

**Our Lord  
Jesus Christ,**



**King of the  
Universe  
November 24**

# Messenger



**Presentation  
of the  
Blessed  
Virgin  
Mary  
Nov  
21**

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## Feast of Christ the King ushers in 'Marian Year'

**A**t a special Eucharistic Celebration to be held at St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kotehena, the Archdiocese of Colombo will celebrate the conclusion of the *Year of Faith* on Sunday, November 24, the Feast of Christ the King and, simultaneously mark the inauguration of the *Marian Year* of the Archdiocese. The *Marian Year* will conclude on November 30, 2014.

According to the Archdiocesan Bulletin,

*Koinonia* the ceremony at the Cathedral will be presided over by the Bishops and parishes of the four deaneries of Colombo (North, Centre, South and Kotte), are requested to join in the celebrations at the Cathedral.

All other deaneries in the Archdiocese will celebrate the inauguration at a parish level on November 24 at 6.30 pm as a par-liturgical service. All schools will organize the

inauguration ceremony on Monday, November 25.

Meanwhile the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith has requested the Archdiocesan Liturgy Office to print the Pastoral Letter on the *Marian Year* in all three languages and distribute it to all parishes to be made available to the faithful at a nominal amount.

In his Pastoral Letter issued on

September 8, 2013 His Eminence explains that, "the *Marian Year* would be a fitting continuity of the *Year of Faith* as Mary is truly the best example of a life filled with faith, for it is through her "let it be" (*fiat*), given in deep faith that God's divine plan became a reality."

In order to motivate the faithful to make the *Marian Year* "truly a force for spiritual renewal in the Archdiocese," His

Eminence has suggested "special orientations" in the parishes. The parishes should have:

- Programmes to create greater awareness among the faithful on the vital and guiding role of Mary in the salvation history.
- The return to Confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation), as a prelude to experiencing God's mercy and love.
- Awareness on the importance of greater

commitment to individual and family prayer, especially the meditations on the Family Rosary as mysteries of God's Love.

d) An even more enthusiastic response from parishioners to participate in pilgrimages to Marian Shrines and the Archdiocesan pilgrimage to Madhu to be held from May 14-17, 2014.

e) A greater sense of concern for the poor in imitation of the Blessed Mother.

### Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Ratnapura gets a new look



**C**athedral of Ss. Peter and Paul in Ratnapura underwent a major renovation recently.

Last week the Cathedral Church was blessed and consecrated by their Lordships, Rt.

Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandrasiri Perera (Bishop of Ratnapura) Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Fernando (Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo) and Rt. Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickremasinghe (Bishop of Galle). Also present at the celebrations were Very Rev. Fr. Michael Kelly, World Provincial OSB, and Rev. Fr. Damian

Fernando, Vicar General Ratnapura.  
**Theobald Samarutunga**

### Benedictine Requiem Mass

**S**t. Benedict's College Old Boys' Union will be having their annual Eucharistic Celebration in remembrance of the dearly departed members of the Benedictine family on Friday, November 22, 2013 at 6.00 p.m. at the College Main Hall.

The Benedictine fraternity is invited to congregate together along with their family members at this Eucharistic Celebration to offer prayers and thanksgiving for all the dearly departed Benedictine family members, who worked and served our beloved school in the years gone by.

**General Secretary,  
St. Benedict's College  
Old Boys' Union**

### Farewell to a past Director of the Colombo Catholic Press

**F**ormer Director of the Colombo Catholic Press, Rev. Fr. Bertram Dabrera was called to Eternal Rest in the Lord on Sunday, November 10, 2013.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, November 12, at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Maligawatte.

Fr. Dabrera who was Director of the Colombo Catholic Press for 17 years, served as the Procurator General of the Archdiocese of Colombo, Parish Priest of All Saints' Church, Borella and Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Maligawatte.



**Rev. Fr. Bertram Dabrera**

We at the Colombo Catholic Press extend our sincere sympathies to his family and share in their sorrow.

May he rest in peace in the Lord!

(Contd on Pg. 8&9) >>>

### New Province Leader for Sisters' of the Good Shepherd

**R**ev. Sr. Francine Muthugala has been elected as the new Province Leader of the Sisters' of the Good Shepherd for the Province of Sri Lanka / Pakistan, at the 18th Province Chapter of Sri Lanka / Pakistan held recently at the Provincial House at Good Shepherd Convent Nayakakanda.

Present on the occasion was Rev. Sr. Brigid Lawlor, the Congregational Leader and her Councillors.



Sr. Anita Fernando, Sr. Prisca Perera Sr. Celinta Fernando, and Sr. Marie Euphrasia Anthonipillai were elected to the Council of Apostolic Sisters while Sr. Patricia

Perera (Contemplative Sister) was elected by the Contemplative delegates, for the Council of Contemplative Sisters. Two councilors for Apostolic Sisters and one councilor for the Contemplative Sisters will be appointed later by the new leadership.

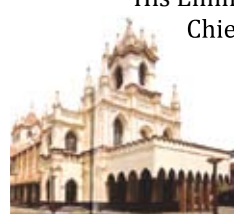
The new Team will hold a term of office lasting 6 years which will commence on February 2, 2014.

**Rev. Sr. M. Mendis**

### Sunday Holy Mass for CHOGM Delegates

His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will be the Chief Celebrant at the Holy Mass celebrated at All Saints' Church, Borella on Sunday, November 17, at 6.30 a.m.

We invite all our CHOGM Catholic brethren to participate at this Eucharistic Celebration.





## FROM THE DIOCESES

## Catholic Professionals and Business circle meet at Bambalapitiya

The Catholic Professionals and Business Circle was formed at St. Mary's Church, Bambalapitiya, under the guidance of the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Sunil De Silva.

The first meeting consisting 42 members of different calibre of Professionals and business circle, was held on November 7, 2013 at the Bambalapitiya Church and Fr. Sunil addressing the Professionals' Circle, said "This Circle is open to men and women professionals and business

people of the Catholic faith. We provide a forum for Catholics of the greater Colombo area to meet one another and to collaborate in professional, social, and apostolic activities. This is also to aim at co-responsibility and collective leadership, so as to build a participatory Church."

Judge C. J. Weeramantry, world-renowned legal scholar and a former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice, addressing the gathering said, "There is

a greater need to promote Peace Education at different levels and to promote reconciliation among the communities. Peace education needs to be introduced into schools at all levels with instructions to children about their duties of making whatever contribution they can towards building a peaceful Sri Lanka over the ashes of war." Judge Weeramantry also said, that it is the urgent need of the hour to facilitate cross-cultural understanding among all and to promote inter-religious meetings".

Geoffrey Alagaratnam. President's Counsel, said, "We need to work towards a common purpose to uplift the civil society and to address the issues of the people not in an aggressive way, but in a different way."

Fr. Sunil informed the gathering, that our unit will be a part of the Business and Professionals Association, functioning under the guidance of His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, the Archbishop of Colombo.

**Bambalapitiya Church correspondent**

## Nuncio presides at feast of Ss Peter and Paul



His Excellency, Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spiteri, Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka was the Chief Celebrant at the annual feast of Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Ratnapura.

Picture shows the Apostolic Nuncio, the Bishop of Ratnapura, Rt. Rev. Dr. Cletus Chandrasiri Perera and the Governor of the Central Province, W.J.M. Lokubandara being accompanied to the Cathedral.

**Theobald Samaratinga**

## Caritas water projects in five Dioceses



The construction of 20 wells is in progress in various locations in the Dioceses of Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Mannar, Kurunegala and Kandy under the "Water Resource Management and Women's Empowerment Project" of Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC.

In addition, in Jaffna Diocese 50 water storage tanks have been provided to families living in the village of Velanai, while a rainwater harvesting tank is being constructed in Pungudutivu and 15 wells are being renovated in Ariyalai.

In Kandy Diocese, a water conveyor is also being repaired in the village of Pattiyagama, Deltota. Two additional rainwater harvesting tanks have been completed in the villages of Mankumban and Mandaitivu in Jaffna Diocese.

**Ainslie Joseph**

## Feast of St. Jude's Church, Halkandawila



The Annual Feast of St. Jude's Church, Halkandawila (Diyalagoda Parish) was celebrated last Sunday. The chief celebrant at Festive Mass was Rev. Fr. Noel Dias, Vice Judicial Vicar, Archdiocese of Colombo.

Picture shows the Rev. Fathers lighting the oil lamp. After the Festive Mass the statue of St. Jude was carried in procession.

**D. Anselm Fernando**

## Good deed by Parishioners of Madampella



Parishioners and Parish Priest of St. Sebastian's Church, Otharawadi, Katana, Madampella got together to build a house for the Sacristan of their Church.

Picture shows the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. Laknath Cooray with the family after the blessing of the house.

**H.A. Caldera**

## Annual Church Feast at Yatiyantota Parish



Rev. Fr. Satheesh from Kurunegala Diocese presided at the 118th annual feast of St. Mary's Church, Yatiyantota recently.

Vespers was sung with the participation of Rev. Fr. Bastian Pillai, Parish Priest of Kudagama while novenas were conducted by Rev. Fr. Niroshan Vaas, Director, Catechetical Centre, Ratnapura Diocese.

All arrangements were made under the supervision of the Parish Priest Rev. Fr. K. Devaraja and the Parish Council.

Picture shows the statue of Our Lady taken in procession.

**Text & pic J. Antony**

## Bolawalana Elders Celebrate "World Elders' Day"



Bolawalana Elders celebrated 'World Elders' Day' at Bolawalana Nimala Maria Maha Vidyalaya with song, dance and drama performed by members. The events culminated with the distribution of a handsome parcel of dry rations to needy elders and presentation of gifts to all the singers and performers followed by lunch.

Among the guests were the Negombo Divisional Secretary, A.R.K. Alawatte, Principal, Nimala Maria Maha Vidyalaya, Kamal Fernando, the President of Negombo Elders' Balamandalaya, H. Mapalagama and the President of Angurukaramulla Elders' Society, Morel Kotikawatte.

**Dilantha Ferdinando**

## Feast of St. Jude's Church, Dunkannawa



The feast of St. Jude's Church, Dunkannawa was held recently with Festive Mass celebrated by Rev. Fr. Ranjith de Mel of the Diocese of Anuradhapura.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. de Mel lighting the oil lamp before the celebration of the Mass.

**Shriyangani Felicia**

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# Church in the Modern World

## "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit"

EWTN - The moment Pope Francis kissed a man suffering from a rare disfiguring disease has drawn comparisons with his namesake, St Francis of Assisi, who was famously said to have embraced a leper.

The Argentine Pope was ending his weekly audience in St Peter's Square on Wednesday when he turned his attention to the man, who

suffers from neurofibromatosis, an illness which causes tumours all over the body.

Images of Pope Francis kissing and hugging the man quickly circulated the world, furthering his rapidly growing reputation as "the people's pope" and winning praise from commentators for his compassion.

Pope Francis, whose real name is Jorge Ber-

goglio, was known in his former role as the Archbishop of Buenos Aires for his concern for social issues and preference for a modest lifestyle.

He was famed for shunning the archbishop's lavish residence in the Argentine capital, instead living in a simple apartment, cooking his own meals and using public transportation.



*Pope Francis and the disfigured man*

### Vatican donates \$150,000 to 'Yolanda' victims

MANILA BULLETIN - Vatican has donated US\$150,000 to the victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines.

The Pontifical Council Cor Unum informed the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) regarding the monetary gift in a letter dated November 12.

"The Holy Father Pope Francis, through the Pontifical Council Cor Unum has decided to send an initial contribution of US\$150,000 for the assistance of the population," the letter signed by Msgr. Seamus Horgan, Charge d Affairs of the Cor Unum read.

"That sum, which will be distributed through the local Church in the regions most severely touched by the calamity, will be dedicated to supporting actions in favor of those displaced and those affected by flooding and it represents an initial and immediate expression of the sentiments of spiritual closeness and fatherly encouragement of the Supreme Pontiff towards the persons and the areas devastated by the storm," it said. Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo, the head of the social action arm of the CBBP National Secretariat for Social Action and the National Director of Caritas Philippines which is currently collecting donations for the typhoon victims, said the Cor Unum is the department of charity of the Vatican.

Aside from the Vatican donation, Pabillo also revealed that they also received pledges of support from their international partners.

"We received pledges from Caritas Australia, Caritas Norway and Caritas US...these are the different arm of the bishops conferences abroad," he said.

### Pope expresses solidarity with victims of Philippines typhoon

ZENIT - Catholic Bishops of the Philippines are calling for a novena of prayer and charity for victims of a massive typhoon which has claimed the lives of an estimated 10,000 people. Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, Media Director of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, told Vatican Radio the funds raised during the novena, which runs from 11 to 19 November, will be channeled to the crisis region through Caritas Philippines.

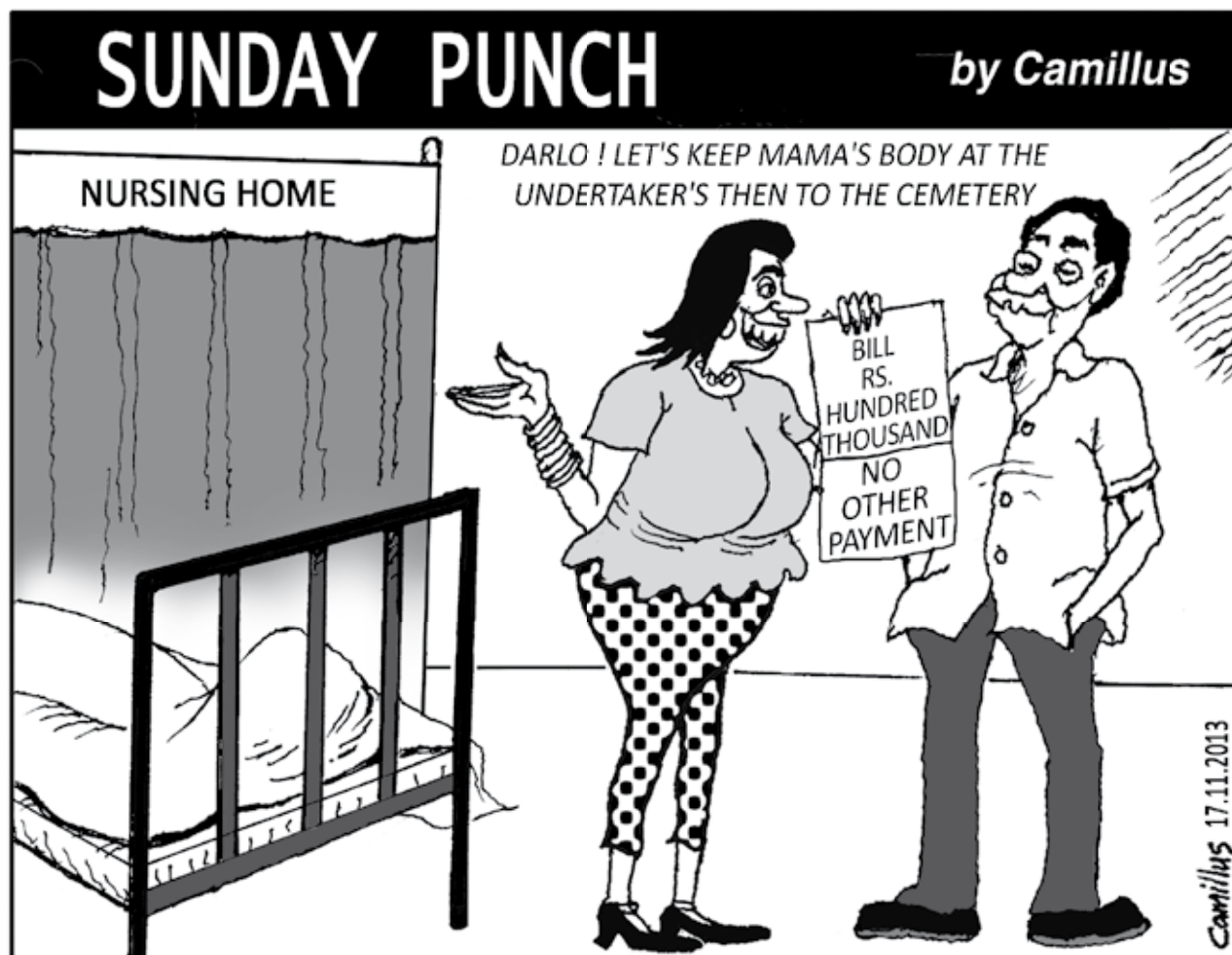
Typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, made landfall on 8 November, driving some 600,000 people from their homes and causing widespread destruction, especially in the Leyte province.

During his weekly Sunday Angelus, Pope Francis prayed for the



people of the Philippines, calling for those in the region to both pray for the suffering and to provide concrete aid.

Three days after the storm struck the country, more than 9.5 million people are in need of aid across nine provinces.



Vatican Secretary of State Archbishop Pietro Parolin has also sent a telegram to Philippine president Benigno Aquino III on behalf of the Holy Father. He writes that the Pope is "deeply saddened by the destruction and loss of life caused by the super typhoon," and that he "expresses his heartfelt solidarity with all those affected by this storm and its aftermath."

The Pope also offered his encouragement to civil authorities and emergency personnel as they work to bring aid to the victims of the storm.

Executive Secretary of Caritas Philippines-NASSA, Rev. Fr. Edwin

Gariguez, said: "It's the first time the Philippines has experienced a disaster of this magnitude. Despite the precautions, this was beyond all expectations. We couldn't imagine a storm of this size hitting the Philippines."

The vast majority of casualties were in the Leyte province, where a tidal surge of nearly 10 feet destroyed the region's capital, Tacloban City.

Caritas and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) teams managed to reach the Leyte island to assess the humanitarian situation.

Catholic Churches, convents, and schools were also damaged by the typhoon.





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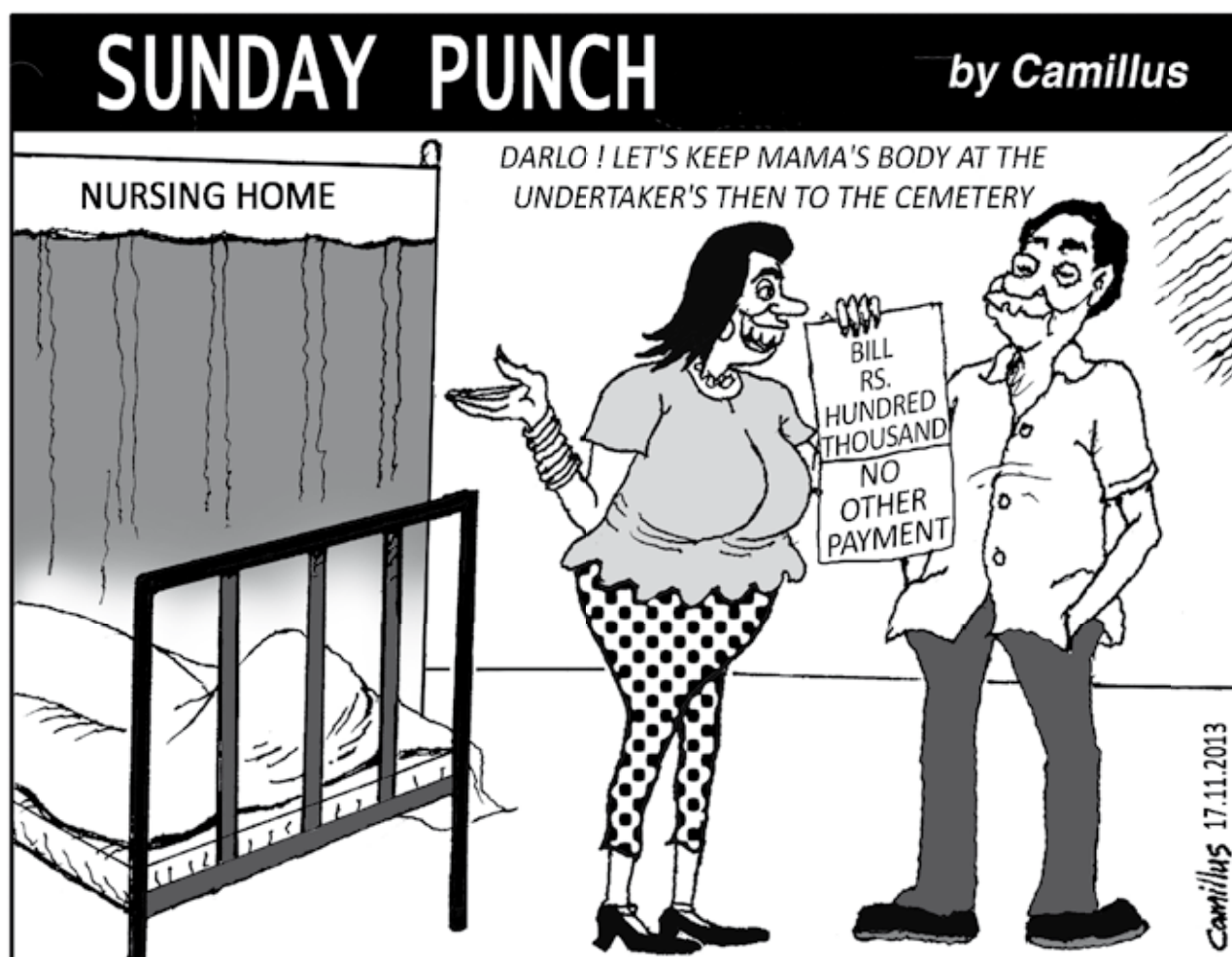
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# Forgotten War Heroes

Every year at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, sirens are sounded and a grateful world stands in silence and thinks of the gallant people who died to keep Democracy alive. Nobody, however seems to think of the men who fought the good fight but instead of dying, lived on to tell their children and grandchildren of the perils they had faced and the dangers they had passed.

## VETERANS

The veterans of World War I in Ceylon have been dwindling steadily and today we are left with exactly one, even to revive memories of Mademoiselle from Armentieres who according to a bawdy barrack-room ballad, had not been kissed for forty years. He is R. Y. Daniel (Rex to his friends) now a breezy octogenarian who, with a stick in his hand and a song in his heart, still keeps the home fires burning at "Royden" in Colombo's Greenpath. The musical obligato to his life is of course, provided by his versatile wife, Bertha, who is now busy rehearsing a Nativity Play to be staged at her parish church, St. Anthony's in Kollupitiya. Bertha, as usual has written the music and the dialogue and is directing what has come to be regarded as an annual artistic event. It is not necessary to say that Bertha is talented because she is the daughter of James van Langenberg, K.C. who was once Solicitor General in the Colonial regime, and a sister of the celebrated Arthur van Langenberg, one of the master-spirits of our age.

Alas, the male line of this dynasty is virtually extinct, but Bertha and Rex, who incidentally were married at Westminster Cathedral, London, have raised a remarkable family which has introduced the art and crafts of Lanka to the exclusive boudoirs and shopping centres of the world. Rex Y. Daniel as may be guessed, is a A. Y. Daniel who a generation ago made auctioneering a fashionable and lucrative profession. When the old man agreed to let his son, who was then at Oxford University, enlist for War Service, many an eyebrow in Colombo was raised. Pessimists who playfully told his auctioneer-father that Rex would soon be going, going, gone had to eat their words, when the son staged a triumphant return, humming, *"It's a long way to Tipperary."*

Rex, who was the first Ceylonese to answer Kitchener's call to arms 65 years ago, was wounded twice, once at Ypres where the Germans mowed down five British divisions, but failed to break through despite using poison gas. The other time he was hit was on the Somme when the Allies used tanks for the first time, but it was in the muddy trenches that Rex received the wound that sent him to hospital. Another Ceylonese who proudly carried the scars of battle to his dying day was Richard Aluwihare. He lived to tell the tale, unlike the 50 others who lost their lives in action, the first being Lt. G. C. B. Loos of the Third Worcesters, a son of the Hon. Mr. F.C. Loos, a member of the old Legislative Council.

Richard Aluwihare (who was knighted later), Rex Daniel, D. B. Seneviratne and Carl Arndt were four men who were up to the neck in the Flanders mud when they served on the Western Front. All of them were promising young men when they enlisted and, as it was seriously interrupted by the war, the British Government held a special Civil Service examination for them.

The test was stiff but all four of them passed it and later justified the confidence placed in their abilities. The First World War did not have much of an impact on Ceylon except for the declaration of Martial law during the 1915 riots and the constant threat to food supplies caused by the German cruiser Emden. The Emden under the resourceful Captain Von Muller created a sensation in Eastern waters by attacking Allied vessels and ports at unexpected moments. Legends began to be built up round this mysterious German warship and the word, Emden, passed into the language as the nickname for a dangerous man or a seductive woman.

## THE KAISER

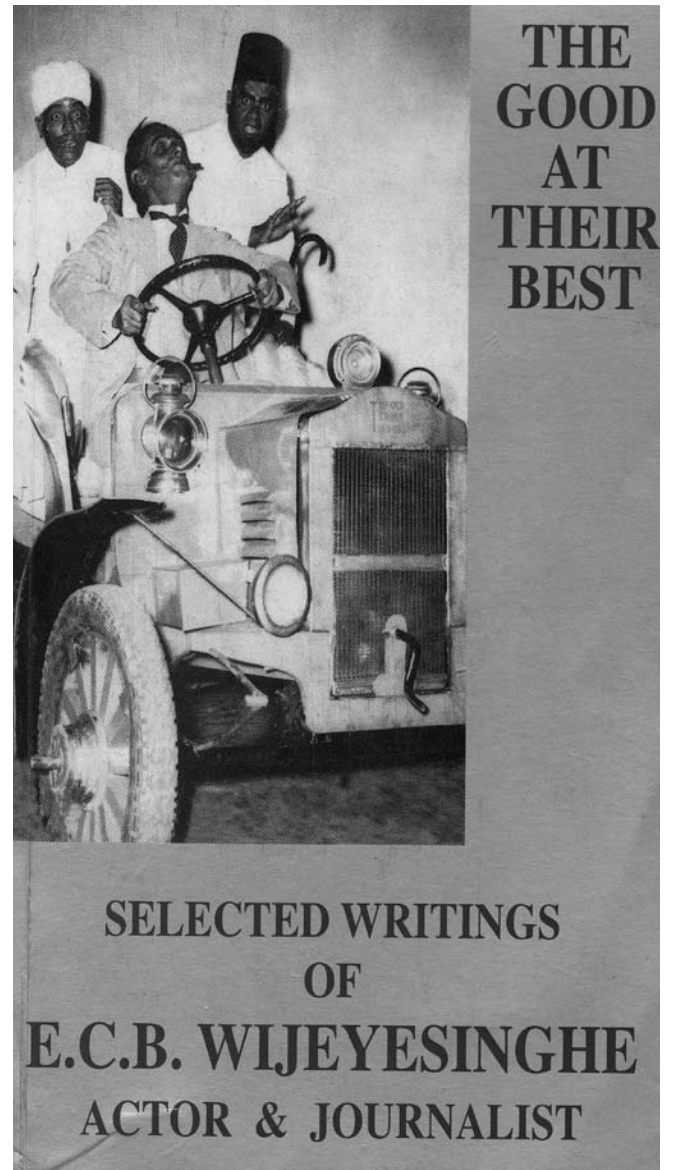
When the first Armistice was signed everybody thought that the war to end wars was over. Such a holocaust could not be repeated unless, of course, another man like Kaiser Wilhem II appeared on the scene. The Kaiser who was a grandson of Queen Victoria was a by-word for that vaulting ambition that o'er leaps itself and falls flat on the other side. Within

two years of his accession to the throne, the Kaiser sacked his Chancellor Bismarck, the man of blood and iron who laid the foundation for the greatness of modern Germany. As a statesman, Bismarck had few equals and his fame became so widespread that local headmen loved to use him as a model. There was even a Mudaliyar who revelled in the honorific "The Bismarck of Kalutara." Germany without Bismarck was like a powerful ship without a capable captain, and one of the most famous cartoons of the century was one published in "Punch" depicting the Iron Chancellor majestically walking down the gangway, while the Kaiser leans on the railings and watches with a quizzical smile the great man's departure. The caption merely said "Dropping the pilot." The Kaiser had the temerity to direct the war in person during the first two years, despite the fact that military geniuses such as von Hindenburg, Talkenhayn and Ludendorff were at his beck and call. There were, however, two talking points about the Kaiser at the time who wanted to rule the world. They were both in his bristling moustache which turned up suddenly at both ends and had numerous imitators in Ceylon. But when the Kaiser went into exile the local moustaches lost their points.

## SCEPTICS

When preachers in churches, temples and mosques grimly proclaimed on November 11, 1918, that once and for all there would be an end to wars and rumours of war there were a few sceptics in their congregations. They were the men who said that history has a nasty way of repeating itself. They were right, because 21 years later Hitler came on the scene and set fire to Europe. World War II had started and two Ceylonese whose names are seldom mentioned in this context deserve an honorable mention. Both of them are happily alive. One is Dr. Chandra Gooneratne, MA, Ph.D who graduated in the United States but joined up as a Welfare officer in the British Expeditionary Force. He was a handsome bachelor then and had not yet met and married Margaret, the English woman, who presides so efficiently over the American Center in Flower Road.

The other man who volunteered to drive away the blues and roll out the barrel when the Nazis were knocking at the doors of Paris was the lovable doyen of Ceylon painters, Gate Mudaliyar A. C. G.S. Amarasekera now in the naughty nineties. This time he was not painting Paris red, but with the help of Chandra Goon-



eratne showing Hitler's men a few Sinhala tricks. With support from the Mudaliyar's magic and Chandra's charm, World War II was won but the way they did it despite the diversions and temptations in the French cities is a long story. Once when the Mudaliyar was missing in Paris they searched for him high and low in all the hot-spots. Eventually, they found him of all places in a church, admiring the frescoes and the paintings. Chandra and his search party were greatly relieved, but it was altogether an anti-climax to the pursuit of the Mudaliyar, whose artistic soul since his boyhood has been devoted to the Pursuit of the Beautiful.

**MEN AND MEMORIES**  
*Sunday Observer 11.11.79.*

## I believe....

Contd. from Pg. 4

"will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body," into a "spiritual body."

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" You foolish man! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel... What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable... The dead will be raised imperishable.... For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality.

**1000** This "how" exceeds our imagination and understanding; it is accessible only to faith. Yet our participation in the Eucharist already gives us a foretaste of Christ's transfiguration of our bodies:

Just as bread that comes from the earth, after God's blessing has been invoked upon it, is no longer ordinary bread, but Eucharist, formed of two things, the one earthly and the other heavenly: So too our bodies, which partake of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, but possess the hope of resurrection.

**1001** When? Definitely "at the last day," "at the end of the world." Indeed, the resurrection of the dead is closely associated with Christ's *Parousia*:

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and

with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

## Risen with Christ

**1002** Christ will raise us up "on the last day;" but it is also true that, in a certain way, we have already risen with Christ. For, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, Christian life is already now on earth a participation in the death and Resurrection of Christ:

**1003** United with Christ by Baptism, believers already truly participate in the heavenly life of the Risen Christ, but this life remains "hidden with Christ in God." The Father has already "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Nourished with his body in the Eucharist, we already belong to the Body of Christ. When we rise on the last day we "also will appear with him in glory."

**1004** In expectation of that day, the believer's body and soul already participate in the dignity of belonging to Christ. This dignity entails the demand that he should treat with respect his own body, but also the body of every other person, especially the suffering:

The body [is meant] for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?... You are not your own;... So glorify God in your body.



Today each human being is striving to be perfect and indeed exert constant effort in realising it. But it is an ever recurring question whether this perfection which most of them aim at, is really a perfection which facilitates a solid ground to be an 'impeccable one' (This does not mean one who withdraws from all the faults of a human being but one who rectifies his mistakes with utmost humility), or rather is it solely an accumulation of material wealth which is wrongly understood as perfection?

If material wealth can prepare at all a platform for perfection, what about the poor people who are cast down? If education alone can help us to realise perfection, what about the people who are deprived of education whatsoever? Or can anyone envisage that if one can entertain all the possible powers in the world (political, economic, etc), he could easily uphold perfection? Thus it is explicit



that the concept of perfection is being distorted and twisted by meagre ideas of the society which eventually have become a menace to the fabric of the society and to the world at large. Consequently the society is deformed and is aloof to the Christian ethics which have provided the basis for a peaceful and gentle society. Therefore we are entrusted with a colossal respon-

sibility to provide impetus to render a real meaning to Christian perfection and to pledge our allegiance to materialize it in the society.

#### Mother Mary: The Perfect Model

It is an irony to say that real and genuine perfection can be achieved only through self giving and self-emptiness. The Virgin Mother, Mother Mary becomes the whole mark and the indelible imprint of Christian perfection next to her Son Jesus Christ who bore witness to the above irony (Phil.2:7). Her perfection and emptiness cannot be segregated; one affects the other. Thus both become two sides of one coin. She was completely aware and profoundly believed the fact that she has been created by God and thus she is a servant of Almighty God (Lk.1:38). Therefore she always made it a point to uphold the very status of a servant by relinquishing her own will in order to follow the will of her Master (Lk.1:49). This call made her to offer everything and to keep herself in the hand of God withholding nothing. This total self-giving ushered Mary into a new era of life which she never expected; that is to become the Mother of God (Lk.1:31-32).

**Rev. Bro. Benedict Jayamanna O. Cist**  
Cistercian Community,  
National Seminary, Ampitiya.

Her emptiness paved the way for her to be blessed (Lk.1:48). This self-giving resulted in her perfection. Her servanthood became a platform on which she started to lay the foundation for her holiness (Lk.1:48).

What is full cannot be filled. Thus emptiness is the beginning of perfection and thereby to achieve salvation. If one is not ready to empty him/herself (from the world as well from him/herself), if one cannot give up him/herself and surrender him/herself to God, he can hardly think about Christian perfection. "Anything we withhold for ourselves is lost, because we only possess what we give" (Rev. Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa). Therefore we spare our lives by giving it and we arrive at perfection by emptying it.

"Look at God's humility, my brothers, and pour out your hearts before him. Humble yourselves that you may be exalted by Him. Keep nothing for yourselves, so that he who has given himself wholly to you may receive you wholly" (St. Francis of Assisi).

What we hold back from God, even if it is a little thing can pollute all the rest. It is like a man who strengthens his fence around the land, keeping a small place free. This tiny place is sufficient for one goat to come in and destroy the whole land. It is imperative for us to understand that there is a guiding force behind us who boosts us to give up ourselves and thereby empty ourselves. Here the promptings of the Holy Spirit is indispensable for such a radical action in our life. Therefore we must allow the Holy Spirit to work in us who helps us to respond to God's calling.

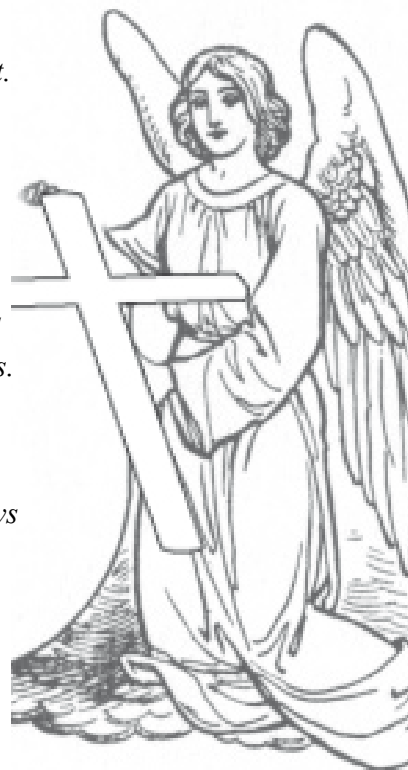
When we respond to Christ's offering by giving our total self, like Mother Mary, God can easily dwell in us. When He is in us, we will become like Him and then love, peace, happiness kindness, begin to emanate from us instead of anger, anguish, jealousy, hatred, which come from evil. When God operates in us we become perfect not because of us but because of Him who works in us because He is perfect.

"Lord, all things are yours in heaven and on earth. I long to offer myself to you as a freewill offering and to remain forever yours. Lord, in the sincerity of my heart, I offer myself to you today to serve forever, for obedience and for a sacrifice of unending praise" (The Imitation of Christ).

## It's November Again

*It's November again the month set apart  
When we remember the dear ones we've lost.  
Life's battles they've courageously faced  
And life's course bravely they've run.  
As we stand beside their resting place  
Fond memories cross our mind.  
The life we shared the bright sunny times  
In joys and sorrows and their loving ways.  
Though gone beyond to their eternal reward  
They are still within the reach of our prayers.  
Let's remember them daily and not just this month.  
For the way they've touched our lives  
Remembering their caring and unselfish ways  
Thanking God for the joy that was lent  
We pray dear Lord to keep them safe  
I your arms let them gently rest  
Free from all pain, sorrow and strife  
For to us they were all the world.*

Ranee Jesuthasan



## Verbum Dei's prayer journal

The *Verbum Dei* Missionaries in Singapore have published a "prayer journal" for students, working adults, retirees, believers and those searching for God.

Prayer for Living: The Word of God for Daily Prayer contains daily Gospel Readings for the next Liturgical Year, which starts on the First Sunday of Advent in December.

Each Reading is accompanied by a short reflection that offers pointers for readers to pray and meditate on.

There are also questions to help readers reflect on how they can ap-

ply the Word of God in various situations, and space for readers to pen their thoughts and insights.

*Verbum Dei* Sr Sandra Seow, who authored the book, said Prayer for Living had been in existence and circulation since 1999 in leaflet format, and subscriptions both in Singapore and overseas had been increasing.

The Sisters thus decided to publish the book as they felt the journal could help more people on their faith journey.

However, they did realise that there are already many similar publications on the market and reflected hard on how their book would be different from others.

In writing the journal, Sr Sandra said she took into account the "possible struggles that people tend to face in their prayer life as they try to live their Christian identity in the daily busyness".

The book is a "daily companion" and "user-friendly" for all age groups - students, working adults, retirees, believers as well as those searching for God, she added.

Prayer for Living "strives to bring the message of the Gospel real, alive and applicable to daily lives," Sr. Seow told *Catholic-News*. "Our charism as *Verbum Dei* Missionaries is scripture-centred and so it is essential to our mission to teach people how to pray and encounter God through His Word."

Proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards funding the Sisters' Project Hope (House of Prayer and Evangelisation). The Sisters are trying to raise \$3.5 million to purchase a permanent residence for their mission.

To purchase the book, email [verbumdeispore@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:verbumdeispore@yahoo.com.sg) or call 6274-0251. Book price: \$20.

Courtesy: Catholic News

## Alcoholics Anonymous on debut opening

Alcoholics Anonymous in Sri Lanka is on the threshold of broadening its generous helping hand to the still suffering alcoholics who wish to bid farewell to a sickness that had undoubtedly ruined their lives.

The Greater Colombo Inter Group of Sri Lanka will be opening its debut service office at No. 192, Kamalwatte, Ja-ela on Saturday, the 23rd November, at 4pm. The birth of this brotherhood dates back to the year 1935 where it sparked out at Akron, Ohio. Since then millions have seen a new light of life by accepting to themselves that they are powerless over alcohol and that their lives had become unmanageable and with a belief that a power greater than them could restore them to sanity.

The services provided by the office would be as follows:

- Receiving, arranging and following up 12 step calls
- Answering inquiries about A/A
- Establishing local public information committees
- Maintaining information about local hospitals and recovery facilities for alcoholics.
- Publishing local A/A meeting lists.
- Providing a news letter.
- Ordering, selling and distributing A/A conference approved literature.

With the opening of the service office, the Alcoholics Anonymous in Sri Lanka broadens its horizon to generously serve the alcoholics in all four corners of Mother Sri Lanka.

Alcoholics Anonymous







Compiled by: Kishani S. Fernando

# Mother and head of all the Churches

they decided to transfer to the Vatican, near St. Peter's. (That basilica, also built by Constantine, had until then served primarily as a pilgrimage church.)

Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590), it is said, in one of his frenzied urban renewal projects, tore down St. John Lateran's original buildings, replacing them with late-

Renaissance structures by his favorite architect Domenico Fontana. Later, Pope Innocent X (1644-1655) engaged one of the Baroque's most brilliant architects, Francesco Borromini, to transform St. John Lateran's interior in time for the Jubilee of 1650. Finally, Pope Clement XII (1730-1740) launched a competition for the design of a new facade, which was completed by Alessandro Galilei in 1735.

Today St. John Lateran retains, internally at least, its original Constantinian arrangement: a large rectangular hall with impressive nave, flanked by double aisles and terminating in an apse. The



Beneath the triumphal arch in the middle of the transept we admire the beautiful Gothic papal altar, which contains a wooden altar where the earliest Popes, from St. Peter to St. Sylvester, supposedly celebrated Mass. The tabernacle, known to be the last Gothic work executed in Rome, was designed by Giovanni di Stefano in 1367, and surmounted by beautiful frescoes, painted by Barna da Siena in 1369.

The Baptistry, to the left of the Basilica, was originally built by Constantine, transformed into an octagonal brick building by Pope Sixtus III (432-430), and substantially restored by Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644).

## Scala Santa

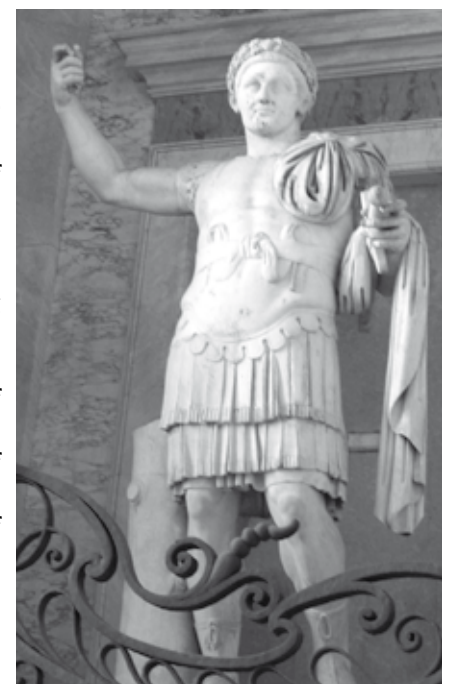
Of the original Lateran basilica and palace, only the Popes' private chapel, the Sancta Sanctorum remains. As an approach to the chapel, Pope Sixtus moved from the Lateran Palace the Scala Santa, the staircase which Jesus is believed to have ascended to Pontius Pilate's palace in Jerusalem, and according to tradition, was brought to Rome by St. Helena in the 4th century. It consists



of twenty-eight white marble steps, now encased by wooden steps and is located in a building opposite the Lateran Basilica.

## The feast of the Basilica

The Church celebrates the feast of the Lateran Basilica on November 09. Initially the observance of this feast was confined to the city of Rome; then, beginning in 1565, it was extended to all the Churches of the Roman rite. The honoring of this sacred edifice was a way of expressing love and veneration for the Roman Church.



The days of bloody Christian persecutions had ended. Emperor Constantine was the undisputed ruler of the Roman Empire (306-337). Christianity was now the official religion of the Roman Empire. The Emperor ordered basilicas built over the tombs of St. Peter, St. Paul, and other martyrs'. He donated his personal property on Monte Celio, received in dowry

Emperor seems to have conceived an edifice to rival the Roman basilicae, or monumental public meeting halls of the imperial city. In fact, the basilica has provided the model for the great majority of Roman churches, from the earliest to most recent.

## Artistic treasures

St. John Lateran contains artistic treasures from every historic period.

In the atrium, an imposing fourth-century statue of the Emperor Constantine (From the Constantine Baths on the Quirinal) is a reminder of the basilica's origins, while the central bronze doors (second century) come from the Curia, or Senate in the Roman Forum. On the sec-



from his wife - the property of the patrician Laterani family, for the building of the first papal Cathedral and residence. (hence the basilica's appellation "Lateran"). So begins the story of St. John Lateran on the Caelian hill. Christendom's first basilica, the Popes' own Cathedral and official residence. It was also the baptism church of ancient Rome.

It was to Pope Melchiade (311-314) that Constantine presented the property on Monte Celio. Henceforth, the Lateran palace, known as the Patriarchate, was the Pope's official residence until the fifteenth century. The basilica, was consecrated in 324 by Melchiade's successor, Pope Sylvester I (314-335) and was dedicated, by will of the Emperor, to Christ the Savior. In the tenth century, Pope Sergio III (904-911) added St. John the Baptist, and in the twelfth century, Pope Lucius (1144- 1145), St. John the Evangelist, to the basilica's dedication.

In the course of its history, St. John Lateran suffered just about as many disasters and revivals as the papacy it hosted. Sacked by Alaric in 408 and Genseric in 455, it was rebuilt by Pope Leo the Great (440-461), and centuries later by Pope Hadrian I (772-795). Almost entirely destroyed by an earthquake in 896, the basilica was again restored by Pope Sergius III (904-911). Later the church was heavily damaged by fires in 1308 and 1360. The basilica and palace came to be in such disrepair, that

and pilaster, between the main nave and far right aisle, we find the fragment of a fresco, attributed to Giotto, of Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) proclaiming the first Holy Year in 1300. This fresco originally decorated the papal loggia outside the Lateran Palace.

The lovely cloister dates from about 1215-1230, the work of Pietro Vassalletto and son--and is not to be missed at any cost! The jewel-like mosaics, delicate arches with paired spiral and smooth columns, and oddly "primitive" animal and floral motifs are typical of the Vassalletto duo.

A small museum has been arranged in the Vassalletto cloister. Among other works collected over the centuries by Popes, Cardinals and private donors are fragments from the original basilica, a thirteenth-century papal throne, and precious monstrances, tapestries, chalices and vestments.

The apse mosaic, completely redone by Pope Leo XIII (1878- 1903) around 1880, using designs and fragments of the original decorations, are especially appealing. The mosaic includes, besides the bust of Christ the Savior surrounded by angels, figures of the Virgin and saints, a magnificent jeweled cross, and pleasant scenes of animals and children frolicking in the River Jordan and the apostles in the lower level.



# The Year of the Blessed Virgin Mary

## The Faith of Mary

Pope Benedict XVI in his Apostolic Letter *"Motu Proprio Data," "Porta Fidei"*, inducted the Year of Faith on October 11, 2012, the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council, and it will end on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King on November 24, 2013. The starting date of October 11, 2012 also mark the 20th Anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a text, promulgated by Blessed John Paul II to illustrate for all the faithful the power and beauty of the faith. "Faith is the life long companion that makes it possible to perceive, ever a new the marvels that God works for us.

On December 1, 2013, the first Sunday of Advent, the Archdiocese of Colombo inaugurates the *Year of Mary*.

## Mary Faithful in Life and Death

The Mother stood by the cross, Mary the woman of Faith, *Virgo fidelis*. She who was to hear the Good News, the first to believe in Jesus, stands with Him in her ultimate act of Faith.

What thoughts and memories must have flooded Mary's heart that day? The weeping mother is suddenly no longer at Golgotha, but at Nazareth. Mary as a young maiden at home, was attentive, silent and present to the Lord. The Angel of the Lord speaks to her, that she is to be the Mother of His Son, Emmanuel. Mary is troubled by the Angel's message. With full trust and courage Mary says 'yes', to God's plan of redemption. With wonder and joy mixed with genuine fear of the Lord, she says, "Let it be done to me according to thy Word."

The young woman of Nazareth acted in complete Faith. Mary's faith never wavered. Her faith was firm in the uncertainties, the message of God's Angel entailed. Her faith was firm even when as an expectant mother she could find no room but a cave. Her faith was firm in the face of Simeon's fearsome Prophecy – indeed she kept it in her heart. Her faith remained firm in the Exile of Egypt and in that moment when she and Joseph found Christ in the temple. Rightly, then, we address Mary as the "Woman of Faith." In doing so, we must continually contemplate the depth and radical nature of her Faith. Mary grieves at the cruel death of her Son,

and as a woman of faith, she shares fully in the depth of His sufferings. Mary's soul is like a mirror that perfectly reflects Christ's sufferings. Mary stands at the cross with an unwavering faith that lacks all consolation.

## The Darkness of unbelief at Calvary

The intense faith of Mary stood in sharp contrast to the unbelieving crowd, the darkness that engulfed the onlookers who mocked and jeered the crucified One was completely different from the darkness that Mary experienced. Her's was a dark night of faith, theirs was the darkness of unbelief. When the hour of Jesus' death approached "the Sun eclipsed" and "a darkness came over the whole land" (Lk. 23:44). In the darkness of those who passed by and jeered at the Lord. "He saved others; he cannot save Himself" (Mt. 27:42). St. Paul rightly says; "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1:25).

All these reactions confirm what St. John would say, "The light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (Jn. 3:19).

## Unbelief Today

We live in a world that is marked by unbelief, a world that often prefers darkness and shuns the light. Today we encounter a lack of faith. Some jeer at the faith of the Church, which flows from the Cross of Christ. Others pass by without looking up, their eyes are on their immediate concerns. Some seek to tame the demands of the cross that makes in our lives. Still others live in darkness, because no one has preached the Gospel to them. The drama of Golgotha continues. The Church stands beneath the Cross of Jesus as a light in the darkness. Every year in the darkness of the Holy Saturday Vigil the church gathers her faithful and they sing; 'Rejoice O Mother Church! Exult in Glory! The Risen Saviour shines upon you!' we have been redeemed by the Blood of Christ.

How does the darkness manifest itself today?

What can we say on behalf of today?

What forms does it take?

What should be our response?

## To scepticism

The Church preachers the

Gospel in an age of scepticism. People want to believe in something or even someone, but by training and experience they are taught to withhold or suspend belief. In much of our intellectual training, men and women are taught to practice methodical doubt, insisting that everything must be proven in a scientific fashion. The truth of that which cannot be measured observed or controlled is put under systematic suspicion. The truth of "the things of the spirit" to held up for special scrutiny. Intellectual vigour is necessary for Arts and Sciences, but we must take issue when it is claimed that scepticism has the final word about the meaning of our existence and the purpose of our work. I must take issue when scepticism spills over into human relations and translates into mistrust, fear and isolation. I must object when scepticism invades the faith of the church and pretends to search for answers that sceptics wish never to find. I must object when the truth of God's revelation is subjected to an unrelenting scepticism that alienates people of today from the source of life, truth and salvation. The church beneath the cross must witness to the truth, especially the truth of God's love revealed in the Cross of his Son.

## To Technology

Today we live in a technological age that has considerably brightened the prospects of millions of people. Information is flashed from one place to another with incredible speed. Consumer demands spur new technology and technology offers new products to consumers. Few would want to return to a pre-technological age. Yet is not our trust in technology misplaced? Our trust is misplaced not because technology sometimes fails but because it can so easily overshadow everything else that is important in human life. "Know how (Techne) becomes the only form of knowledge worth pursuing, the only thing that approaches reliability. Sometimes the goals of technology are pursued without regard for their effect on human life and dignity. Technology is good, but the Church must warn against the danger of its becoming a barrier to faith and openness to God, the Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of the world.

## To Alienation among youth

We must have a special concern for our young. They have grown up in

a sceptical world that makes little room for the claims of faith. In the absence of love they often feel worthless. Their lives, so rich in opportunity, see bleak and meaningless. They are victims of a society that has given them nothing indeed, no one – to believe in. Believing in no one, neither do they believe in themselves. So they turn to drugs, to sex, or to the blare of a music that celebrates nothing.

The Church must be with our young people. The Church must be present to their families of ten broken by divorce and selfishness. The young must be personally invited to stand with Mary and with the church beneath the Cross and say, "He loves me, he gave up his life for me!"

## Our responsibility

Faced with these problems what must be our response as Shepherds and Servants of the Church? Can we not hear the voice of Christ asking us; "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes will He find Faith on earth"? (Lk.18-8) Will he find the darkness of unbelief, or will he find a community of faith.

It goes without saying that the Son of Man must be able to look into our hearts and to find there the deepest faith. We owe it to the Lord, to the Church and to our people "Believe what we read, to preach what we believe, and to put into practice what we preach".

Similarly we must bend the faith of those who serve us, our priests, our catechists and our lay faithful. We must help them to have a living faith. We must encourage them to acquire a taste for wisdom which enables them "To taste and see the goodness of God." (Ps 38:8). They cannot fulfil their calling well unless their faith is strong and courageous, like Mary's.

Finally, we must extend loving pastoral care to every person who has a right to hear the truth and walk in the light. Our task is to pluck them from the crowd of faceless, unbelieving onlookers and to gather them with Mary and the Church under the Cross. Only then by faith will we discover the love worth living for and worth dying for.

*Courtesy: November Koinonia Editor*

# Our Lady Queen of Peace of Maligawatte

Don't tell Our Lady where to show her face. She knows how to do it. You might meet her on the rock of Massabielle to the lonely Pyrranees. Or at an unlikely place, like Fatima. That is Our Lady's way, being humble and simple, to choose the humble and the simple.

It happened, somehow, Sri Lanka, which had gone Mar-ian over the years, is where she would step down, choosing once more an unlikely, marshy, multicultural village called Maligawatte, in the city of Colombo.

May be at a time when the country was sizzling over innumerable problems, Our Lady of Peace wished to come and dwell among us. She put a dream into the heart of a quiet priest who had spent years to making her known and loved. In his long ministry, he found the greatest need of the times was peace. He prayed, And the

answer came. Funds? A great benefactress stepped forward. He would build a shrine to her where she may dwell and be with us. And his faith in Our Lady was big enough to find what he needed.

He made no noise about it. On a quiet evening he began to build his shrine.

The neighbours and well wishers were around him. Prayers said, hymns sung, the first sod was cut and things began to happen. Not for long. The sun went down. The first day ended.

Came the second day. The third and the fourth. The silent architect priest get busy with his papers and plans. The problems of material, labour, soggy ground, crowded his mind. But challenge was here. He was at his best. He alone did not do it. The senior architect and advisers were there too.

The picture of the monument was clear in his mind. Blue prints were there. Every peg, every rod, every stone was found and gathered. Not everything he needed was found here. But he got all he needed.

His beautiful dream began to take shape. The foundation, the vital pillars, the walls came up. The doors and windows were in place. Up came the presbytery too.

The spill was such that those who entered the sanctuary had walked on steps built with stones from the Dutch and British periods, which told you the succinct take of our past. We left behind Holland and England and entered into our own era. Literally no stone was left unturned to build this monument for peace.

It is complete now, Or nearly so with those exotic butterfly windows behind the altar

coming all the way from New Zealand.

There now stands the dreams of the priest architect waiting to meet tomorrow with its new challenges. As the priest stands at the altar interceding in devout prayer he would be inspired by the thought that this little jewel of a monument in cheerfully raising its head to face A.D. 2000.

And in facing the altar, the congregation's eye would be lifted to the symbol of our salvation, the cross, which would be seen above the altar inspiring us to pray without words, thus fulfilling the purpose for which all churches are built.

It is presumed as it happened on Calvary. Our Lady too would stand there interceding for all humanity

And so, Mary, Queen of Peace, stay there and accept our love and homage for always and ever.



Finally we pray for all those who helped to build this sacred fane to the glory of God.

*Late Fr. Marcelline Jayakody OMI (Courtesy: Catholic Messenger of 11/09/1994)*



# Fr. Bertram: God's Greatest Gift to our Family

**A**dmired by his kith and kin for his words and deeds, the late Very Rev. Fr. Bertram Dabrera was undoubtedly God's greatest gift to our family.

Born on December 31, 1932 in the hamlet of Bolawatte as the fourth of the eight children of Alexander Joseph Dabrera and Mary Leocadia Fernando, he was baptized as Bertram Sylvester on January 3, 1933 at the village parish church renowned for the services rendered by late Fr. Jacombe Gonsalves.

From his younger days, Fr. Bertram excelled in studies as well as in sports. His Uncle, late Rev. Fr. Zacharius Dabrera, OMI perhaps encouraged by his talents picked him to follow in his footsteps. Young Bertram responded positively and he was sent to St. Aloysius College, Galle. He completed his studies. Thereafter he was trained to be a planter. He entered the seminary and was ordained on September 1, 1962.

Fr. Dabrera, Snr soon started inculcating the rich values and traditions of Christianity in Fr. Dabrera Jnr and together they served the church until death spared Fr. Dabrera Snr in 1967. During this era Fr. Dabrera Jnr would have earned many deeds from his uncle and mentor and even today he values the lasting impressions he created.

My association with Fr. Bertram, affectionately called "Fr. Uncle" is a long one. When I was young, my parents used to tell that I have the features of Fr. Uncle and I was very proud of the fact as to all of us young ones Fr. Uncle was our hero. I remember him very much from 1967 - the year I received First Holy Communion.

Ever since, he beckoned me in the right direction like a lighthouse that guides the mighty ships that sail in the seas. He has guided me all along and inspired me in an unprecedented manner throughout my life span. I am beholden to the God Almighty for the great gift of dear Fr. Uncle.

When we were young we always looked forward to the Christmas season, mainly to enjoy the long holidays, visit relatives and to receive gifts from the Santa Claus. But for our parents Christmas meant



something different. And for them it was a time to welcome warmly Fr. Dabreras - both Snr and Jnr.

I vividly remember those memorable annual visits by the two giants of the family. Fr. Dabrera Snr always would inquire about the spiritual activities and of course studies and I used to lead the march with our reports. When it is the turn of Fr. Dabrera Jnr it was a parade with trophies and medals won in athletics and always he said "Well done."

Whenever they visited there was a renaissance and an awakening amongst all in the family. We all looked forward to do well in the following year. And so happened as the years rolled by.

It is true that good things come in God's good time, inspired by the Holy Spirit. From the moment Fr. Bertram became a priest of God, he with his ever beginning smile and endearing ways set forth to his task of evangelization.

In 1962, immediately after the Ordination, late Cardinal Thomas Cooray picked him to serve in his own parish of Sea Street, Negombo. From there, he was sent to All Saints' Church, Borella, in 1964 as Assistant Parish Priest and then appointed Parish Priest of Pallansena, Kochchikade in 1966. Thereafter he had a one year stint at St. Lucia's Cathedral, Kottahena. Then he was reappointed as Assistant Parish Priest at All Saints' Church, Borella, where he served under late Rev. Fr. John Heart who inspired him the most.

Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando as the Archbishop of Colombo appointed him as the Parish Priest of All Saints' Church, Borella, in 1977 at a time the Catholic Church was making an untiring effort to consolidate its strengths and abilities and move forward. Later in 1982, Archbishop Nicholas Marcus appointed Fr. Bertram as the Procurator General of the Archdiocese of Colombo.

Consistency was the key in his life. He has aptly proven this by conducting the famous Novena for the Mother of Perpetual Help at All Saints' Church for an era. Then at St. Bridget's he has been preparing young Bridge teens of generations after generations to receive the First Holy Communion.

His capacity for work was unbelievable. Whether it is long hours of discussion, lengthy arguments, organizing processions, printing magazines, coordinating religious ceremonies - never was he tired.

He derived satisfaction by delegating work to others, giving them freedom, inspiring and guiding them and often was capable of bringing out the best in them. That is what he exactly at the Colombo Catholic Press.

Fr. Bertram was a priest who really loved his priesthood, who was eternally grateful to the 'Lord' for calling him out of many to serve God's people as a priest, and there was joy in his priesthood, and he was able to communicate his love for the Lord to others.

The Dabrera family sacrificed the two best sons to the priesthood. Together they have served the Archdiocese for 85 years - Fr. Zacharius from 1922 -1967, Fr. Bertram from 1962 - 2002. They are ever loved and admired.

He was loved and respected by all those who came in contact with him for his uprightness integrity, honesty and straightforwardness, unshakable love and devotion.

In 1987, he took over the land donated by President Premadasa at Maligawatte and the development work he carried out speaks of his stature and assiduity. Fr. Bertram ardently believed that peace, goodwill, harmony and love bonded together must blend spontaneously to prepare unto God a perfect, peace loving people.

The edifice of Our Lady Queen of Peace built

at a time when Mother Lanka was sizzling over innumerable problems will undoubtedly remain as a lasting monument to Fr. Bertram.

The people of Colombo will always remember his work and cherish him. To him may be applied, the words of the poet

**"Languor is not in your heart  
Weakness is not in your word  
Weariness not in your brow"**



**Rear Admiral Shemal Fernando**

## November Month of the Dead

In November the Catholic Church remembers the dead. 'What is death'; therefore is a good topic for discussion.

Death entered the world when Adam disobeyed God in Genesis 3:19. God tells man that he who is created from dust will go back to dust. This death is not the physical destruction of human body but the power conferred on man when he was created by God to be like him. This is described in Genesis 1:16-27. Therefore death means not the physical destruction of body alone, but loss of spirit of God in man.

In November the Catholic Church remembers those physically dead keeping in mind their spiritual death. The physically dead are only a thought in the human mind and have no physical entry. Hindus were the first to be afraid that physically dead will revive and remember the physical body to prevent its revival. Hindus knew that spiritual body can cause changes to the physical body. The story of Dracula written by Bram Stoker is a fiction story based on the spirit of the dead entering the physically dead body.

In the Gospel John 11:1-44 describes the physical resurrection of the dead Lazarus. This is a narration of a corpse being bought alive four days after burial. According to John this is the immediate reason why Jews wanted to kill Christ. They thought if Christ was allowed to continue to live all Jews will follow him and Romans will destroy them. (John 12:1,2,9-1).

Man when he is being spiritually created in another womb God knows it. In Psalms 139:15-16 it is said God knew the physical creation of Man in the Mother's womb and God decreed the life of man prior to his birth. Thus it is shown that together with the physical creation of the human body there is a concurrent spiritual process in case of man who was created to resemble God.

To be remembered after physical death a man needs wisdom. In Solomon's Wisdom 8:13 it is clearly said that only those who get wisdom, will be remembered after their physical death. In Solomon's Wisdom 1: 12-16, it is said the world has no power over death and death is not an act of God. So it is clear that in November the Catholic Church remembers those who are only physically dead but spiritually not dead. A man can be dead, not dead or alive spiritually. Christians baptised do not want to die spiritually though they are physically dead.

**P.V.D. Leo Samson**





## Let there be Peace!

I was able to celebrate the last Ramazan Festival with my Muslim friends down South and at Akkaraipattu. Meeting them, I was able to discuss your Editorial of July 7, 2013 titled "The Radicalisation of Buddhists," where you state about the pathetic plight of the Rohingya Muslim Community in Myanmar. Further I was able to create awareness of a similar plight the Coptic Christians face in Egypt and other predominant Muslim countries.

This Editorial brings out the bitter facts and realities of another July 83 scenario, where mobs armed with voters' lists created mayhem, burning Tamil people alive in their homes, and causing endless agony and pain. Those dark days saw the wanton destruction and the burning of the Jaffna li-

brary ending access to wisdom and knowledge.

Allow me also to draw attention to your Editorial dated August 25, 2013, under the heading "Do not allow sectarian violence to spill out of control."

In the area where I come from in Mawanella, there is a historic Buddhist site amidst a Muslim population with a history in these areas that goes back to the 5th century or more. These Muslims have been the main traders in spice and other produce, to the tradesmen of the famous silk route that goes back thousands of years. The Sinhalese in these areas were mainly farmers and cultivators, while some of them were engaged in weaving, pottery, metal craft, carpentry and other arts according to one's caste. Will this become another

Ayodhya like in Delhi? While I do not see any meaningful dialogue among those concerned there is however the presence of fear and suspicion as to what will happen next.

With the end of the colonial era there emerged great men in the likes of Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Vinoba Bhave, Nelson Mandela, Bishop Tutu and Martin Luther King. These were great men of reconciliation and peace, who inspired their Nations towards harmony and prosperity. But in Sri Lanka sadly such great men have not dominated our body politic, and we are poorer for it, for our Nation lacks those major foundation stones that are peace, harmony and justice.

Sinhalese and Tamil Christians have the capacity

to move toward creating an all embracing National Sri Lankan Identity and march towards reconciliation and lasting peace, which all Sri Lankans long for. All Christian parishes including the clergy, laity and educational institutions should play a major role towards this noble goal and it should not remain an utopian dream. The Catholic Christian and other print media can play a vital role in this respect.

I would also like to thank you indeed for making the weekly Messenger, a thought provoking, wholesome food for the soul and mind. At the same time I would appreciate very much if we are given more knowledge about the teaching of the Early Church Fathers of East and West including that of St. Augustine whom we love very much.

Lastly allow me to share with you something that touched me when I attended Sunday Holy Mass in Tamil in a small Parish Church in Akkaraipattu. There were no musical instruments other than voices of the people inviting and longing for God. The Consecration of bread and wine, was filled with silence more than a Bawana, this may be due to the Hindu influence of Bakthi and praise. For the priest nothing else mattered but the Holy Mass. It is sad to note that the ambience and atmosphere which I experienced there is not found in our Parish celebrations of Holy Mass.

Aloy Prematilake  
Mawanella

## My Sister Enid – Mother Courage ('Diriya Mava')

Nangi was born two years after me, the third in a line of ten siblings. I guess I didn't like her much as a child as she stole my parents' affection from me, more because she was their first girl. As little kids we used to quarrel a lot – it turned to affection only when as teenagers we realized the difference between boys and girls! She wasn't bright at her studies as the rest of her siblings, but she had loads of other talents, mostly inherited from our mother, in cooking, sewing, dress-making, turning out artificial flowers, decorations and such-like. She dressed brides in her entire neighbourhood, did their hair and make-up and their bouquets. She married at 19 – unfortunately it didn't turn out well and she had to take the extreme bold step of bringing up her four small children on her own as a single mother, and that's when the real Enid came into being and got going come what may. We remember the lengths to which she had to go, the oceans of problems she had to cross, the untold miseries she had to endure – despite all that she was fun-loving, enjoyed life to the hilt, and was always the best-dressed in the family.



I named her Mother Courage (Diriya Mava) and implored her to hold fast in her illness – but her infirmities were too much to bear and God in His infinite wisdom took her away.

As Christians we are told we have to follow only two commandments: Love God and love our neighbour. When a man asked Jesus who is our neighbour, Jesus narrated the poignant story of the Good Samaritan helping the man who had been attacked and left to die on the road-side. Nangi excelled in the love of neighbour – she understood poverty, sickness, human suffering more than anyone of us – and

she would give her last cent, and time more than anything else, to help anyone in need. How much she had done in that department we learnt only when people we had never met before, turned up at her house to pay their last respects and attend her funeral. Everyone of them had a story to tell, as to how much Enid had helped them in their times of need.

A friend of mine told me a long time ago when he lost his mother, that the greater gift of God is the power to forget and not the ability to remember. If we continue to feel the terrible pangs we felt when Enid died, we would have died of broken hearts within a few days of her death. But over time, the greater gift of God came into play and the sting of the pains has subsided a little, and we are indeed happy we remember her good deeds which are her legacy to us. The riches she left to her children and her siblings are delightful memories and the gratitude with which people held her in high esteem.

If there's anything that we have to learn from her death, it's just that we take nothing with us to the next world except the good we have done, and we leave nothing behind except loving memories and the results of the good we have done.

Max Jayamanna

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## Appreciation

It is indeed a privilege to pen these few lines for "Dulcy Miss" a dedicated and beloved Teacher. She was the loving wife of my friend Mr. D.S.A. Wanasinghe alias Linus, a retired Principal of St. Joseph's College, Trincomalee.

Dulcy was born on September 3, 1935, at Beruwala. Her parents were W.B. Robert Benjamin Fernando and Francesca Jayasooriya. Her father was from Beruwala and her mother from Payagala. One of her sisters became a Good Shepherd Nun.

Dulcy joined the Catholic Training College, Bolawalana, Negombo in 1971. Her hard work and exemplary behaviour won her the respect of the Ad-

ministration and co-trainees. On completion of her two-year training, she was posted to the Convent of Child Jesus, Ratnapura, as a Catholic Religion teacher.

After ten long years she was transferred to the Ferguson Girls' High School also at Ratnapura. This move was necessitated to fill the dire need for a Catholic Religion teacher at Ferguson. It was a non-Catholic Christian School and she became the Catholic Religion teacher for the whole school.

At Wattala or Ratnapura or later Trincomalee, she was more a mother than a teacher. She main-



tained a high sense of discipline. She never discriminated against the pupils on the basis of race, creed or caste. She was a Sinhalese and a Catholic. She treated them all alike whether haves or havenots, for her there was nobody high or low. She was a deeply committed Christian and

a Catholic. For her, each and everyone was a child of God. She treated all of them equally alike. During the height of the troubles she stood up fearlessly for equality for all citizens of Mother Lanka.

Dulcy got married to D.S.A. Wanasinghe from an educated family in Kandy. He himself was a teacher and a Principal later on.

On the invitation of the then Bishop of Trincomalee-Batticaloa she became a teacher at St. Mary's and her husband became the Principal St. Joseph's College, both schools in Trinco. Both of them are well remembered

by Ratnapura and Trinco folks to this day.

Her husband Linus retired in 1989, his wife joining him in retirement prematurely. And so they returned to Ratnapura and resumed their dedicated work in the lay-apostolate.

Some time later they bought a plot of land in Negombo at Palm Grove, a new settlement in Kadirana, Negombo. They built a house and settled at last into a home of their own to spend their life's evening.

Eventually she fell seriously sick and for almost two years she went through her intense pain without a grumble. She

was called to rest in the arms of her Saviour Lord Jesus Christ.

Linus remained with her through thick and thin throughout their happy married life. Although they had no kids of their own, they have loving children all over Sri Lanka.

"Like St. Paul you have run the race. You have fought the good fight valiantly and kept the faith fervently." You will be remembered by your ever loving husband and inseparable companion and by us all. You have won the crown.

So Farewell Dulcy, my friend and Sister!

Francis De Silva

## A Tribute to a Beloved Teacher Simona Dulcy Wanasinghe



# Education in Catholic Schools: Making them play a vibrant prophetic role

## Introduction

The Church opted to retain some of its schools as private at the time of the takeover of schools by the Government in 1961, for the sole purpose of maintaining its freedom and giving itself room to carry out its prophetic mission of being salt and light in the field of education in Sri Lanka. The sacrifices involved in terms of finances, anxiety, risk etc. were not considered too heavy a price; they were justified by what was at stake. The question now is, to what extent have these private schools fulfilled the purpose for they which were retained as private in the first place. A more down-to-earth way of posing the question is: is there a significant difference between students who pass out of a Government school and those of a Catholic School in terms of their Christian and human stature, and consequently their commitment to serve God and man, in the context of Sri Lanka.

Though Catholic Schools have to conform to basic requirements of the national education system with regard to syllabi, curricula and examinations, they enjoy considerable freedom in a number of areas, such as choice of teachers, in-service programmes, extra-curricular activities, connections with parents, community etc., and most importantly, with regard to the vision and goals of education. In other words, is the prophetic voice of Catholic Schools heard loud and clear regarding what real education should be - a full flowering of the student in personal and social dimensions - not just in words, but in action, namely in everything the schools does for the children, to bring them to the lived realization of being "another Christ." More concretely, the Catholic boy/girl stepping out into society should be a person of deep faith, having God, incarnated in Jesus Christ, at the centre of his/her life, and consequently:

- Is inspired to strive for the full realisation of his/her potential in human and Christian dimensions
- Is inspired by a deep love for people, specially love of the poor and needy.
- Is driven to put that love into action by a life of service.

## Self-Examination

Though the ideal will not be attainable perfectly in the short term, it has to be kept firmly and clearly in mind in order to ensure that it is the guiding light for every decision and action. Each school will have to take a close, hard look at what it is doing, very sincerely and honestly. Self-justification or rationalization is a strong temptation for both individuals and institutions. All too often we sincerely preach one thing and practice something else. In Education, all would strongly agree that the school should see to the integral and holistic development of the child and not merely success at examinations, but in practice what happens? Do we not, like the others, judge one school better than another in terms of examination results?

One very pertinent question in this regard is, how many outstanding lay women and men have come out of our Catholic Private Schools which have been in operation for the past 52 years - lay people of deep, enlightened faith, committed to Catholic attitudes, values and behaviour patterns in their personal, family, social and professional life - ready to make hard sacrifices in bearing witness to Catholic values and principles? Again, are Catholic lay people, products of Catholic Schools, prominent in campaigns and movements for ethnic harmony, social justice, human rights, integrity in public life, clean Government etc. Are Catholic professionals truly and deeply Catholic in the practice of their professions? Yet again, children who opt for the priestly and religious life, are they more numerous, proportionately, from Catholic Private Schools or from Government Schools?

## A Change of Course

Any Catholic School which, after self-examination recognises a serious weakness in its prophetic role cannot but opt immediately for a change of course. In that regard the following would be essential and indispensable.

1. The full-hearted conviction of the Principal about the prophetic role of the Catholic School, embodying a vision and goal of education as the integral and holistic growth i.e. in all aspects of life, into the fullness of 'being Catholic Christian' and for non-Catholics of 'being human'.
2. An enthusiastic sharing of that conviction with the Staff in such ways that it evokes an action response from within.
3. A deep-seated conviction in the teachers themselves (or at least in the majority of them) about the above mentioned vision and goals of education.
4. The quality of the teacher as a Catholic/Christian and as a human person, and not merely 'academic qualifications, as criterion for selection to the staff.
5. A Catholic and deeply humanistic spirit to pervade the whole atmosphere of the School and all its teaching and other activities, as background spirituality of the education that it imparts to all the children.
6. A critical evaluation of social realities in all aspects, cultural, political, economic, religious etc., in the light of the Gospel.

In order to realise the above, effective practical courses of action will be called for, some of which would be common to all and others particular to each school. Some indications:

## Practical Steps

1. The implicit and explicitly stated expectations of the School from the students - success at examinations and academic distinctions or more importantly, high human and Christian stature. This goal need not

## Rev. Fr. Mervyn Fernando

conflict with academic achievement, on the contrary, could enhance it, appropriately.

2. Expectations of parents from the School to be brought in line with the above, through regular non-formal parent education sessions.

3. The example of the teacher and of the staff as a whole regarding values of simplicity of life, recognition of merit, absence of favouritism, compassion, encouragement, honesty and love.

4. Convictions and attitudes of the staff to be reinforced on an on-going basis through seminars, Days of recollection, retreats etc.

5. The way in which each subject is taught, incorporating the element of values.

6. A re-examination of the role of sport, vis a vis, formation of mind and heart of the students.

7. The problem of finances: Is the allocation of income to different departments, activities curricular and extra-curricular in keeping with vision and values? What is the image of the School in the public eye in this regard?

8. The respective importance attached to competition and co-operation, in sport and other activities, values of team-work, co-operation and community.

9. Complementing text-book study with reading' library assignments, discussion sessions, project work, exposure to social realities etc., promoting initiative and creativity in self-learning and learning to learn.

## Conclusion

The witness of the Church with respect to the vision and goals of Education is vitally essential today, more than ever before, when there is so much confusion and gross shortcomings in the educational system. Without being deterred by the enormity of the challenge, we should be bold to come up with proposals for reform and re-orientation as a service to the Nation. But it would be futile for any single School to undertake this task. However if all Principals of Catholic private Schools under the leadership of Church authorities, put their heads together and work out a well-thought out practical plan of educational reforms, keeping firmly in mind the vision and goals of education outlined above together, it could be a major step forward in putting the whole educational system on the right track, both for the Church herself and the country.

It is a pity that Private Catholic Schools by and large operate in isolation, each one doing its own thing. More openness to learn from each other by sharing experiences and experiments would be beneficial all round. Hopefully we will not miss this golden opportunity to inject sanity, rationality and wisdom to our Education, for the sake of the whole-being of future generations of Sri Lankans.



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Stay awake and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming.

(Mt. 24:42,44)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR YEAR C  
17th November - 24th November 2013

Sun: 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Mal 3: 19-20a; 2 Th 3:7-12; Lk. 21:5-19 Mon:  
Dedication of the Basilica of  
St. Peter & Paul  
1 Mac. 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-64;  
Lk. 18:35-43  
Tue: 2 Mac 6:18-31; Lk. 19:1-10  
Wed: 2 Mac 7:1, 20-31; Lk. 19:11-28  
Thu: Memorial of Presentation of B.V. Mary  
Zec. 2:14-17; Mt. 12:46-50  
Fri: Memorial of St. Cecilia, Virgin &  
Martyr  
1 Mac 4:36-37, 52-29; Lk. 19:45-48  
Sat: Memorials of St. Clement I,  
Pope & Martyr  
1 Mac 6:1-13; Lk. 20:27-40  
Sun: 34th Sunday of Ordinary Time  
Feast of Our Lord Jesus  
Christ, King of the Universe  
2 Sam 5:1-3; Col 1:12-20; Lk. 23:35-43

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer**

For the followers of Christ: That they may not be deceived by false prophets, even when they claim to speak in his name; and that they may not lose heart in times of trial and persecution. For this, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer**

For all world leaders; that in spite of innumerable setbacks they may persevere in their efforts to bring about a just and peaceful world. For this, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer**

For all those who are lost or confused and who are easy prey for false prophets. For this, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer**

That we may bear witness to Christ by lives of truth, honesty and goodness, for this, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Response: Lord, hear our prayer**

**First Reading: Mal. 3:19-20a**

Prophet Malachi foretells about the Day of Judgment for those who were still living sinful lives. They will be set on fire while the righteous will have sunshine and healing.

**Second Reading: 2Thes.3:7-12.**

St. Paul setting his own life as an example tells the Thessalonians not to live in idleness waiting for the end of time and thereby be a burden to others. He wants them to lead a responsible life by earning their own living.

**Gospel: Lk. 21:5-19.**

Jesus speaks concerning the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem which the Jews thought could never be destroyed. He also foretells the end of time which will be preceded by wars earthquakes, famines, terrors,...etc. False prophets too would appear. But the Lord promises to be with the faithful.

**Reflection.**

As we come to the end of another liturgical year, as it is customary the Readings remind us about the end of time. This end of time is spoken by way of warning and instructions. Christ wants us to keep away from sin so that we will be ready for the day. The readings also show how it will happen so that we will recognize the signs and know that it is happening. It may not happen today or tomorrow; therefore instead of idly watching and waiting, we should fulfill our daily tasks. Nevertheless we should be attached to the Lord for Christ vows to guide and protect those who are His.

In the First Reading prophet Malachi prophesized the Day of Judgment. On that day the evildoers will be stubble. They shall be burned up so that neither root nor branch will be left. But to those who fear the Lord, the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. The Reading warns

us to be ready by way of leading a sinless life lest we be punished.

The Gospel gives us different signs that would appear. There will be wars, earthquakes, famines, terror,...etc. It also warns us of those appearing in His name and saying, "I am He. The time is at hand." Christ warns us not to be deceived. The Lord promises to be with those who are faithful to Him. When they are taken before judges and governors he promises to give them words and wisdom. The only thing is that we should not be discouraged, for even if our own would put us to death. "By our endurance we will gain our lives," says the Lord. When all these things and happenings were mentioned some Thessalonians gave up work and began to lead an idle life. They thought that everything would happen in a day or two and therefore St. Paul had to instruct them to carry on with their day to day work until what was foretold really happens. Thus they will not be a burden to the society. For only God knows the day and the time. We only have to go on living until those events take place. Therefore let us not cease from performing our day to day duties while awaiting the end of time which might not happen during our own life time. But our lives could come to an end at any time. Therefore let us always be prepared by way of living a sinless life, so that when the day comes we will be ready to go before the Lord to face His judgment and be rewarded.

But let us be attentive to the signs so that when they appear we will be able to recognize them at the first instant, so that we will not be caught unawares.

**Aid Story.**

When St. Chad was Abbot of Lastingham, he received into the monastery a nobleman named Owini, who tells us how the saint watching the various moods of nature across the sky of the Fan

country, was reminded of the eternal truths of God. Sunshine no doubt put him in mind of God's love for us; but what Owini noticed more was St. Chad's reaction to bad weather. When the wind began to blow threateningly he thought of God's warnings, and he would say; "God have mercy on all poor sinners." When the winds rose to gale forces he would close his books and kneel in prayer, and sometimes, when the sky was darkened and lightning and thunder rent the air, he would go to the Church and pray till the storm was over; Owini asked him why he did this. "Because, my son, it is the Lord who moves the air and sends the thunder and lightning. He sends it to put us in mind of that day when He will come in His majesty to judge the living and the dead. So in the storm we should fear and adore God and repent of our sins and pray for sinners."

No doubt he thought of our Lord's words; "As the lightning cometh out of the east and appeareth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

**Aid Story 2.**

The 2000 member church was filled to overflowing capacity one Sunday morning. The priest was ready to preach. Two men dressed in long black coats and black hats entered via the back of the Church. They both reached under their coats and took out automatic weapons and announced, "Everyone willing to take a bullet for Jesus stay in your seat." Naturally the pews emptied followed by the choir loft, The Deacons ran out the door too. After a few minutes, there were about 20 people left sitting in the church. The priest was holding steady in the pulpit. The men put their weapons away and said, gently. To the priest, "Alright Father, the hypocrites are gone. Now you may begin your service."

**Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos**

## THE EUCHARIST A SACRIFICE OF REMEMBRANCE

At the heart of all our worship as Catholic Christians, we pause to remember...We remember Christ, and all he did for us; we remember how he suffered, died and rose for us; and in word and sacrament, we remember what he did at table with his friends on the night before he died. Every time we celebrate the Eucharist, then, we remember someone who has died: our brother, Jesus. And every time we celebrate the Eucharist we remember others who have died, too. You know the words as well as I do: Remember our brothers and sisters who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again; bring them and all the departed into the light of your presence...We remember all our brothers and sisters in Christ and not only them but all the departed - everyone who has died - and we pray that through the mercy and love of

God everyone of them will enjoy the light and peace of God, forever.

The Church has long taught that after death, those not quite ready for heaven may need some further purification. This has sometimes been called purgatory. But we might have a false picture of purgatory. It's not some "flaming concentration camp on the outskirts of hell." It's not God's last chance to make us suffer! St. Catherine spoke beautifully of the fire of purgatory as "God's love burning the soul until it was wholly aflame -- with the love of God." It's like the fire mentioned in the book of Wisdom: "As gold in the furnace, God will prove us, purify us, and take us to himself... we shall shine...and we shall abide forever with God in love..." If there is pain in purgatory, it is the pain of longing to be with God, to be worthy of the heaven Jesus won for us. And so we

pray for those who have gone before us that God bring to completion the good work begun in their lives while they were still with us. We cannot know how or even if time is measured in this purification. Perhaps one day, one hour, one minute on our clocks of finally and fully realizing the greatness of God's love for us and how unloving in return we often were, perhaps one second will be all it takes to purify us of the sins of taking God's love and the love of others for granted.

Through this month of November, we remember those who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again and all the departed...And we remember Jesus, our brother, who died for us and rose and opened the door to his Father's house and prepared for each of us a dwelling place in his peace.

**J.M.R.Casie Chitty**

## Jesus - Circle of Saints

Rejoice  
Jesus awaits  
Open gates  
Welcomes  
all goodness  
Inculcated  
Weary Souls  
In sacrifice  
Strive  
So sainted  
Stand  
Feel pleasure  
Nearer  
The Divine

**Miran Perera**



# A Priest, Prophet and King: My Mission of Christ

Through our baptism each one of us is called to share in the threefold function of Christ; we are anointed as priests, appointed as prophets and enthroned and crowned as kings. These three functions with which we are entrusted help us to cover all the spheres of life and nurture love in every aspect of life in which we fail most often. In spite of our state of life; Priesthood, Religious or Lay, we share one equal baptismal dignity.

Baptism anoints us to share in the priestly function of Christ. Though there had been priests throughout the biblical history, the priesthood of Christ is so special and unique. Old Testament prophets offered animal-sacrifices unrelated to themselves, whereas Christ was the Priest, the Altar and the Victim-Sacrifice at the same time.

Thus Christ highlighted that most demanding requirement of the priesthood is none other than self-oblation or the self-sacrifice. Within our family circles we really do make sacrifices; parents for their children and children for their parents etc. But how much spirituality do we feed into our sacrifices is a question. Are we really convinced that God can work out our salva-

tion through those acts of sacrificial love or else do we fulfill then our obligation? Oblation and obligation are two different things. It is to be noted that acts done under obligation are not necessarily oblation (sacrificial). It is a fact that we do make sacrifices especially within the boundaries of our families. But if our sacrifices are limited only within the confines of our family it is not enough. We ought to be Good Samaritans as Our Lord Jesus taught us.

There is still one greater demand from us all Christians, and that is none other than forgiving those who have wronged us even though they have spoiled our good name in vain. Our Lord's Prayer and the parable of the unforgiving servant speak to us about how essential it is to forgive our enemies. None of us can say "I have forgiven him/her with my whole heart, but I really find it difficult to forget what he/she has done to me and cannot relate to him/her as I did before," if I have not forgotten, that means I have not forgiven! Forgiveness and forgetting acts that hurt are inseparable and can be likened to both sides of a coin. In simple words, no one could ever forgive whole-heartedly without forgetting the misdeed



done to him/her.

Our second baptismal vocation is to be a prophet. The duty of a prophet is to interpret the Word of God according to the present context of a particular society. His main tasks are to raise the voice against injustice, challenge people when the occasion demands and to correct people with a fraternal spirit. Being prophetic does not mean being harsh or violent in presenting the truth as it is; it can be done with love, as Paul taught the Ephesians (Eph 4:15).

Most of us are reluctant to correct others. When we notice that someone is obviously acting wrongly, we turn a blind eye, thinking that it is beyond our concern; we think to ourselves "that is none of my business." We are frightened of impending danger beside challenging someone who is

more powerful than us. Truth can be bitter most of the time, if not confronted with humility. Truth is truth and there is no compromise with truth. It is so realistic, if I say, that often we betray our conscience for our own survival and smooth up-keeping. This reminds of the words of late Bl. Pope John XXIII to his college of cardinals shortly after the conclave where he was elected as the Pope in 1959: "We have nothing to hide because truth is our way of life".

Sometimes we find it extremely difficult to correct our own people, who are living under same roof, working under the same roof and especially our dearest friends. We try to ignore their mistakes even though we notice them. This is certainly because we are afraid of losing them; we are afraid that our relation-

ship will be shaken if we try to correct them. But we must always remember that when we correct someone with love, most often, that would make the bond stronger and not broken. It is my personal experience too. There is also something very important that I feel must be discussed. It is connected to a scriptural quotation: "How can you say to your neighbour: 'Friend, let me take this speck out of your eye,' when you can't remove the log in your own?" (Lk 6:40).

We most often misunderstand and misinterpret this biblical phrase. This phrase is not intended to discourage our spirit of fraternal correction or fraternal challenging. But it is intended to examine our own mistakes and strive to correct our own as we try to help others to correct their own. None of us are perfect although we must be striving to achieve holiness of life. It is not a secret that we all make mistakes. Therefore just because I am not perfect it does not mean that I cannot help others to be perfect. If I want to correct someone I must first examine the disposition and intention of my heart. If it is to look down upon the person and to bring shame on someone, then my intention is impure. But if I correct with a fraternal spirit and at

the best opportunity and suitable occasion, circumstance and place, then there is nothing wrong; it is an act of love and Christian concern.

We are called to be kings through our baptism. We are to be kings as Jesus was. The throne of Christ was the Cross and not the one at the Right hand of God. It is on the cross that He reigned and sacrificed Himself for whole of the humanity. It was on this throne of the cross that He taught us what it is to be a real king: It is very much in contrast with our present day worldly leaders who constantly seek to be served and never to serve. This reminds me of Pope Gregory the Great who adopted his papal title as "*Servus Servorum Dei*" (servant of the servants of God) in contrast to the Eastern Patriarch who held himself "Ecumenical Patriarch". So Christ's kingship was characterized by extreme humility, easy approachability, great availability and above all total obedience to His Father. So, we are to be humble when we are challenged and corrected by others. We also have to make ourselves accessible and approachable to anyone who is in need of us.

**Rev. Bro. Gihan Dushmantha Senadeera OMI, Oblate Scholasticate, Ampitiya.**

J  
E  
S  
U  
S
C  
H  
R  
I  
S  
T

J - Justice is my reign  
 E - Eternal be your gain  
 S - Sin no more avoid pain  
 U - Under trials bear the strain  
 S - Salvation must by your aim.

C - Come unto me, is my call  
 H - Hold on to me, not to fall  
 R - Rise with me, do not crawl  
 I - Infinite love I give all, big or small  
 S - Souls I thirst and search to be mine  
 T - Truth is, I am your Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**Francis**

## Special Olympics Serendib (Sri Lanka)



### Special Olympics Asia Pacific Games 2013

For the first time a Special Olympics Asia Pacific Games, will take place in Sydney Australia, from November 29 to December 7, 2013. The event is being organised by the Special Olympics Australia.

A delegation of 47 (34 Athletes, 9 coaches, 1 manager, 1 assistant manager, a doctor), will be travelling to Australia to compete in this international event.

Special Olympics International founded in 1968, by a member of the Kennedy family, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, is an organization dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of the society through sports.

The mission of the Special Olympics is to provide year round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities

to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics Serendib (Sri Lanka) is the local body accredited by Special Olympics International. In 2011, we participated at the Special Olympics World Games in Athens Greece with 13 special Athletes where they won 11 Gold medals, 5 Silver medals and 1 Bronze medal.

Today Special Olympics stand as a leader in the field of intellectual disability and currently serve over 3.1 million people with such disabilities in more than 190 countries including Sri Lanka. According to statistics 03% of the world population belongs to this group and the intellectually disabled population in Sri Lanka is over 600'000.

Total budget for this tour is almost Rs: 50'00'000.00. So far

we have received from generous donors 50% of the total budget.

We seek your cooperation, to help us to find the balance money for this humanitarian cause and hope that with your support we will make a difference to all those lives.

#### Best regards

Yours truly

Francis Paul Welangoda  
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 Special Olympics Serendib  
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Web: www.specialolympics.org  
 Created by Joseph P Kennedy Jr.  
 foundation for the benefit of  
 persons with intellectual  
 disability.



# Young World

## Nuncio graces De Mazenod Prize-giving



His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Spirit, Apostolic Nuncio in Sri Lanka was the Chief Guest at the Prize giving of De Mazenod College, Kandana.

Picture shows the Apostolic

Nuncio being welcomed by the Rector Rev. Bro. Bertram Perera, De La Salle Provincial Densil Perera and members of the Staff.

*Anton Jayasuriya*

## First Holy Communion Service at St. Thomas' Church, Kotte



Thirty one children of St. Thomas' Church, Kotte received Jesus in First Holy Communion recently. Rev. Fr. Indra Ratnasiri Fernando, Archdiocesan Director for Catechetics presided over the concelebrated Eucharistic Celebration together with Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernandopulle, Episcopal Vicar of the Colombo South Region and Parish Priest

of St. Thomas' Church, Kotte and Rev. Fr. Gihan Sheno, Assistant Parish Priest.

First Holy Communicants are seen in the picture together with the celebrants and their teachers Rev. Sr. Jean SC, Rev. Sr. Anne SP and Rev. Sr. Malanie SP.

*Text: Trevor Ludowyke*

*Pic by Asiri Warnakulasuriya*

## 9th Asian Schools' Chess Championship



Awards Ceremony to honour the Gold medalists of 9th Asian Schools' Chess Championship 2013 was held at Loyola College Auditorium, Negombo recently. The Awards were presented by the Secretary of Chess Federation of Sri Lanka, Mr. Lakshman Wijesooriya.

The Gold medalists are M.K.T.

Chankamie (Southlands College, Galle), Himasha Jayasekera (Sacred Heart Convent, Galle), Roshell Natasha Askey (Ave Maria Convent, Negombo), Thakshila Jayatilaka (Dharmasoka College, Ambalangoda) and Dinithi Kulatunga (Visaka Udyalaya, Colombo)

## Peterites win Joe-Pete Do-You-Know Quiz



The Peterite Quiz Team convincingly beat the Josephians at the Annual Joe-Pete Do-You-Know Quiz contest for the Dr. P. R. Anthonis Challenge Cup held at St. Joseph's College, Colombo recently.

The Peterite team comprised Ayesh Ishara (Captain), Sachin Perera, Arshad Fauzil, Shanil Arjuna and Pansilu

Nilaweera. The chief scorers were Ayesh Ishara and Sachin Perera.

The questions for the quiz were compiled by a team of Royalist who also conducted the entire quiz.

Picture shows the winners with Miss Imojen Mel, Teacher-in-Charge.

## Workshop for Daham Pasal Teachers



A one day workshop for Daham School teachers in Nayakakanda, Keralapitya and Balagala was held at the Pradeshiya Sabha Hall, Hendala under

the guidance of Rev. Fr. Indra Rathnasiri Fernando Director, Catechetics, Archdiocese of Colombo.

*Nimal Perera*

## First Holy Communion Service at Andiambalama



Children from the Daham Pasala of Holy Rosary Church, Andiambalama received their First Holy Communion recently, presided by the Parish Priest. Rev. Fr. Nimal Ponweera.

The children were prepared to receive the Blessed Sacrament by Rev. Sr. Hubert Marie (HF) and the Catechism teachers.

*Pic. T. Sunil Perera*

*"Now young men... Listen to what you are taught. Be wise; do not neglect it" - Proverbs 8: 32-33*



# English with Fun and Entertainment

## Dear Readers,

In our eighth lesson we practised the speech sounds (b) (n) (f) (r), learnt 8 riddles 5 palindromes, went through a short course in human relations, learnt a short composition on my pet and read one exciting anecdote about happy marriage

In this lesson you will learn the speech sound (ʌ) as in run, three riddles, prioritize ten inspirational quotes, read a joke, two anecdotes about the power of women and do a simple reading comprehension about a person and practise the language function of making a request with the modals 'can' and 'may'

Thanks for the readers who made valuable suggestions and for using these lessons effectively. You are invited to share your experiences to enrich our lessons further.

With best regards!

*NJ*

## Task 1 Speech Sounds

The English alphabet is basically divided into two major categories as vowels and consonants. We studied the letters A, E, I, O, U, as vowel letters and B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, W, X, Y, Z, as consonant letters in the lower forms. These letters do not represent the sound system of the language. The study of the sound system of a language is called phonology. The speech sounds are written in phonetic symbols. In this lesson let's study the phoneme (ʌ) as in run

**Activity one:** Read aloud and practice the speech sound (ʌ) as in run

but	cut	hut	mut	shut
bud	dud	mud	judge	nudge
us	bus	rush	fuss	crush
bun	done	ton	fun	run

a) Come and cut the bun.	"Go, my son, and shut the shutter,"
b) The pup is in the tub.	This I heard a mother mutter.
c) Rush to the hut with the gun.	"Shutter's shut," the boy did mutter,
d) Don't make a fuss in the bus.	"I can't shut'er any shuter
e) Judge not and you shall not be judged.	

## Task 2 Riddles

(1) Ground not for thy daily bread,  
Leave me in my scented bed,  
Ignore me not, lest I doth wither,  
My name I leave you to consider. What am I?

(2) What goes up and down but doesn't move?

(3) I can help you have some fun,  
Sometimes I get stronger from the sun,  
If you never give me a break,  
You will find I never wake,  
I am optimistic on one side,  
I can be short, fat, tall or wide,  
Rectangle and cylinder are two of my shapes,  
And I can even help you make video tapes,  
Sometimes you must wait for me to get ready,  
Just hold on for a few hours and be steady,  
I can help you get around the mall,  
Or help you make a telephone call.

What am I?

## Task 3 Inspirational quotes:

Read the inspirational quotes and prioritize them according to your preference

- "An optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity." — Winston Churchill
- Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears. – Les Brown
- Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful. –Joshua J. Marine
- The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing. –Walt Disney
- I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do. –Leonardo da Vinci
- Limitations live only in our minds. But if we use our imaginations, our possibilities become limitless. –Jamie Paolinetti
- Expose yourself to your deepest fear; after that, fear has no power, and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes. You are free. –Jim Morrison
- I didn't fail the test. I just found 100 ways to do it wrong. –Benjamin Franklin
- In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure. –Bill Cosby

10. A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new. – Albert Einstein

## Task 4: A joke - Read and enjoy the subtle humour

Not so very long ago, an old man was feeling guilty about something he had done, so he decided to go to Confession.

He said, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. I feel terrible because during World War II I hid a refugee in my attic."

The priest said, "But that's not a sin! I wouldn't feel bad about that if I were you!"

"But I made him agree to pay me 50 dollars for every week he stayed."

The priest said, "Well, I admit that certainly wasn't the most noble thing to do, charging the man to save his life -- but you did save his life, after all, and that is a good thing. Don't worry about it too much; God forgives."

The man said, "Oh thank you, Father that eases my mind. I have only one more question to ask you -- Do I have to tell him the war is over?"

## Task 5: The Power of Woman - Read and enjoy the fun

There were 11 people – ten men and one woman – hanging onto a rope that came down from a helicopter.

They all decided that one person should get off, because if they didn't, the rope would break and everyone would die.

No one could decide who should go, so finally, the woman gave a really touching speech saying how she would give up her life to save the others, because women were used to giving up things for their husbands and children, giving in to men, and not receiving anything in return.

When she finished speaking, all the men started clapping.  
(Submitted by Dane).

## Task 6 : Commanded by wife - Read and enjoy

God comes and says, "I want the men to make two lines. One line for the men that dominated their women on earth and the other line for the men that were dominated by their women. Also, I want all the women to go with St. Peter."

With that said and done, the next time God looked, the women are gone and there are two lines. The line of the men that were dominated by their women was 100 miles long, and in the line of men that dominated their women, there was only one man.

God got mad and said, "You men should be ashamed of yourselves. I created you in my image and you were all whipped by your mates. Look at the only one of my sons that stood up and made me proud. Learn from him! Tell them my son, how did you manage to be the only one in this line?"

And the man replied, "I don't know, my wife told me to stand here."

## Task 7: Read the text and (a) underline the pronouns in the text (b) answer the following questions

Martin Silva

Martin Silva is a driver. He lives at Nagoda with his wife and seven children. His wife's father also lives with them. He works at the Consumer Affairs Authority. He drives a van. He comes to office early in the morning. He is a dedicated worker. His director likes him very much.

- What is Martin Silva?
- Where does he live?
- With whom does he live?
- Where does he work?
- Who likes him?

## Task 7: - Making a request

Rain: Can I borrow your dictionary please?	Saman: May I have your umbrella please?
Brown: Sure. Here it is.	Kamal : Sorry I haven't brought it today

Study the following ways of responding to a request.

Affirmative :	Negative
Yes, Of course	No. I'm sorry
Sure. Here it is.	Sorry I don't have one.
Of course. Here you are	Sorry, I haven't got it here
Surely	Extremely sorry.

## Answers

Task 2 : (1) a flower (2) a staircase (3) a battery

## Task 6 :

- (a) Pronouns are He his His He He He (b) 1. Martin Silva is a driver .  
2. He lives at Nagoda 3 He lives with his wife, seven children and his wife's father.  
4. He works at the Consumer Affairs Authority 5. His director likes him

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Compiled by Noel Jayamanne



# QUIZ

## On Catholic Themes

(..... from last week)

### QUESTIONS

#### 1. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

##### *Anointing of the Sick*

496. What is the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
497. Who can receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
498. Can the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick be repeated?
499. Who can administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick validly?
500. Where in the New Testament are instructions given for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
501. What name do we give to the Eucharist administered to the dying?

##### *Mary*

502. When it was time for Jesus to become a human being, whom did God choose to be Jesus' mother?
503. What is the name of the Archangel who appeared to Mary?
504. What is the Annunciation?
505. When is the feast of Annunciation celebrated?
506. Where did Mary, the Mother of Jesus live at the time of the Annunciation?
507. Whom did Mary visit soon after the Annunciation?
508. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth?
509. When is the Birthday of Mary celebrated?
510. What is known as the Prayer of St. Bernard of Clairvaux?
511. Where did our Blessed Mother appear to St. Bernadette Soubirous?
512. How did Mary introduce herself to Bernadette Soubirous when she appeared to her in Lourdes on Mary 25, 1858?
513. What is the Immaculate Conception?
514. In which year was the dogma of the Immaculate Conception proclaimed and by whom?
515. To whom did Our Lady appear at Fatima?

(contd next week.....)

### ANSWERS

#### I. THE CHURCH AND CHURCH TEACHINGS

##### *Anointing of the Sick*

496. The Sacrament which, through the anointing and prayer of the priest, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when one is in danger of death.
497. Any one of the faithful who is in danger of death from sickness or old age.
498. Yes, if the same person falls sick again or if his/her illness becomes more serious.
499. Only a bishop or a priest.
500. James 5: 14-15. ("Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.")

501. *Viaticum*.

##### *Mary*

502. Mary of Nazareth.
503. Gabriel.
504. Angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she was chosen to be the Mother of Jesus.
505. March 25.
506. Nazareth.
507. Her cousin Elizabeth.
508. About 3 months.
509. September 8.
510. The *Memorare*.
511. Lourdes, France.
512. "I am the Immaculate Conception".
513. The Immaculate Conception is a dogma of the Catholic Church, which maintains that the Blessed Virgin Mary was kept free of original sin from the moment of her conception and was filled with the sanctifying grace normally conferred during Baptism.
514. 1854 by Pope Pius IX.
515. Three shepherd children Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco.

*Courtesy: Clare Ukken fsp*

## JESUS with a DIFFERENCE

### [Spiritual Reflection]

#### *Mark 12:41-44 - The Widow's Offering*

Did anybody speak or give something to the widow after putting all what she had to the treasury?



*Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money....*

Many rich people threw in large amounts.

But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

*Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said.....*

#### **Jesus**

He did not speak to the rich or to the widow, but saw what they did. He didn't count what the rich put (a large amount) but he took account of the widow's offering.

#### **Hidden Point**

Did Jesus expect any positive action from His disciples when He brought the widow's plight to their attention?

Did He expect His disciples to trust Him just as much as the poor widow trusted in God to give all she had?

#### **Difference**

The widow understood the message of God. God was the provider. Did the disciples understand that?

Are we able to see the hidden message God sends to us through another's life?

Is my life a proclamation of God's message: A message visible to others?

#### **Turning Points**

*Yes..! It is very pretty picture. Through the 'widow's mite' Jesus leads His disciples to a new mission. Jesus reflected on each man's life through the acts of the rich and the widow.*

*And He allows His followers to start a mission for them. Jesus opened the gate and showed the need of speaking and helping.*

*Rev. Fr. S. Randil Fernando OMI  
Nazareth - Wennappuwa*

## FROM THE VATICAN DOCUMENTS

### *"Right to lead a religious life"*

May the God and Father of all grant that the human family, through careful observance of the principle of religious freedom in society,

may be brought by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to the sublime and unending and "glorious freedom of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21).

### *Dignitatis Humanae 15*

Declaration on Religious Freedom  
Pope Paul VI  
December 7, 1965