive welcome. The present government has mastered the art of welcoming visiting dignitaries who come to the country. The personal invitation being carried to Pope Francis by President Rajapaksa himself was a sign of the warm welcome that the government is prepared to bestow on the visiting religious leader.

Positive indication

The President's visit to the Vatican to in-

vite the Pope personally and officially was quite extraordinary given the fact that the Catholic Church, as far back as June this year, announced that the Pope will be visiting Sri Lanka. It even gave the dates. The Archdiocese of Colombo had a news item on its website on June 7, 2014 written by Rev. Fr Sunil de Silva in which it said in banner headlines that the 'Holy Father Pope Francis confirms his visit to Sri Lanka in 2015 January 13,14, and 15'. Further it showed a photograph of the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith inviting Pope Francis to visit Sri Lanka. It also stated that Pope Francis will pay a two-day visit to Sri Lanka in January 2015 and then to Philippines and that this was an announcement he made at a news conference in the aircraft on his return home to the Vatican.

In the aftermath of President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to the Vatican to meet with the Holy Father, a special team from the Vatican is expected to visit Sri Lanka soon to ensure that the arrangements are in order. This is a positive indication that

the Pope will indeed visit Sri Lanka. There was a doubt that early Presidential Elections anticipated to take place in January might even compel a postponement or cancellation of his visit. The Vatican has a policy of not having the Pope visit any country that is in the throes of an election or political instability. In this context, Church leaders have asked the government and the opposition not to exploit the visit of Pope Francis as a political tool. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith forthrightly asked the Government and the Opposition to not politicise the visit. He said, "We hope that the visit will not be disturbed by an election campaign and politicians of both the Government and Opposition would not use it as a political tool."

Saner counsel appears to be prevailing. Several political parties within the government alliance have been urging that the government postpone the elections till after January, which would enable the Papal visit to go ahead without any constraints. In these circumstances, President Rajapaksa's visit to the

Vatican to personally invite the Pope would have been to assure him on that score and make sure that the Pope will indeed visit Sri Lanka.

National interest

There are several reasons for the Pope's visit to be of national interest. At a time when Sri Lanka is getting on the international map for being a home to extremist Buddhist nationalism, the visit of the Pope and the honour paid to him by the government can send a counter message of the country's religious pluralism and tolerance. In addition, the Holy Father is expected to visit Madhu in the North of the country and hold a Service there. Madhu is not only a sacred area for Catholics on account of the Madhu Shrine to which tens of thousands of Catholics from all parts of the country go yearly to pay homage. Madhu was also a part of the last phase of the war, and one of the last battleground areas. Therefore, a religious service there could be one that helps in the national healing and reconciliation process.

The issue of na-

tional reconciliation appears to be uppermost in the Holy Father's hopes regarding Sri Lanka. When the Sri Lankan Bishops met the Pope recently at the Vatican, he is reported to have urged the Bishops of Sri Lanka to continue their role in working toward reconciliation between the government and the Tamils living in former conflict areas. He said, "After many years of fighting and bloodshed, the war in your country has finally ended ... though the war has ended, you rightly note that much work needs to be done to promote reconciliation, to respect the human rights of all the people and to overcome the ethnic tensions that remain." After meeting with the President, a Vatican communiqué stated that "In this context, the parties expressed their hope that the Holy Father's upcoming visit to Sri Lanka may be welcomed as a sign of closeness to the Sri Lankan population and may encourage those who work for the common good, reconciliation, justice and peace."

Ven. Ashin Wirathu

The visit to Sri



Lanka of another religious leader, Ven. Ashin Wirathu who heads the 969 Movement in Myanmar, which has engaged in anti Muslim activities caused considerable unease amongst the Muslims in Sri Lanka. The government has to win back the confidence of the Muslim community and other minorities as well. At the Convention of Buddhist monks attended by the Ven. Wirathu one of the positions taken was that Sri Lanka should be a Sinhala Buddhist State and that the National Flag should only represent the Sinhalese majority and not the ethnic minorities. Even five years after the end of the war Sri Lanka remains a country in which ethnic and religious passions continue to motivate aggression and fear amongst the people. In this context the visit of Pope Francis to Sri Lanka would offer the government another opportunity to demonstrate to the ethnic and religious minorities that it accepts the reality of Sri Lanka being a multi ethnic and multi religious country.



Moulding - Our Children

"Children are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward."

(Psalm 127:3)

Yes indeed, we parents are given a blessed responsibility, which is "to love, protect, discipline and nurture our children, to what God wants them to be." To raise them in the image and likeness of God is the task of both parents a combined effort.

Inclination of children

The natural inclination of children are two-fold

- * Towards that which is not good (bad)
- * Towards what is good

Psalm 51:7 (Please refer) gives us an indication as to why the human person is prone to evil, we see in this that sinful nature is also part of every person born.

Now, when a child is left unattended, without proper advice and correction to subdue or overcome this negative and sinful nature, the consequence of which can only bring about shame and heartbreak to the parents and also to those near and dear.

"The rod of correction gives wisdom, but a boy left to his whims disgraces his mother," ... "Correct your son, and he will bring delight to your soul." (Proverbs : 29: 15/17)

Parents should not just endure their children, a child that grows-up without guidance and love has the potential of becoming a problem both to those at home and out in the society.

This does not mean that we as parents and stewards of God's gift/s, need to be discouraged or disheartened. The following *Psalm* should give us hope and encouragement, that our children are created, also to



desire that which is good -

"You formed my innermost being; You knit me in my mother's womb. Praise you, so wonderfully you made me; Wonderful are your works ! My very self you knew."

(Psalm 139:13-14)

We see from the above that God has a plan for every life, even before conception and after conception He fashions the development, He oversees the unique design of each one, He know's exactly what He wants every individual to be and the bonus is, that His plans are for our own good.

"For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! plans to give you a future full of hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

What we can understand from the above, is that it was never in God's plan for a mother to end the life in

her womb, every conception contains a spark of divine creativity, we parents actualize God's endless generosity, co-creating with Him, and manifesting His Love and hope in humanity.

God gave each one a free will, we can choose good or choose that which is bad, a child not trained to do good will choose that which is not. We parents must realise that it is the natural desire for the child to know and experience what is not good, the selfish desires and the urge to satisfy his/her own wants are predominant, when these wants are denied he/she will act with anger. Hence, we need to take some time and imagine what my son/daughter would be as a teenager, if he/she is left to ego-centric desires (self-centered)

There are no dress rehearsals for parenting, parents need to discover and nurture that which is good in the child, there is no waiting for a time that is convenient for this, it is "a on the job, all the time," training correction and moulding must be done when they are young and most supple.



The twin events that signal Bharatha (Parava) resurgence

It took five long years and a gamut of events to produce a historic crescendo that resounded on July 13, 2014 with the inauguration of Bharatha Cultural Fellowship. This occasion gathered together over 200 Bharatha men and women from different parts of Sri Lanka. The birth of this new entity at its very beginning, proclaimed - "let our people unite". The participants swiftly and energetically responded to this clarion call by Rev. Fr. Joseph Leon SJ, at this meeting.

The objective is to unify a race that in recent times has become disengaged and has seen its identity diluted. The event provided the participants ample opportunity to sing and dance to their hearts' content. The proceeds of the event are earmarked to help needy Bharatha children to embark on higher studies through scholarships.

The next event envisaged is a carol service planned for December 28th, 2014 at St. Joseph's College, Colombo, as is customary, where an outstanding Bharatha choir of men and women are expected to lead in singing.

Bharatha Cultural Fellowship Management Council Members 2014/2015

Office Bearers

- President - Mr. Joe Roche
- Vice President - Dr. Mano Fernando
- Vice President - Mr. Francis D' Almeida
- Secretary General - Mr. Albertine Peiris
- Asst. Secretary General - Ms. Daphne Paldano
- Treasurer - Mr. Claude Alvares

Council Members

- Mr. Vincent Alvares - Ms. Rosita Davey Gonsal
- Mr. Maurus Gonsal - Mr. Basil Anthony
- Mr. Kumar Lopez - Mr. Lasantha Fernando
- Ms. Jovita Motha - Mr. Roshan Corera
- Mr. I. X. Fernando - Mr. Roshan Rodrigo
- Ms. Florence Gomez - Mr. Mahen Fernando

All Island JP

Mr. K. Henry Borgia Fernando of Bolawatta, Waikkala, took oaths as All Island Justice of the Peace, before the honourable District Judge of Marawila.

He is a leading social service worker and an Old Boy of St. Mary's College, Negombo.

K. Nihal Fernando

25 Years in Religious Life

Rev. Fr. Francis Jeyaseelan CR celebrated his Silver Jubilee in religious life on Oct 7, 2014 with the Thanksgiving Mass on Oct 12, 2014 at the Rosarian Monastery, Merlin, Ontario, Canada.

Fr. Jeyaseelan was born on December 13, 1969 to Benjamin Amirthanather and Mary Josephine of Sillalai, Sri Lanka. Completing his studies at Sillalai RCTM Maha Vidiyalayam and St. Henry's College, Illavalai, he joined the Congregation of the Rosarians on May

20, 1986. He made his first Religious Profession in 1989 in India. After completing his Philosophical and Theological Studies at Rosarian Philosophy College, Trichy, Carmelaram Theology College, Bangalore, India and the National Seminary, Ampitiya, he was Ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar on August 20, 1998, at St. Lucia's Cathedral, Colombo.

His first appointment was as Master of Scholastics at Rosarian Scholasticate, Meekanuwa,



Rev. Fr. Francis Jeyaseelan CR

Ampitiya. Thereafter he was appointed as Novice Master at Rosary Ashram, Mathavuvai thakulam, Vavuniya. In 2008 he obtained a Masters and Licentiate degree in Canon Law at Ottawa University,

Canada and a diploma in Ecclesiastical Administration from St. Paul's University, Ottawa, Canada. He also served as 'Advocate' at the Regional Marriage Tribunal in the diocese of London, Ontario, Canada. In 2010 he was one of the pioneers at the first Rosarian Monastery in Canada outside of Sri Lanka and India. Now he serves as Superior at the Rosarian Monastery in Canada.

Ad MultosAnnos!

Rev. Fr. Antony Kamalathasan CR

DR. P.M. JAYAWARDENE - a brother's tribute

My Loving Sydney Aiya was called to eternal life with Jesus on July 13, 2014. He was 94-years-old. When Sydney Aiya was at the Medical College, for weekends he came home. My father, who was particular about reciting our prayers, asked Sydney whether he recited the Rosary and his reply was "yes."

When I attended College, Sydney Aiya was boarded at the CAM along with other doctors. Sydney Aiya would insist that I be with him on Friday afternoons at the Old Joes Sports Club, when the cricket matches were played at St. Joseph's College, Colombo, main grounds. I recall witnessing a match where late Fr. Joe de Mel captained with late Fr. Lucien Dep, vice captain, bowling left arm spin.



When Sydney Aiya came home after getting through his MBBS, qualifying as a fully fledged doctor, what celebrations we had at home with Mamma preparing sumptuous meals! As Sydney Aiya was the first medical doctor to pass out from Wattala soil, what happiness and joy that was brought to Pappa and Mamma and the rest of the family!

Sydney Aiya's first posting as a medical officer was to Dickoya, Hatton as DMA and my memory goes back to his new car, Morris Minor, which was driv-

en to Dickoya by brother Emile and myself joining him. The price he paid for the brand new car was Rs. 4,200/=.

His marriage took place when Sydney Aiya was at Dickoya. The reception was held at Galle Face Hotel with two important personalities as witnesses; Sir Albert Pieris, Speaker to the House of Representatives and Sir Arthur Ranasinghe, the then Secretary to the Treasury. This was in 1954. In 1955, he was selected on a scholarship for further studies to England.

After Sydney's return to Sri Lanka, his first posting was as Resident Surgeon at the General Hospital, Colombo. This was for a short period. Subsequently, he was posted to the Badulla General Hospital. After serving in Badulla for five years he

was attached to General Hospital, Ratnapura.

Here too he served as a Consultant General Surgeon. His final posting was at Colombo South General Hospital. At that time Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike was Prime Minister. She brought a rule that all medical doctors in government service will not be allowed private practice. With this rule, Sydney Aiya retired from government service at the age of 45 years to start his private practice.

Sydney Aiya was a doctor to all of us and so noble a person. May Jesus, the Son of God and the Father, accept you, my dear Aiya, into his warm embrace.

"Deep in my heart, Sydney Aiya, you will stay loved and will be remembered always."

Aloy and Delicia



by: Kishani S. Fernando

In a recent visit to the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka in Ampitiya, Kandy, we were shown around its valuable library and took a walk in the garden and farm.

Library

The library was part of the original Papal Seminary building established in 1893. Its architecture, wood work, furniture and design were the work of the Jesuits who were the administrators of the Papal Seminary. However when the Papal Seminary was shifted to Pune, in India, the books were also transferred since it was Jesuit property developed over the years with the funds of the Jesuit Congregation. The present library was built up by the Oblate Fathers who were entrusted with running the National Seminary in 1955. Thus it is an "Oblate Product."

The oldest book here is 'A Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul According to the Latin Version of Vulgate', Published in the Year 1522 A.D.

Dating the Portrait of Fr. Joseph Vaz

For some reason the portrait of Fr. Joseph Vaz that had been part of the original Papal Seminary library had been left back by the Jesuits when they transferred all their books to the library in Pune. The almost life size portrait takes a foremost place in the centre wall of the library and is in excellent condition of preservation.

We extend our grateful thanks to Rev. Fr.



Elmo Dias - Rector of the National Seminary for taking the trouble to bring down the massive portrait of the Blessed Joseph Vaz from its mount in the library, to confirm the name of the artist and date of the portrait. The artist is now confirmed as D.L.G Perera and not K.D.L.E. (Douglas Perera). The date of the portrait is established as September 1896. The name and date is found on the front right side bottom of the portrait (on the side of the flower pot). The date is conclusive of the fact that Msgr. Zaleski not only wrote the biography of Fr. Joseph Vaz titled 'The Apostle of Ceylon, Fr. Joseph Vaz, An Oratorian Priest, 1651 - 1711', Printed in Calcutta in 1897 but also got a painting done in 1896, in order to present him to the Papal Seminary Brothers as a local example of priestly life. The proximity of the dates appearing on the book and the portrait is no coincidence. It is possible the portrait was completed in time for Msgr. Zaleski to use part of the portrait as the front cover of his book.

Farm

The farm attached to the National Seminary has its origins from the very first years of the Papal Seminary. These building still stand where they were first built. The cowsheds, drains etc still follow the original plans made for their maintenance. The dairy which was started to bring income to the Seminary and nutrition to the Brothers continues to this day.

The land around the Seminary buildings includes a forest of timber trees, fruit trees, vegetable plots and a paddy field. Traditional crops like pepper, cocoa, coffee, nutmeg and cloves bring in a small income and produce enough for annual consumption. Among the fruits trees are mainly mangoes, bananas and avocado. The variety of salads grown include; raddichio, green romaine, tango, loose leaf lettuce, watercress, chicory and our local greens like kankun, gotukola, mukunuwenna and anguna kola. We were even surprised to see herbs like basil, thyme, among the local rampe karapinchica etc. Showing us around Fr. Elmo Dias said that "as it was in the past, the land is maintained in order to meet

even in a small way the ever increasing cost of running the Seminary. In order to buttress the dwindling funds we produce about 80% of our vegetable requirement."

CLARIFICATION



In the article on the Diamond Jubilee of the National Seminary, published on September 28 in this page, it was inadvertently stated that the Richard Gabriel statue of Our Lady of Lanka placed in the Seminary Chapel, was replaced by a new statue on a decision made by the present Rector, Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias. However, it is learnt that the decision to change the statue on the main altar alcove was taken by Rev. Fr. Anthony Jayakody, the former Rector of the National Seminary and not by the present Rector, Rev. Fr. Elmo Dias, whose task was to implement the said installation. The error is regretted.



World Mission Sunday

“Let us change our lives to proclaim the values of the Kingdom!”

Let us change our lives to proclaim the values of the Kingdom!



In the Epistle of St. James, we read: “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works?..... If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for

the day and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm and eat well’ but you do not give the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:14-17).

Although this is so, what we read about the Early Christians in the Acts of the Apostles is quite different. There it is explained very clearly about their active faith and its results.

“The Community of believers was of one heart and mind and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common” (Acts 4:32).

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone and many wonders and signs were done through the Apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one’s needs. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the Temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favours

with all the people and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42-47).

Our Early Christians lived their lives as true followers of Christ, according to the Lord’s teachings. We have heard and read in books what the Non Christian Romans had to say about these Christians: ‘See, how these Christians love one another.....’ The Romans not only appreciated the way of life of the Christians of their time, but they also opted to imitate them and become followers of Christ. This is how our Early Christians lived the Commandment of the Master: ‘Go and make disciples of all nations... and behold I am with you always until the end of the age’ (Mt. 28:19-20). Not only were they Christians by name but they lived their Christianity and bore witness to their faith. Their active faith became so strong in them, that they were ready to go through any difficulty and tribulation, even to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Christ the Lord. Here, it is good to recall that the Early Church grew and became strong on the blood of the martyrs.” Let us also remember the axiom: ‘Example is better than advice.’

Will the Non Christian today dare to say about today’s Christians, what the Non Christians of the Early Church said of the Christians of their time? Will our Non Christians brethren be able to say the same about Christians today – “See how the Christians love one another?” If the answer is “No,” where have we failed? Christianity had been in Sri Lanka, for the last 500 years or so. Yet, we are only 7% of the total population of the country, at present. In the 1960s Christians were about 8% of the population and we occupied the third place according to the religions of the country. We who were

behind our Buddhist and Hindu brethren in numbers, today instead of increasing have decreased in numbers to fourth place. Yet the commandment of Christ Jesus, our Master; “Go and make disciples of all nations ...” is still valid today. If so, what shall we do? Where have we failed? Do we give more importance to the values of this world, instead of the values of the Kingdom of God? Are we ready to follow the example of our Christian forefathers? Are we mere nominal Christians? Let us change and try to live our Christian faith rather than become just adherers of Christianity. Let us always remember that we are only sojourners in this world and our true home is in the Kingdom of God – the Next World.

During Mission Sunday this year, let us take some time out to reflect about our Christian life. Let us sincerely decide to correct our shortcomings and live a true Christian life. Let us be ready to go forward as true Disciples of Christ and introduce Christ to a Non Believer by our words and actions. Let us be examples to our youth and children, as to how we should build our lives on the values of the Kingdom. Let us help our children to inculcate in their lives from their very young days, the fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self Control.

Finally, let us all change our lives and come forward to proclaim the values of the Kingdom!

May God bless us! Mother Mary Protect us!

Rev. Fr. Reginald Saparamadu
National Director
Pontifical Mission Societies



NATIONAL
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Archdiocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes



Inaugural Holy Mass



Dedication of the Archdiocese of Colombo to our Blessed at the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

ay - October 19, 2014

claim the values of the Kingdom"



All are called to be Missionaries

From the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church

- No.23.** Every disciple of Christ has the obligation to do his part in spreading the Faith.
- No.35.** Since the whole Church is missionary and, the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God, this Sacred Synod invites all to a deep interior renewal; so that, having a vivid awareness of their own responsibility for spreading the Gospel, they may do their share in missionary work among the nations.
- No.38.** As members of the body of bishops succeeding to the College of Apostles, are consecrated not just for someone in the diocese, but for the salvation of the entire world.
- No.39.** Priests personally represent Christ, and are collaborators of the order of bishops in that threefold sacred task which by its very nature belongs to the mission of the Church. Therefore, they should fully understand that their life is also consecrated to the service of the missions.
- No.40.** Religious institutes of the contemplative and of the active life have so far played, and still do play, the main role in the evan-

gelization of the world. This Sacred Synod gladly acknowledges their merits and thanks God for all that they have expended for the glory of God and the service of souls

Communities dedicated to the active life should sincerely ask themselves in the presence of God, weather they cannot broaden their activity in favour of expending God's Kingdom among the nations.

No.41. Laymen cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization; as witnesses and at the same time as living instruments; they share in her saving mission;

From the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity

- No.12.** Young persons exert very substantial influence on modern society. Their heightened influence in society demands of them a proportionately active apostolate. Happily, their natural qualities fit them for this activity. Adults ought to engage in friendly discussion with young people so that both groups, overcoming the age barrier, can become better acquainted and share the special benefits each generation has to offer the other. Children also have their own apostolic work to do. In their own way, they can be true living witnesses to Christ among their companions.

| Mission Sunday Collection - 2013 | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Diocese | SPOF Collection 2013 |
| ANURADHAPURA | 56,201.00 |
| BADULLA | 83,870.00 |
| CHILAW | 555,284.00 |
| COLOMBO | 2,332,156.50 |
| GALLE | 102,264.00 |
| JAFFNA | 798,778.00 |
| KANDY | 295,260.00 |
| KURUNEGALA | 232,270.00 |
| MANNAR | 4,186,790.00 |
| RATNAPURA | 101,500.00 |
| BATTICALOA | 107,281.00 |
| TRINCOMALEE | 106,000.00 |
| Total | 8,957,654.50 |

The Pontifical Society of the Propagation of Faith



Founded in Lyons, France in 1822 by Miss Marie Pauline Jaricot, to awaken and promote Missionary Awareness in all sectors of the People of God, among local Churches, in view of the evangelization of the world and to exchange spiritual, personnel and material resources.

DIRECTOR
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Over 3000 pilgrims representing several parishes in the Archdiocese of Colombo, participated in the Lourdes pilgrim-

age last month on the initiation of the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith.

In his pastoral letter issued on September last year on the feast of the Birthday of Mother Mary, His Eminence

called upon the faithful to join in the Archdiocese pilgrimages to Madhu and Lourdes as a special honour to Mother Mary in the



Mother

Leading the candle lit procession

Sri Lankan pilgrims carrying the statue of the Blessed Mother

VATICAN - Message of His Holiness Francis for the World Mission Day 2014

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - Fides publishes Pope Francis's Message for World Mission Day, which this year will be celebrated on Sunday, October 19

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today vast numbers of people still do not know Jesus Christ. For this reason, the mission *ad gentes* continues to be most urgent. All the members of the Church are called to participate in this mission, for the Church is missionary by her very nature: she was born "to go forth." World Mission Day is a privileged moment when the faithful of various continents engage in prayer and concrete gestures of solidarity in support of the young Churches in mission lands. It is a celebration of grace and joy. A celebration of grace, because the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, offers wisdom and strength to those who are obedient to his action. A celebration of joy, because Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, sent to evangelize the world, supports and accompanies our missionary efforts. This joy of Jesus and missionary disciples leads me to propose a Biblical icon, which we find in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 10:21-23).

1. The Evangelist tells us that the Lord sent the seventy-two disciples two by two into cities and villages to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was near and to prepare people to meet Jesus. After carrying out this mission of preaching, the disciples returned full of joy: Joy is a dominant theme of this first and unforgettable missionary experience. Yet the divine Master told them: "Do not rejoice because the demons are subject to you; but rejoice because your names are written in heaven. At that very moment Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: 'I give you praise, Father...' And, turning to the disciples in private he said, 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you see'" (Lk 10:20-21, 23).

Luke presents three scenes. Jesus speaks first to His disciples, then to the Father, and then again to the disciples. Jesus wanted to let the disciples share His joy, different and greater than anything they had previously experienced.

2. The disciples were filled with joy, excited about their power to set people free from demons. But Jesus cautioned them to rejoice not so much for the power they had received, but for the love they had received, "because your names are written in heaven" (Lk 10:20). The disciples were given an experience of God's love, but also the possibility of sharing that love. And

this experience is a cause for gratitude and joy in the heart of Jesus. Luke saw this jubilation in a perspective of the Trinitarian communion: "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit", turning to the Father and praising him. This moment of deep joy springs from Jesus' immense filial love for His Father, Lord of heaven and earth, who hid these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to the childlike (cf. Lk 10:21). God has both hidden and revealed and in this prayer of praise it is His revealing which stands out. What is it that God has revealed and hidden? The mysteries of His Kingdom, the manifestation of divine lordship in Jesus and the victory over Satan.

God has hidden this from those who are all too full of themselves and who claim to know everything already. They are blinded by their presumptuousness and they leave no room for God. One can easily think of some of Jesus' contemporaries whom He repeatedly admonished, but the danger is one that always exists and concerns us too. The "little ones", for their part, are the humble, the simple, the poor, the marginalized, those without voice, those weary and burdened, whom Jesus pronounced "blessed." We readily think of Mary, Joseph, the fishermen of Galilee and the disciples whom Jesus called as He went preaching.

3. "Yes, Father, for such has been your gracious will" (Lk 10:21). These words of Jesus must be understood as referring to His inner exultation. The word "gracious" describes the Father's saving and benevolent plan for humanity. It was this divine graciousness that made Jesus rejoice, for the Father willed to love people with the same love that He has for His Son. Luke also alludes to the similar exultation of Mary: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God my Savior" (Lk 1:47). This is the Good News that leads to salvation. Mary, bearing in her womb Jesus, the evangelizer par excellence, met Elizabeth and rejoiced in the Holy Spirit as she sang her *Magnificat*. Jesus, seeing the success of His disciples' mission and their resulting joy, rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and addressed His Father in prayer. In both cases, it is joy for the working of salvation, for the love with which the Father loves His Son comes down to us, and through the Holy

Spirit it fills us and grants us a share in the Trinitarian life.

The Father is the Source of joy. The Son is its manifestation and the Holy Spirit its giver. Immediately after praising the Father, so the evangelist Matthew tells us, Jesus says: "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 1).

The Virgin Mary had a unique experience of this encounter with Jesus, and thus became "causa nostrae laetitiae." The disciples, for their part, received the call to follow Jesus and to be sent by him to preach the Gospel (cf. Mk 3:14) and so they were filled with joy. Why shouldn't we too enter this flood of joy?

4. "The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 2). Humanity greatly needs to lay hold of the salvation brought by Christ. His disciples are those who allow themselves to be seized ever more by the love of Jesus and marked by the fire of passion for the Kingdom of God and the proclamation of the Joy of the Gospel. All the Lord's disciples are called to nurture the joy of evangelization. The Bishops, as those primarily responsible for this proclamation, have the task of promoting the unity of the local Church in her missionary commitment. They are called to acknowledge that the joy of communicating Jesus Christ is expressed in a concern to proclaim Him in the most distant places, as well as in a constant outreach to the peripheries of their own territory, where great numbers of the poor are waiting for this message.

Many parts of the world are experiencing a dearth of vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life. Often this is due to the absence of conta-

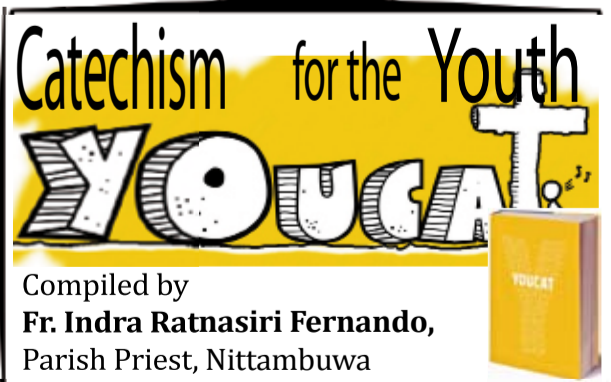
gious apostolic fervour in communities which lack enthusiasm and thus fail to attract. The Joy of the Gospel is born of the encounter with Christ and from sharing with the poor. For this reason I encourage parish communities, associations and groups to live an intense fraternal life, grounded in love for Jesus and concern for the needs of the most disadvantaged. Wherever there is joy, enthusiasm and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations arise. Among these vocations, we should not overlook lay vocations to mission. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the lay faithful in the Church, as well as a recognition that they are called to take an increasingly important role in the spread of the Gospel. Consequently they need to be given a suitable training for the sake of an effective apostolic activity.

5. "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). World Mission Day is also an occasion to rekindle the desire and the moral obligation to take joyful part in the mission *ad gentes*. A monetary contribution on the part of individuals is the sign of a self-offering, first to the Lord and then to others; in this way a material offering can become a means for the evangelization of humanity built on love. Dear brothers and sisters, on this World Mission Day my thoughts turn to all the local Churches. Let us not be robbed of the joy of evangelization! I invite you to immerse yourself in the joy of the Gospel and nurture a love that can light up your vocation and your mission. I urge each of you to recall, as if you were making an interior pilgrimage, that "first love" with which the Lord Jesus Christ warmed your heart, not for the sake of nostalgia but in order to persevere in joy. The Lord's disciples persevere in joy when they sense His presence, do His will and share with others their faith, hope and evangelical charity.

Let us pray through the intercession of Mary, the model of humble and joyful evangelization, that the Church may become a welcoming home, a mother for all peoples and the source of rebirth for our world.

From the Vatican, 8 June 2014,
the Solemnity of Pentecost

FRANCISCUS PP.



Catechism for the Youth
YOUCAT

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

What are Creeds?

Brief formulas of this kind can be found already in the letters of St. Paul to the Early Christians. Apostles' Creed has a special dignity, because it is thought to be a summary of the faith of the Apostles.

CREEDS are brief formulas of faith that make it possible for all believers to make a common profession (185-188, 192-197).

The Nicene Creed is highly esteemed because it resulted from the great councils of the Church when she was still undivided (Nicaea, 325; Constantinople, 381) and is to this day the common basis for the Christian in the East and the West.

How did the Creeds come about?

The CREEDS go back to Jesus, who commanded His disciples to baptize. In doing so, they were to require of the people seeking Baptism the profession of as definite faith, namely, faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit TRINITY. (188-199)

The original cell from which all later CREEDS grew is the Profession of Faith in Jesus the Lord and in His missionary mandate. He told His apostle, "Go therefore and make all disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). All Creeds of the Church are elaborations of the faith in this Triune God. Each of them begins with a Profession of Faith in the Father, the Creator and Preserver of the world, then refers to the Son, through whom the world and we we have found redemption,

and concludes with a profession of God in the Church and in the world.

What Does the Apostle's Creed say?

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:*

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary;

*Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried.*

He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

The Holy Catholic Church,

The Communion of Saints,

The Forgiveness of sins,

The Resurrection of the body,

And life everlasting. Amen.

Lord, God, may the gifts we offer bring us your love and forgiveness and give us freedom to serve you with our lives.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR A
19th Oct. 2014 - 26th Oct. 2014

Sun: 29TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME
WORLD MISSION SUNDAY
Is.45:1. 4-6; 1 Thes.1:1-5; Mt.22:15-21
or Is. 2:1-5; Eph.3:2-12; Mk.16:15-20
Eph.2:1-10; Lk.12:13-21

Tue: Eph.2:12-22; Lk.12:35-38

Wed: Eph.3:2-12; Lk.12:39-48

Thu: Memorial of St. John of Capestrano,
Priest
Eph.3:14-21; Lk.12:49-53

Fri: Memorial of St. Anthony Mary
Claret, Bishop
Eph.4:1-6; Lk.12:54-59

Sat: Eph.4:7-16; Lk.13:1-9

Sun: 30TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME
Ex.22:20-26; 1 Th.1:5-10; Mt.22:34-40

Papal Visit

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION FOR PAPAL VISIT AND CANONIZATION OF BL. JOSEPH VAZ SUNDAY MASS INTENTIONS Sunday October 19th

That we come to the realisation that we cannot be held back by our weaknesses or our sins, nor by the many obstacles in fulfilling our responsibility to the witness and proclamation of the Gospel.
We pray to the Lord.

That we come to understand that "Mercy overcomes every wall, every obstacle" and can instill new life and hope in those who have strayed.
We pray to the Lord.

That the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka take the initiative to take Inter-Religious Dialogue to a new level where the lay faithful could actively participate, thus find answers to religious fanaticism spreading all over the world.
We pray to the Lord.

That we like Blessed Joseph Vaz do all that is necessary to protect and grow in our faith as we walk the journey of life.
We pray to the Lord.

TWENTY NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

First Reading:

Is. 45:1, 4-6.

God tells Cyrus through His prophet Isaiah that He is the only God and that there is no other besides Him. God's power is shown as universal because He is the God of Creation.

Second Reading:

1 Thes. 1: 1-5b.

St. Paul lauds his converts for their fidelity to God and to Christ His Son. He tells them how they are ever in his prayers and exhorts them to remain faithful to God's call which they have received.

Gospel: Mt. 22: 15-21.

A question is asked about payments of taxes to the king. Though those sent had asked for any spiritual advice, Christ tells them to serve God with all sincerity and humility because He has a right to be served.

Reflection.

In today's Readings we hear how God demands worship, honour, respect and glory from human beings as He alone is the only God and there is no other besides Him. Therefore in all our efforts and endeavours we ought to give the first place to God and not to the king even though he could be the most powerful king on earth. All honour and glory belongs to God and to Him alone. The Readings point to this very clearly.

In the First Reading God through Prophet Isaiah tells King Cyrus

that God alone is true and that there is no other God besides Him. He wants the King to act according to God's wishes. God lets the king know that it is He who appointed him king to grant freedom to the Israelites. Therefore He wants him to allow the Israelites to go and live in peace. Here the prophet requests king Cyrus to follow God's instructions. In the second reading St. Paul is happy that the Thessalonians have given God His rightful place in their lives. He is really proud of them. Therefore he along with his companion, praise and thank God. St. Paul tells the Thessalonians that they are constantly in his prayers for leading a life of faith, of love and of steadfast hope in the Lord Jesus Christ which they possess.

In the Gospel we see the Pharisees who are supposed to be close to God, setting a trap against Jesus. Very probably they have heard that Jesus is a courageous man who is not afraid of any mortal. So they set a trap in order to betray Him to the king. The trap is about the payments of taxes. Jesus calls for a coin, as the inscription on the coin relates to Caesar He tells them to give that to Caesar and what is God's to God. A coin being of worldly concern and as it has the inscription of the king it belongs to the king, therefore it is to be given to the king. But man is made to the likeness and image of God. Therefore man belongs to God. There-

fore we should offer our lives to God and not betray it to the world. This should be done by living in true brotherhood and holiness; then and only then we could offer ourselves to God. This shows us that we should give God what is his, that is ourselves, we should give to God and not to the world. Therefore as baptized Catholics, missionaries of God we all ought to work for the salvation of men. In order to save them from the world and the wiles of the evil one; so that they too will be able to offer themselves to God as worthy offerings.

Aid Story.

According to the law of the jungle, the mighty Lion became the King of the beast. He had sharper teeth, a louder roar and nimbler feet. He came across a small animal who told him of a rumour about another animal called "Man" who considered himself king of the creation. The Lion roared with anger and said that he would test his strength against that of the usurper.

The Lion went forth and met a strange animal (Man) and asked him if per chance he had seen an animal called king of creation and whom he was seeking. The man feigning ignorance said that he himself was interested in meeting him and was looking for him. Perhaps they could



go together in search of man, but since it was too late they could spend the night together and start out the following day. "Agreed," said the Lion, who thought it was not a bad idea. The man opened a door of a cage that he called his house, and asked the Lion to go in. When the Lion was inside the man slammed the door and said to him from outside, listen friend, "I am man" Man's intelligence had overcome the Lion's strength. This blessing of God is not for us to be like an animal in the world, but to be like God in the world.

Aid Story 2.

John Wesley's three point sermon, in which his first point was "Get all you can." To this an old rich miser said, "Amen." Next Wesley said, "Keep all you can." Again, the miser said, "Amen." Then the preacher said, "Give all you can." And the selfish man said, "What a shame to spoil a good sermon."

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

"Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16,15-20)

1. On this World Mission Sunday, we listen to the last portion of the Longer Ending of Mark. This Longer Ending (Mark 16,9-20) is a canonical part of the Gospel, as defined by Trent. It was cited early by the Fathers of the Church. Its vocabulary and style indicates that it was written by someone other than Mark. It is a compendium or a resume of the Resurrection Appearances narrated in the other canonical Gospels.

2. The disciples are commissioned as apostles - those who are sent by the Lord. Those who have just been upbraided for their lack of faith and hardness of heart - "(But) later, as the eleven were at table, he appeared to them and rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed those who saw him after He had been raised" - are now entrusted with preach-

ing the Gospel. Is it not startling? It is both startling and encouraging. The more they preach the Gospel, the more their faith is strengthened; their initial doubts are overcome. Hence in the proclamation of the Gospel, what counts is not human merit but God's amazing Grace.

3. The disciples are instructed to proclaim the Gospel to all - Jews and Gentiles alike. It is a universal mission: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature."

4. The Lord also speaks of the fate of preaching the Gospel: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned."

4.1 The preaching of the Gospel is accompanied by persuasive signs. Some begin to believe. They profess their faith in Jesus

and are baptized. The response of faith is sealed by Baptism. It is the outward sign of faith in Christ. It is the means of entrance into the Community of the Risen Lord, the Church. In future, they will be judged and saved.

4.2 Despite the persuasive and convincing signs some refuse to believe. They are obdurate. In future, they will be condemned. Who will be condemned? Those failed to be baptized will not be condemned. Condemnation is for those who do not believe. Further, Baptism without faith has no saving power.

5. "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned." Today we are cautious to preach this statement. It dualistically equates faith in Christ with salvation and disbelief with condemnation.

Today disbelief flows from many factors. For example, people do not accept the Gospel because of the unconvincing signs. The Gospel is preached by some who scarcely resemble Christ. Hence the Church, the Community of the Risen Lord, has to pause and ponder where she stands today, what she is doing, why she could succeed in some missions, why she failed in some other missions and what measures she can take to better her mission. The World Mission Sunday is an apt wake-up call or a time of grace to weigh her mission in all its aspects and look into new horizons and avenues of evangelization.

6. "But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs." The Lord, enthroned "at the right hand of

God," does not abandon His disciples. He continues to work. He reinforces them and gives them courage. He cooperates with their endeavours. He confirms the Message of His disciples and puts it more forcefully into effect through signs. The signs also show that His power and life are now given to them. They authenticate the disciples. This power manifests wider as they are now going into "the whole world" and "to every creature."

The Church always possesses the gift of miracles. The march of faith is always accompanied by sufficient signs. For example, miracles in the Early Church such as exorcisms, prophecies, gift of tongue, cures and resuscitations are well attested by Justin, Tertullian and Irenaeus. The infant Church needed them. The adult Church is not without them.

Rev. Fr. D. Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

Lead us to Christ, O Mary our Mother"

Devotion to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary at Talangama Parish



Pope Pius IX declared that "The Rosary is the most efficacious means of increasing in the hearts of the faithful devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary."

"Preach My Rosary. It alone will suffice to destroy heresy and foster virtue and will be a great and singular safeguard to the Church of God." Such were the words of Our Lady to St. Dominic, the herald of the Rosary.

October 7th, is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. It was instituted by Pope Saint Pius V to mark the anniversary of the Christian victory over the infidel forces at Lepanto in 1561 - a victory attributed to Our Lady's intercession through the recitation of the Rosary.

The Holy Rosary is a prayer for all centuries. Pope Paul said: "It is my favourite prayer. A marvellous prayer. Marvellous in its simplicity and in its depth." It is so simple that we do not need to be theologians to say this prayer! This is why the family Rosary holds a special place in our homes for even children can join in it, and the family that prays together. It brings very special graces and blessings. Instead of wasting time watching television, how much nicer it would be if we make a special time for offering our Rosaries to Our Blessed Mother and obtaining Her blessings and powerful protection. The Rosary increases our faith, for in the "I believe" we profess our faith in God. The "Our Father" is the prayer taught by Jesus Himself when the disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. The "Hail Mary" is Scriptural and the Gloria brings us to the inner life of the Blessed Trinity.

Pope Pius XII described the Rosary as "the compendium of the whole Gospel." This is true, for in the succession of Hail Mary's we contemplate on the mysteries. The "Hail Mary" - composed in Heaven is the Angel's greeting to Mary and Elizabeth's proclamation as she was filled with the Holy Spirit. And so we pray: "Hail Mary, full of grace the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus" (Luke 1:28, 42). We then beg of Mary's intercession: " Holy Mary, Mother of God pray for us sin-

ners now and at the hour of our death." Thus, each "Hail Mary" is a powerful prayer for she who is closest to God prays for us the moment we cry out to Her and very specially at our journey's end. Just for a moment ponder on this face and we will realise how the Mother of God who is closest to Her son in each "Hail Mary" intercedes for us and Her intercession is so powerful even as Jesus' first miracle was performed at the request of Mary. And never was it known that anyone who fled to Mary's protection, implored Her help or sought Her intercession was left unaided.

If only our separated brethren could understand the Scriptural role of Mary in our lives, it will not be difficult for them to accept Her as their mother and honour Her. In the *Magnificat* (Mary's Song of Praise), She proclaimed, "For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done great things: and holy is his name" (Lk. 1:46-54). From the Cross Jesus Himself gave Mary to us as our mother, let us pray that all Christians will accept and honour Her. Indeed all generations shall call Her blessed! And this prophecy is being fulfilled in the Rosary! Our Lady's favourite prayer is the Rosary and since she prays for us sinners, She has repeatedly in Her apparitions - as in Lourdes and Fatima requested for us to Pray the Rosary. Let us remember it is not just the rattling off the prayers, but we must offer our Rosaries with love and devotion whilst contemplating on the mysteries for then only will it be fruitful and draw us closer to Her Son, our saviour.

Of all the Mysteries (Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious) - the one most closest to my heart are the Sorrowful Mysteries - for in contemplating Jesus' intense sufferings and agonizing death on the Cross, I am also drawn close to His sorrowful Mother who shared in the sufferings of Her only Son. Thereby I realise how great indeed has been the love of Jesus for me to have suffered and died such an ignominious death so that I might have eternal life. Yes, it is for us, sinners, Christ sacrificed His life, and it is only when we stand at the foot of the Cross can we realise that He paid the price for OUR sins - and I am reminded tearfully it was for MY sins.

How I wish and pray I could be like Mary, pure and sinless! Mary is the "Hope of sinners, as wax melts before the fire," says St. Bonaventure, "so the wicked spirit lose their energies in the presence of souls truly devoted to Mary and so as I pray the Rosary, pray for us sinners I know that Mother Mary understands my human weakness and prays very specially for me, a sinner."



Let us take time and ask ourselves the question. "What does the Rosary mean to me?" To me the Rosary is **my guiding light** which lights up my darkened way pointing out the correct path to follow Jesus on the road to Calvary. This is narrow and difficult to follow, unlike the broad and easy way that leads to destruction - which sadly, many in this world follow today.

The Rosary is **my unfailing strength** and gives me the necessary courage to carry my cross daily in order to be Christ's disciple.

The Rosary is **my great comfort** and even the touch of each bead brings solace in moments of sickness, pain and sorrow.

The Rosary is **my armour and shield** and protects me from the evil one and helps me fight temptation.

The Rosary is **my inspiring teacher** and counsels me to do the correct things in life.

The Rosary is **my strong chain** which draws me up to Heaven.

The Rosary is **my true joy** to experience the blessed presence of Jesus and Mary always with me.

The Rosary is **my priceless treasure** more precious than gold.

The Rosary is **my constant companion** - who will be with me in this life and all the prayers I have offered will accompany me in death.

Through the prayer of the Holy Rosary untold blessings have been showered upon mankind. So let us love Rosaries, carry them with us always and pray the Rosary daily. Then Mother Mary will surely lead us to Christ.

Lilian Ferdinands

Teachers have important role to play in shaping the life of a Child



Bishop of Ratnapura



"Children have a quality of simplicity. They have the ability to respond to love with freedom. They have the quality of spontaneous obedience out of love which most of the elders

do not possess. They are a treasure not only to the family but to the entire society. This treasure should be safeguarded and developed."

The Bishop of Ratnapura, His Lordship,

Rt. Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandarasiri Perera OSB, said so addressing the annual concert of Yatiyantota Good Shepherd Montessori held at Dr. N.M. Perera Central College recently. The Principal Rev. Sr. Marie Lourdes welcomed His Lordship and other invitees.

His Lordship said, that our mental stress disappears when we see our children singing, dancing and acting on the stage. They are a panacea for all our worries. Parents

leave their children under the care of the teachers with great enthusiasm. Teachers have the great responsibility of building the future of the children through imparting knowledge and nurturing them with spiritual qualities to become disciplined members of society and develop their skills.

In our day, His Lordship continued, we learnt English as the main subject along with our mother tongue. Children from all races studied to-

gether and we moved as children of the same family. Everything went topsy-turvy after the schools take over. Children were separated on ethnic basis. English language which linked children from all races was a thing of the past. Today we see discipline rule the roost and there is unrest in schools and universities. We must learn to respect the custom, culture and language of other races, he said.

Text and Pix by J. Antony

Young World

First Holy Communion at Nayabedde Parish



Thirteen children from the Parish of Annai Vellakanni Church, Nayabedde in the Diocese of Badulla, received First Holy Communion.

Picture shows the children in a group photograph with the Parish Priest Very Rev. Fr. Marshall Rajanayagam.

Noel Weeratunga

"Youth Gathering" at Nattandiya Parish



A talent show to bring together children of all churches belonging to the Parish of Nattandiya, was organised recently to inculcate the importance of

oneness among the youth of the Parish. The talent show was titled "Youth Gathering."

Shriyangani Felicia

First Holy Communion at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine



Sixty eight children belonging to Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nattandiya received First Holy Communion recently.

Shriyangani Felicia

Teachers' Day in Diyalagoda



The Daham Pasal of the Church of St. Sebastian in Diyalagoda, paid tribute to its teachers as they celebrated Teachers' Day on October 12. The Daham Pasal prefects under the guidance of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Dinesh Taranga Keerthis-

inghe organized a meaningful service to mark the event.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. Dinesh, Rev. Sr. Ayomi, Rev. Sr. Bethelda and Daham Pasal teachers being taken in procession to the main venue.

D. Anselm Fernando

First Holy Communion at Ekala Church



Sixteen children of St. Mathew's Daham Pasala (English Medium) received First Holy Communion, recently at St. Mathew's Church, Ekala.

Bro. T. J. Justus. CMSF

St. Jude's College Prefects' Investiture 2014



Prefect's Investiture 2014

The Prefects' Investiture of St. Jude's College, Kurana, Negombo was held recently.

Picture shows the newly elected prefects in a group photograph with

Rev. Fr. Rohitha Rodrigo (Rector), Rev. Fr. Dinush Gayan, Rev. Fr. Leslie Fernando, Rev. Sr. Mercy Fernando and teachers in charge, Miss K. H. A. A. Nirosha, Mr. Nicholas Fernando and Mrs. Thilini Gomis.

Retired Principal felicitated



After serving as the Principal with sincere dedication for over 18 years at St. Cecilia's Girls' College, Batticaloa, Rev. Sr. Mary Elizabeth A.C. was felicitated at the valedictory ceremony organised by the School Development Committee. of St. Cecilia's in a majestic manner.

The highlight of the ceremony was the reading of a poem about Rev. Sr. Elizabeth, written by an eminent poet and the release of a souvenir, which was brought together by the compilation of various articles on Rev. Sr. Elizabeth from within the island and around the world by students, teachers and well-wishers.

M. Nayantara Jeyaraj,

125th Programme for Youth



A preparatory programme for children receiving Confirmation was conducted by Mr. Kumara Nayanajith of the Gnanartha Pradeepaya at the Godella Parish in the Chilaw Diocese under the guidance of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Maurice Anderson. This was Mr. Nayanajith's 125th programme.

Cyril Perera

English with Fun and Entertainment

Dear Readers,

In our 48th lesson we learnt some great quotes from St. Francis of Assisi, matched proverbs with their interpretations, learnt a beautiful conversation with delicate shades of meaning of words for vocabulary enrichment.

In this lesson we'll read a lot about St. Teresa of Avila, read the scene 11 of the visit to Sri Lanka and learn some hints about punctuation marks, a request made by one of our beloved readers.

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

God Bless You!
NJ

Teresa of Avila quotes

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. "May today there be peace within." | "Be gentle to all, and stern with yourself." |
| May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be? | "It is love alone that gives worth to all things." |
| May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith? | "It is foolish to think that we will enter heaven without entering into ourselves." |
| May you use those gifts that you have received and pass on the love that has been given to you? | "If this is how you treat your friends, no wonder you have so many enemies." |
| May you be content knowing you are a child of God? | "Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. Everything passes away except God." |
| "Untilled ground, however rich, will bring forth thistles and thorns; so also the mind of man | "The closer one approaches to God, the simpler one becomes." |

Activity 1: Read about the St. Teresa of Avila with the help of the similar words for difficult words given with brackets.



St. Teresa of Avila

St Teresa of Ávila (March 28, 1515 – October 4, 1582) was a **prominent** (conspicuous) Carmelite nun and Spanish **mystic** (spiritual) St Teresa had many mystical (supernatural) experiences she tried to **reflect**(replicate) in poems. She took an active role in the Carmelite order and was later **canonized** (beatified) a saint by the Roman Catholic church.

St Teresa of Avila was born in Avila, Spain on 15th March 1515. She had a natural **charm** (charisma) and found it easy to make friends. In return she enjoyed the **compliments** (salutations) and friendships of others. However, she was not at peace, considering herself to be a **miserable** (wretched) sinner; later she would look back in **guilt** (fame) at her early life. Her parents **inspired** (stirred) their daughter to take up a life of prayer. The experiences were so **transforming**,(converting) she at times felt the **illuminating** (lighting) grace of God would wash her soul away. She was so filled with divine **contemplation (meditation)** it is said at times her body would **spontaneously**(impulsively) **levitate.(float)** Teresa, however was not **keen** (profound) on these public displays of '**miracles**'.(marvels) When she felt it happening she would ask other nuns to sit on her to prevent her floating away.

*"I threw myself down in **despair** (misery) before an image of the Mother of God. With many tears, I **implored** (beseeched) the Holy Virgin to become my mother now. **Uttered** (articulated) with the **simplicity** (ease) of a child, this prayer was heard. From that hour on, I never prayed to the Virgin in vain." (1)*

When she was a little better she **resumed** (recommenced) her prayers with **renewed** (transformed) vigour. However on telling others of her **visions** (apparitions) and spiritual experiences certain clergy felt they were just **delusions** (misconceptions) of the devil. As a result, for many years Teresa lost the **confidence** (self-reliance) to **pursue** (follow) her prayers and her spiritual life was almost put on hold. However, when Teresa was 41, she met a Priest who **convinced** (persuaded) her to go back to her prayers and implore (plead) God to come back. She became **absorbed** (engrossed) in deep contemplation and felt an ever growing sense of **oneness** (unanimity) with God. At times she felt overwhelmed (stunned) with divine love. Teresa was not just a quiet, placid saint. She had an **endearing** (charming), natural quality; her life energy attracted and inspired many who were close. They admired her for both her outer charm and inner **serenity** (tranquility). But at the same time her religious **ecstasies** (delights)also caused jealousy and **suspicious**.(doubts)

At the age of 43 St Teresa decided she wanted to **found** (initiate) a new order committing to the **values** (tenets) of poverty and **simplicity**.(ease) She wanted to move away from her present convent which made a life of prayer more difficult. Initially her aims were greeted with widespread opposition from within the town of Avila. However, with the support of some Priests, the opposition **waned** (diminished) and she was allowed to set up her first convent. St Teresa proved to be an **influential** (powerful) leader and founder. She guided the nuns not just through strict **disciplines**, (chastisements) but also through the power of love, and common sense. Her way was not the way of **rigid** (severe) **asceticism** (austerity) and self denial.

Poetry of St Teresa Avila – Recite the two poems given beautifully. Learn with the words given

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| (1) "God alone is enough." Let nothing upset you, let nothing startle you. All things pass; God does not change. Patience wins all it seeks. Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone is enough | (2) "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours, Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good; Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now." |
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Activity 2: Visiting Sri Lanka Scene Two - Read aloud and play different role and practice.

Upali : Akka, we have a visitor.Mrs.Stefan this is my sister Geetha.Akka this Mrs. Anna Stefan.
Geetha : How do you do?
Anna : Glad to meet you.
Upali : Their car has broken down. I've sent for Martin Baas.
Could you look after Mrs. Stefan for a while. I'll go back to Mr. Stefan.
He'll need my help.
Geetha : Come Mrs. Stefan. Come and sit down. You must be hot and tired.
Anna : Yes. I'm rather. We've been travelling for nearly three hours this morning.
Geetha : Where are you going?
Anna : We are on our way to Dunhinda Falls
Geetha : I hear it's a nice place. My brother has been there...
Where do you come from Anna?
Anna : I'm from Switzerland. My husband comes from England.
I hear you are a teacher. What do you teach?
Geetha : I teach Sinhala and History in the village school.
Anna : You don't teach English, then?
Geetha : I don't.
Maria : But your English is superb.
Geetha : Your English is excellent too, although you are Swiss.
Anna : Well, many of us in Switzerland speak two or three languages and I have been in England for many years.

Activity3: Imagine you are Geetha and ask ten questions that you would ask Anna to sustain the conversation. Leave space for Maria's response.

Activity 4 –Learn about punctuation - English Punctuation (to be continued)

Punctuations are symbols used to organize sentence structures. They are standard marks and signs in writing to separate words into sentences, clauses, and phrases in order to clarify meaning. The most commonly used punctuations in the English language are :

- (i) period, (ii) comma, (iii) colon, (iv) semicolon,
- (v) apostrophe, (vi) question mark, (vii)exclamation mark,
- (viii) dash, (ix) hyphen, and (x) parentheses. Period
- (xi) or (full stop (xii) The period is the most basic punctuation mark.

Its function is to separate one sentence from another. It is used at the end of a complete sentence. It is also used in abbreviations.

Examples

- a) Paris is the capital of France.
- b) He was born in Hungary, but now he lives in England.
- c) The accessibility of the computer has increased tremendously over the past several years.

The period is also used to show that certain words are abbreviated.

- a) He works from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- b) There are a lot of places to visit in the U.K.



The Life of the Apostle of Sri Lanka

Blessed Joseph Vaz was born on April 21, 1651, in Benavilium, Goa India, His parents Christopher Vaz and Maria de Miranda were devout Catholics. Blessed Joseph Vaz (Sinhala - *Bhaagyawantha Jose Vaz Piyathuma*) was the third of six children.

Fr. Vaz, hearing the distressful situation of Catholics in Ceylon who reportedly had no priests for many years, volunteered to come to Ceylon to the rescue of the Ceylonese Catholics, but instead he was given a post in India which he occupied for three years. In 1686 he obtained permission to give up this office and proceed to Ceylon. As Fr. Vaz entered Ceylon during the Dutch rule when Calvinism had been imposed as the official religion, he travelled throughout the island barefoot bringing the Eucharist and Sacraments to clandestine groups

of Catholics. Later in his mission, he found shelter in the Kandyan kingdom where he was able to work freely.

During his mission he performed many miracles. One of his major miracles was, the rain miracle in Kandy. Normally the kingdom of Kandy got rain at the end of the month of May. But in the year when this miracle occurred, there was no rain at all. Drought reigned throughout the year.

Then king Wimala Dharma Suriya who came to know about this situation ordered the Buddhist monks to offer sacrifices invoking the aid of Buddha, but no rain came. Then the Tamil magicians were called, with the same negative result. Finally the Kandyan King called Fr. Vaz to pray to God to save his people from famine. Fr. Vaz in response made an altar in the town

and placed a crucifix on it to pray. Many people who joined him, knelt down and started praying. As they were praying, the rain started to flow, which continued for hours. This was also a result of his faith and prayers.

His death occurred on January 16, 1711. He was only 59 years old. By the time of his death Fr. Vaz managed to rebuild the Catholic Church in the island. As a result of his tireless labours Fr. Vaz is known as the Apostle of Ceylon, now Sri Lanka.

On January 21, 1995 he was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Colombo. He will be canonised in January 14, 2015 by Pope Francis in Sri Lanka. As Sri Lankans, we call Blessed Joseph Vaz, the Apostle of Our island. We celebrate his feast on January 16, every year.

W. Dulika Rasanjali, St. Anne's English Medium College, Chilaw.

YOUNGEST NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER SAYS, AWARD SIGNALS ONLY START OF HER CAMPAIGNING FOR CHILD EDUCATION



Malala Yousafzai

Education campaigner Malala Yousafzai revealed she learnt she had won the Nobel peace prize in her chemistry lesson, when she spoke of her honour at receiving the accolade.

Speaking after finishing the school day at Edgbaston High School for Girls in Birmingham, the 17-year-old said: "I'm proud I'm the first Pakistani and the first young woman or the first young person who is getting this award. It's a great honour for me.

"I'm also really happy that I'm sharing this award with a person from India, whose name is Kailash Satyarthi. His great work for children's rights and against child slavery totally inspires me.

"I'm really happy there are so many people working for children's rights and I'm not alone. He totally deserves this award and I'm really honoured that I'm sharing this award with him.

"We are the two Nobel award receivers - one is from Pakistan, one is from India. One believes in

St. John Dal Bastone Church, Talangama organises Residential Leadership Camp



The first ever residential leadership camp for the children of the Sumudu Daham Pasala of St. John Dal Bastone Church in Talangama was held recently at the Sethsarana Model Farm in Madampe.

Responding to an invitation by Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, to encourage Catholic children to spend their School holidays in a meaningful manner, the Catechists under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Sanjeewa Mendis, Parish Priest organized this camp for the prefects and senior students to provide them an opportunity for greater fellowship and networking in an atmosphere of learning, through fun filled games, team and confidence building activities.

Thirty seven children accompanied by Fr. Sanjeewa, four Catechists and a parent travelled in

a specially organised bus to Sethsarana, one of the more recent retreat and training centers set up by the Archdiocese of Colombo. A warm welcome was accorded by the Director of the Centre, Rev Fr. Rohan De Alwis who began the programme with prayer and went on to conduct the ice breaker "web of friendship" which helped the children to get to know each other closely at the very outset of the programme. He then delivered an inspiring talk on the importance of living a Christ like life.

The participants were thereafter divided into three groups, setting the stage for the children to interact as a team for the many interesting group activities that followed.

These activities were conducted professionally by a team of trainers under the guidance of Sethsarana and consisted

of a variety of programmes that included an obstacle race, a session on physical training, drama and a number of other interesting activities not forgetting a sing song and dance session, the highlight of the evening on the first day that was enjoyed by all. The participation by the children was excellent and their talent amazing.

Adventure activities such as rope walking, zip lining, a tunnel crawl were a novel experience for the children which helped build the much needed confidence in themselves. There were also Self Development activities that made the children think "out of the box" a skill they were happy to be exposed to.

The final day of the camp began with the Eucharistic Celebration presided by Fr. Sanjeewa. In his inspiring homily on the Liturgy for the day on the memorial of the

Passion of St. John the Baptist, he enlightened the children on the courageous testimony of a life that was just and truthful.

Consultant and Trainer Mr Titus Dharasiri conducted a session on leadership giving the children an insight to the qualities of a leader taking examples from successful leaders in the world and sighting Jesus Christ as the greatest leader history has ever known.

In his imitable style he also gently advised the children on some important facts of life that they should remember when they step out into the world which will be remembered by them for many years to come.

The success of the camp cannot be mentioned in words. The brief evaluation that was presented by each of the three groups at the end of the sessions said it all. The children were overwhelmed with the spiritual up-liftment they received, the novel experiences they gained, the new friends they made and the fellowship they enjoyed. Most importantly they are now one united family, brimming with confidence, carrying pleasant memories of an unforgettable holiday season, eagerly looking forward to more opportunities of this nature in the future.

Special mention



must be made of the Director and staff of Sethsarana for the excellent arrangements that had been made, the trainers for a well thought out and planned programme, Fr Sanjeewa for being there right throughout, inspiring and encouraging the children and the Catechists for dedicating their time to be with the chil-

dren to make the camp a memorable one for them.

Needless to say if camps of this nature are organized at Parish level at least on an annual basis it certainly will be a step in the right direction that will help mould children to be worthy citizens to society.

Denise Abeyaratne