75th Jubilee of First Sinhala Legion of Mary

The 75th Jubilee Thanksgiving Holy Mass of Sri Lanka’s first Sinhala Prelature of the Legion of Mary was celebrated on February 10, 2019 at 8.30 at the Pamunugama Church presided over by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. Jubilarian Men’s Legionaries of Pamunugama, Parishioners of Pamunugama and other Legionaries were present on the occasion.

The Jubilee Holy Mass was concelebrated by Very Rev. Fr. Bertram Ranjith Episcopal Vicar, Charity of the Archdiocese of Colombo and Rev. Fr. Francis Jayakody, Parish Priest of Pamunugama. His Lordship in his homily made reference to numerous Apostolic Services rendered by the First Sinhala Men’s Prelature of Pamunugama established in 1943 in the Parish of Pamunugama and surrounding parishes.

The first Sinhala men’s presidium referred to by His Lordship was started on September 23, 1943 at St. Joseph’s Church, Pamunugama. Emmanuel Perera, M.J.A. Perera, W.M. Boteja, Joseph Ponweera, HDM Joseph were the persons who joined and supported this presidium.

Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, Kimbulapitiya

"Our country is faced with numerous difficulties. Problems relating to the natural environment, daily conflicts in the lives of the citizens and the unbearable cost of living are some of the many. A selected few are leading comfortable lives while the majority of the people are struggling for survival. Therefore it is necessary for the Catholic Church to cast the net among the people and draw them ashore so that all will be protected from the perils of the sea of turmoil", said His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Devarathika Valence Mendis, Bishop of Chilaw and Secretary General of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Sri Lanka, in his homily at the Annual Festive Holy Mass celebrated at the National Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, Sri Lanka, in his homily at the Annual Festive Holy Mass of Sri Lanka’s first Sinhala Legion of Mary was celebrated on February 10, 2019 at 8.30 at the Pamunugama Church presided over by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. Jubilarian Men’s Legionaries of Pamunugama, Parishioners of Pamunugama and other Legionaries were present on the occasion.

The Foundation Stone was laid to the proposed Daham Pasal building at the Church of Our Lady of Madhu a sub station of the Tutudla Parish recently. The funds for the building estimated at Rs. 4 million were donated under the concept of National Development through spiritual upliftment by Hon. Sajith Premadasa Minister of Housing, Construction and Cultural Affairs. The allocation for funds was made on a request made by Dr. Kavinda Jayawardena, Member of Parliament. In the picture Rev. Fr. Linton Joseph, Parish Priest Tutudla is seen blessing the foundation stone to be laid.

Anton Jayasuriya

The grand re-opening of Claretian Publications by His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo took place at No 55, Ragama Road, Welisara recently.

Re-opening of Claretian Publications

"Happy those who do not follow the counsel of the wicked" (Psalm 1,1)
Public Lecture: Christian Perspective on Human Life

Date: Tuesday, February 19, 2019

Time: 8 am to 12.30 pm

Venue: Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Attidiya, Dehiwela

Medium of Instruction: English

Programme:
- * 8.00 am: Holy Mass
- * 8.30 am: Registration
- * 8.45 am: Morning Prayers
- * 9 am: Session I: Biblical-Moral Perspective
  - Rev. Fr. Lalith Felix Fernando and Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi
- * 9.45 am: Session II: Legal Perspective (Church Law and Civil Law)
  - Rev. Fr. Noel Dias and Thushaar Ratnayake
- * 10.30 am: Tea Break
- * 11 am: Session III: Medical Perspective (psycho-somatic issues)
  - Dr. Nilat Ratnayake and Dr. Roshinie Perera
- * 11.45 am: Session IV: Panel Discussion and Open Forum
- * 12.30 pm: Vote of Thanks & Final Blessing

Organized by: Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Attidiya, Dehiwela

Inquiries:
- Derrick Anthony (0777354477); Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi (0717693519)

Special Notice

Dear Rev. Fathers,

1. I would like to draw your attention to the following points which concern the pastoral care of the parishioners under your care.

1. During the Year of the Family in the Archdiocese of Colombo we launched a special programme to form Family Life Committees in parishes. Five couples were chosen from each parish and a special training session was conducted by me in each deanery.

2. During this Year of the Youth, I recommend that programmes to enrich the youth of our parishes be launched. Rev. Fr. Malcolm Perera, the Archdiocesan Chaplain for Youth will send you information and guidance in this regard. One such venture could be to form youth groups in zonal level in your parishes. It will be a good way of reaching out to the youth in the periphery of your parish.

Kindly also send me a plan of action for the year 2019 especially keeping in mind the Year of the Youth declared in the Archdiocese. You may jointly coordinate the activities of the Youth group and the Family life committee in your parish with the assistance of a few young couples who have been members of the youth group earlier.

Please follow the guidelines given in the Pastoral Parish Council directives in forming the above sub-committees. I thank you for all your fruitful labour put in for the pastoral care of our faithful.

May God bless you and your parish ministry.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Malcolm Cardinal Ranjit
Archbishop of Colombo

Notice

Dear Brethren,

1. I am appointing the following priests to be Spiritual Directors of the Archdiocesan Legion of Mary - Tamil stream with effect from 1st February 2019.

- Rev. Fr. Manojkumar Fernando
  - Thiruchchelvamalai Madha Curia, Colombo
- Rev. Fr. Clarion Fernando
  - Atputha Madhu Curia, Negombo

Thank you and God bless you!

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Malcolm Cardinal Ranjit
Archbishop of Colombo

ON AIR - SLBC
CATHOLIC HALFW HOUR
Sunday 17th February – 8.00 pm – 8.30 pm

Presented by: Rev. Fr. Leopold Ratnasereeka OMI
Also featuring a message from His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Claret C. Perera OSB, Bishop of Ratnapura on the recent Youth Synod.

Felicitation ceremony

Ms. Florence Wisidagama the ex-president of the Bidders’ Society in the Grama Seva Division KAs of Maha Pamunugama was felicitated for her 10 years of yeoman service to the Society.

Picture shows Patron of the Society Dr. Nihal Silva, presenting a felicitation award to her. Rev. Fr. Frans Jeyakody, Parish Priest, Pamunugama, graced the occasion.

Benjamin Kirihetti

Training Session for Sunday School Teachers

Participants: Sunday School Teachers of English Stream

Modules: Teacher Personality, Child Psychology, Identifying Children and Modern Teaching Methods

Date: Tuesday, February 19, Poya Day

Time: 8.30 am to 4 pm

Venue: All Saints’ Church, Borella, Colombo 8

Organized by: Archdiocesan Catechetical Centre, Colombo 8

The Parishioners of the Maha Pamunugama have made elaborate arrangements to celebrate the Lenten Feast of the Madhu Shrine on March 15, this year.

Their Lordships Rt. Rev. Des. Emmanuel Fernando, Bishop of Mannar, Harold Anthony Perera, Bishop of Kurunegala and J. D. Anthony Jayakody, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo are scheduled to officiate at the Feast which will be conducted by the Liturgy Committee together with Rev. Fr. Jayantha TOR.

The celebrations will commence on March 12, with the evening devotion, novena and continue with an open air Way of the Cross and the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. On March 14, the solemn Vespers Service will conclude with the candle lit open-air procession of the Blessed Sacrament under the leadership of Their Lordships. The Festive Holy Mass will be celebrated in the morning of March 15, and conclude with the procession and the veneratio of Our Lady of Madhu.

Rev. Fr. P. Soosai the new Administrator of the Shrine will make arrangements to provide accommodation for the pilgrims during the Feast, said Mr. Sunny Norbert Ponweera President of the organising committee with the guidance of Rev. Fr. Francis Jayakody Parish Priest, Pamunugama.

Benjamin Kirihetti

Family Encounter in Negombo and Katana Deaneries

By T. Sunil Fernando and Roshan Pradeep

“Christian Marriage is a divine grace bestowed by God. God has united man and woman in Holy Matrimony to carry on as a channel of bringing forth life into the world. Parents cannot deny the right to life of children given by God. In the present times the parents restrict the number of children to one or two in the family due to difficulties encountered in the admission to schools. If it be the main issue the Archdiocese is ready to find solutions to the problem. In the future at the admission of the third child to the Catholic Schools only half of the stipulated donation has to be paid and from the fourth child onwards no payments are needed to be made to the school.”

His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith the Archbishop of Colombo made this statement when he addressed the gathering of members of the Christian Family Encounter of the Negombo and Katana Deaneries held at the Parish Hall of St. Joseph’s Church, Thilawanduwa, Negombo.

Continuing the address His Eminence said that our providence is not the bank balance or the life insurance policy but our total reliance on the power of God. If parents live a steadfast life of faith totally committed to God, He will provide all the necessities for the children who are given by God Himself.

Rev. Fr. Claude Nonis, Director Archdiocesan Family Apostolate, Rev. Fr. Shiran Dassa, Coordinator, Negombo Deanery Family Encounter, Rev. Fr. Clement Rosario, Dean of Negombo Deanery, Rev. Fr. Neeshantha Rodrigo, Dean of Katana Deanery and several Parish Priests were present on the occasion.

The meeting with the participation of about 600 families from Negombo and Katana was organised by Rev. Fr. Ravind Sandasiri Perera, Parish Priest Thilawanduwa together with the members of the Family Encounter of Negombo Deanery.

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Benjamin Kirihetti

Sundri School Teachers

Rev. Fr. Claude Nonis, the Archdiocesan Director for Family Apostle asked the priests to be Spiritual Directors of the Archdiocesan Legion of Mary – Tamil stream with effect from 1st February 2019.

Rev. Fr. Manojkumar Fernando
Thiruchchelvamalai Madha Curia, Colombo

Rev. Fr. Clarion Fernando
Atputha Madhu Curia, Negombo

Thank you and God bless you!

Yours devotedly in Christ,

Malcolm Cardinal Ranjit
Archbishop of Colombo

Ceas on the occasion.”

“Nor go the way of sinners, nor sit in company with scoffers” (Psalm 1,1)
Fr. Joe immortalized

In the front page of last week we highlighted how the ‘Master Builder’ was lauded by all present at the historic opening of the ‘Very Rev. Fr. Joe E. Wickremasinghe Pavilion.’ The litany of praises received in the wink of an eye a thundering ovation. Rev. Fr. Trevor Martin, the Rector, together with the priestly community of St. Peter’s College, Colombo deserves it unarguably for their colossal work and uncommitted commitment.

This thundering applause erupted not only for their indefatigable efforts but also for their sense of gratitude, a noble human quality of the highest degree. St. Peter’s never forgets its glorious past. Hence the Pavilion came to be dedicated as a fitting and ‘immortal’ tribute to an illustrious Rector who rendered an invaluable service to the College in the capacity of a renowned educationalist for sixteen long years. The thundering ovation was the unstoppable and inevitable outcome. This Editorial is, however, an inadequate tribute to this amazing pedagogue and brilliant Rector, who steered St. Peter’s to its ‘Golden Era’ or ‘The Renaissance.’

Born in 1934 as the fifth child in a family of six, Rev. Fr. Joseph Emmanuel Wickremasinghe or ‘Fr. Joe’ as he was affectionately known to us, had his early education in his home town of Pamunugama, a well-fortified citadel of Catholic Faith. At fourteen, this teenager, named after the Parish Saint, St. Joseph, walked through the portals of St. Aloysius’ Minor Seminary, Borella. God, in His ineffable wisdom, had called him to be another ‘Joseph’, a foster father to generations of children in the future.

Subsequently, the young Joe graduated at the prestigious National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka, Kandy where he won, exhibiting his exceptional intellectual calibre, the gold medal for Sacred Theology, Consecrated by God in 1960, the young Fr. Joe, after a short spell in a parish, returned to the Seminary as a lecturer. These two years were his first taste in the field of education.

In July 1963, God sent His ‘young Joseph’ to St. Peter’s College, Colombo where he acquired his educational skills. God’s plan for him was perfectly on the track. He was appointed as the Priest in Charge of the boarders and Prefect of Studies and Discipline. God’s plan for him! However, being new to the vocation, he was prepared to learn from those who knew better, especially from the lay teaching staff. That was his sheer Christ-like humility.

In an era when no student complained to the Rector, giving due recognition to the experienced and professional seniors, new opportunities were proved their devotion to the cause of Peterite education. Their pedagogical efforts as an educationist par excellence would reach its peak from 1978 to 1994.

How did Fr. Joe create the Renaissance in Peterite history? First he built up the People. In order to bring about some sanity in the College he lost no time in restoring the morale of the tutorial staff, the kingpin of the big city schools. He fostered better understanding between the staff and the Rector. He also recognized the potential of the senior teachers, who had proved their devotion to the cause of Peterite education. He raised the standard of the institution to prevent the exodus of promising students to other schools and instilled in the students a sense of values and the appreciation of all that is good and proper.

Giving due recognition to the experienced service of the senior teachers, new opportunities were opened to them. The roles of Prefects of Studies and Discipline were de-centralised by the appointment of Sectional Headmasters. Incentives within the framework of the limited financial resources available encouraged the tutorial staff to raise the quality of teaching. Thus the exodus of the bright students to other schools was reversed. While upholding the traditions established by his predecessors as well as the bonds of dedicated teachers of the past, he realised that the new assignment required, above all, a more liberalised concept was necessary. He created hence a new Board of Administration with lay teacher participation.

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The college, steering clear of all controversial issues and enlisting whole-hearted cooperation from all quarters, had this written, “Never forget how he stood at one end of the corridor and with his booming voice instruct students.” One student of Fr. Joe, Sampath Perera by name, had this written, “I thought I was forgotten … rather, the law of the LORD is their joy; God’s law they study day and night” (Psalm 1,2). Included among the many who had this thought was Grace Nicholas Marcus Fernando, His Lordship Marius Peiris, His Lordship Joseph Ponniah and Rev. Frs. Dudley Perera OMI, Mihes Ganemulla, Claver Perera, Henry Silva and Cyril Perera who persuaded the present writer in those sedating and balmy evenings to read the Sacred Scriptures for the mission.

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The Messenger of last week dug deep into ‘Ezra the Scribe’, an Old Testament Writer and today, we encounter a New Testament Writer, St. Paul.

First, we may look into his educational background (Part I) and then, into the turning point of his life and mission, namely the ‘Christ-Experience’ (Part II). Lastly, we may treat his literary productions (Part III).

In our critical inquiry, we read his Letters as the primary source and Acts of the Apostles as a complementary/supplementary source.

Education
1. What kind of education did St. Paul receive prior to becoming a prolific writer?

i. As a Philippian, 3:5-6 indicates (‘Circumcised on the eighth day of the race of Israel, one of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, in observance of the law, a Pharisee, in zeal I persecuted the church, righteousness based on the law I was blameless’). St. Paul had some sort of training in Jewish Law from the perspective of the Pharisees.

ii. Read also Galatians, 1:13-14: “For you heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it, and progressed in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my race, since I was even more zealous for my ancestral traditions.”

iii. As a citizen of a Greek-Roman city, Tarsus, reputed for education, culture and philosophy Paul could have been influenced by some of the common (Greek, in part and Aramaic).

He could have read and write in Greek: “See for yourself how eating out among Gentiles and multilingual society.

In the school of life, St. Paul could have learned the religions of the Gentiles among whom he lived. He could also have known how to translate this into a baptismal image and adapted it to another time and context. Thus they gave the quotation an entirely different twist to that found in the original.

St. Paul demonstrates that he handled such interpretive moves with ease. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-4: “I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and all of them were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. All ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was the Christ.”

Here St. Paul recalls Moses leading the Israelites through the wilderness and brings up the image of the rock of water from the rock: “From the desert of Sinai the whole Israelite community journeyed by stages, as the LORD directed, and encamped at Rephidim. Here there was no water for the people to drink. They quarreled, therefore, with Moses and said, ‘Give us water to drink.’” Moses replied, ‘Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to a test?’”

Then in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die of thirst in the heart of this wilderness?” Moses did, in the presence of the elders of Israel. The place was called Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled there and tested the LORD, saying, ‘Is the LORD in our midst or not?’ (Exodus 17:1-7).

Paul translates this into a baptismal image and then pronounces that “the rock was Christ.”

Finally, he concludes that God’s righteous judgment will come upon all on judgment day.

5. What can we conclude from this educational background of St. Paul the writer?

We may conclude that St. Paul was well educated and literate; his upbringing in the diaspora influenced his language and rhetorical abilities. He received a rather traditional Jewish upbringing in an urban environment within the context of a multicultural and multilingual society.
Rabies is one of the world's deadliest and most fearsome diseases. In unvaccinated persons, rabies is almost always fatal, after the neurological symptoms have developed. But there have been a few cases that have survived in the world. By vaccinating after exposure, the outcome is highly successful. It has got to be taken within 6 days of exposure. If vaccinated early, protection is 100%. There are 20 to 30 deaths per year in Sri Lanka. In the world, 55,000 die per year, of which 99% of them are in Africa and Asia.

It is called hydrophobia, which means fear of water. The main symptom is getting tight or spastic in the throat, the muscles in the throat get tight or spastic and attempt to swallow makes it severe and creates a very dangerous looking picture. Even attempting to swallow a little water will present a very serious picture with the patient being unable to breathe and some water causing choking. It is a near death like picture.

Rabies is endemic in Sri Lanka or in other words regularly found in the country: 95% of rabies in Sri Lanka is due to dog bites. Other animals can also transmit the disease. In Sri Lanka rabies virus has been detected in mongoose, cottle, goats, pigs, bandicoots, jackals pole-dogs, civet cats, squirrels, bats, monkeys, horses and elephants. Rabies has not been implicated in human to human transmission also as has not been documented. There are two million dogs in Sri Lanka out of which 100,000 are vaccinated. 80% are still not vaccinated. And there are 10,000 dog bites per day. People are vaccinated or treated every year for which many millions of rupees is spent per year.

The rabies virus can penetrate the broken skin or the mucous membrane of other than physical wounds. Humans are usually infected when the virus laden saliva is inoculated through the skin by the bite of a rabid animal. Saliva can also infect if the skin is already broken. The virus has been found in the saliva even up to 14 days before it exhibits the first sign of rabies. Intermittent excretion of the virus in the saliva continues throughout the illness. The time for the first manifestation of the illness in an exposed person after a bite averges from one to three months, but can range from five days to more than a year.

Rabies is an illness where the picture (symptoms and signs) appear suddenly, and rapidly appear to affect the nervous system. There are two varieties of rabies. The classical variety called the furious rabies and the paralytic variety called the dumb rabies.

Furious rabies. Fever and headache with tingling sensation at the site of the bite are the initial manifestations. About 10 days later there is marked anxiety, agitation, restlessness, hallucinations, bizarre behaviour and paralysis may develop. Overexcitability, the hallmark of the disease is precipitated by auditory or visual stimuli. Hydrophobia is present in 50% of cases. Fear of air is a very characteristic and is a specific sign of rabies. The patient gets fits, stoppages of breathing, and heartbeat death. Deaths occur in about 14 days.

Dumb rabies or paralytic rabies present with a paralysis of both sides of the body. This is known to occur specially after being bitten by rabid bats.

PREVENTION

Once bitten by a suspected animal or in those people who are in danger of being bitten by a rabid animal the mainstay of treatment is prevention.

Early vaccination following a bite by a rabid animal can prevent the infection. Rabies vaccines are available. Human diploid vaccine (HDV). Purified vero cell rabies vaccine (PVRV). Purified chick embryo cell vaccine (PCEC). Only the latter two are now available in Sri Lanka. The efficacy is 100% if the full course of vaccine is taken. Pre exposure vaccination is recommended for the following risk groups:

Veterinary surgeons, students and support staff;
Laboratory staff handling material contaminated with rabies virus.
Abattoir workers, animal handlers and vaccinators, wild life employees, employees in animal quarantine premises and zoological establishments.

If there has been taken the pre-exposure vaccine and he/she is bitten by a suspected animal, consult a well informed doctor immediately, as a course of vaccine has to be taken. Choice of therapy depends on the screening of the patient and of the animal before a decision on the vaccination is taken. The exposures are divided into major and minor ones.

IN THE SCREENING OF THE ANIMAL

Major exposures are:

- Single or multiple bites with bleeding on the head, neck, face, chest, upper arms, palmer, finger and toe tips and genitalia.
- Deep scratches with free flowing blood on the head, neck or face.
- Single or multiple deep bites anywhere.
- Contamination of mucous membrane with saliva.
- Bites of wild animals with bleeding
- Bites of domestic animals or non-rabid animals with blood
- Nibbling of uncovered skin
- Contamination of open wounds with saliva.
- Drinking raw milk of rabid cow or goat
- Superficial bites and scratches of wild animals without bleeding.

IN THE SCREENING OF THE ANIMAL

- Major exposures to dogs and cats are—Healthy observable animals with two vaccinations; the last one within a year; can observe for 14 days.
- If sick or suspected of rabies take the vaccine.
- Discontinue if he/she is well after 14 days. If having rashes full course of vaccine.
- Minor exposures are—If animal is healthy and observable and has had a vaccine within a year; at an age above 3 months; incident occurring 1 month after vaccination.

In the following situations vaccination is not needed. Contamination of intact skin with saliva. Contact with utensils, or direct body contact. Eating left over food by a suspected pet.

Wash the area with soap and water.

The above information should be taken to the doctor who will then decide on the course of treatment.

Ventilation of Feelings

We read in the papers recently that a mother of a four year old daughter said that she am sure she did not intend to kill her. But she was so infuriated at that moment and assaulted her for what she did or said and the blows caused her death. The mother was in utter remorse for what she did. This mother was in utter remorse for what she did or said and the blows caused her death.

Prayer

As we saw in the case of David, prayer is another way to ventilate our negative feelings. As we are ventilating to a third party such as a friend or a counselor, God can show us the way out of these distressing feelings. They gained extra strength from expressing their feelings of fear, frustration and anxiety, and agitation, or depression, hallucinations, manifestations. About 10 days later there is marked

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LIVING FAITH
Rev. Fr. Daniel Icatio

“LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY”

Dialogue with God

Over time, this renewing and renewed dialogue with God dispuses us to love and serve Him with a more adequate love and learning entirely in His hands. To reach this end which is desired by all requires years of prayer and intermediate steps in addition to grace.

Do we honestly want to love God? If we say “yes” yet, we do not spend at least a quarter of an hour in a daily conversation with the Lord, then it is not true that we want to love Him. Therefore, the first thing that is needed is a regular and frequent dealings with the beloved.

We must desire to learn how to follow Him, so that “Lord, teach us to pray!” Aside from vocal prayers, we have to speak with God in a heart to heart conversation. We call it mental prayer. It has nothing to do with transcendental meditation which requires a correspondence of the heart. Contrary to that, it is a process of filling oneself with God, it is an encounter with the divine.

Things big and small

Saint John Paul II pointed out, every gift of God is “gift and task”, so is prayer. Divine graces require our human correspondence. What this implies, among other things is discovering the greatness and beauty of opening ourselves to God and seeking His friendship, which makes us happy here and hereafter, and learning entirely in His hands. To reach this end which is desired by all requires years of prayer and intermediate steps in addition to grace.

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Things big and small

Saint John Paul II pointed out, every gift of God is “gift and task”, so is prayer. Divine graces require our human correspondence. What this implies, among other things is discovering the greatness and beauty of opening ourselves to God and seeking His friendship, which makes us happy here and hereafter, and learning entirely in His hands. To reach this end which is desired by all requires years of prayer and intermediate steps in addition to grace.

Do we honestly want to love God? If we say “yes” yet, we do not spend at least a quarter of an hour in a daily conversation with the Lord, then it is not true that we want to love Him. Therefore, the first thing that is needed is a regular and frequent dealings with the beloved.

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Hrotsvitha von Gandersheim

The Clarion Voice, c. 935 – 1001 AD

Preface to Her Plays

There is no development without solidarity

Pope to World Government Summit

World leaders met at the World Government Summit, taking place in Dubai from February 10 to 12. In his video message, Pope Francis greeted those participating in the Summit, and recalled his own visit to the United Arab Emirates earlier this month. “I encountered a modern country which is looking to the future without forgetting its roots”, His Holiness said. “I also saw how even in the desert the flowers spring up and grow. I returned home with the hope that many deserts in the world can bloom like this.”

Pope Francis said, “I am thinking of you and your commitment in these days, as you face fundamental issues including political challenges, economic development, protection of the environment and the use of technology. The Holy Father emphasized that “we cannot really speak of sustainable development without solidarity. He concluded his message by thanking those taking part, and with the prayer that the Lord might bless their commitment “for a more just and prosperous world for everyone”. "

Vatican News

“And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said” (Luke 6,20)

Preface to Her Plays

Hrotsvitha notes in her Preface to The Complete Works, “I found all the material… in various ancient works by authors of reputation, and given the philosophical discussions on religious thought and mathematics in at least two of her plays as a woman in the monastic tradition who obviously was well educated. Monastic life for women during the middle ages was particularly desirable, providing an oasis from the traumas of Germanic married life and a safe haven where a woman could live with some sense of security.

Turning Privilege into Responsibility

Due to the depth of her point of view in her writings, it is widely believed that Hrotsvitha took the veil later in life. Hence some scholars infer that she may have personal experience with the love and repression that comes in a male gender sphere. She obviously was well educated. Monastic life for women during the middle ages was particularly desirable, providing an oasis from the traumas of Germanic married life and a safe haven where a woman could live with some sense of security.

Inttellectual Subversion

This canoness believed it was her duty to accept her God-given talent and use it to aid fellow Christians in their faith and understanding. Stepping outside the acceptable boundaries of her female role, she chose to express her religious beliefs in writing as only a few other women before her, a jurisdiction of rights that fell within the realm of the male sphere. She gained her decision with a mantle of Christian obligation and asserted her own female unworthiness. The former she truly believed in, if we take her writings and prologues at face value. The latter, she does not necessarily believe in again, if her writings and prologues are taken as fact, since she subverts her claims to inferiority in a number of ways. According to Tara Bond, Hrotsvitha used her writing to establish a clever dual approach to any resistance to her writings and utilizing the rhetoric of Christianit, she proactively diminished the possibility of criticism or punishment for her unorthodox actions on the other. Living in the royal abbey within the Ottonian Empire, she might have had access to books and teachings that only a few select female contemporaries would have shared. But, this woman felt compelled to do more than just read, more than just satiate her own desire for knowledge.

A Feminist for Men

The best way to redeem women is to redeem men who are exploitively subjected by women. Such women lovers, mothers or wives, incite men who are under their control to fight with each other under the guise of ‘manliness’ to prove themselves and be preferred by women for courtship. Such a crude gynocentric system requires men to provide goods to women in sex and easy pleasure. In the pursuit of this cultural savage and primitive societies males fight for their mating rights which is biological and inescapable as argued by evolutionary scientists, but women who cruelly exploit this male biological drive are the agents of a gynocentric social system that needs reform if at all women are to be truly redeemed socially.

According to Hrotsvitha the gynocentric social organization that holds men subservient to women needed reform. Through her plays she has provided an under-appreciated critical perspective on gynocentric social organization. She rewrote the story of St. Thais as a play that nobly criticizes men’s oppression and urges a more harmonious social organization that provides justice for men. Hrotsvitha has thought that throughout history, the lives of the vast majority of men have been of secondary interest only as a means for providing goods for others or for fighting with other men and therefore expendable easily. In Hrotsvitha’s dramatization, Thais explicitly recognizes the injustice she has done to men through harlotry. The men who love Thais are utterly subservient to her despite her filial violation. These men are incapable of asserting their own right to justice having given into lust. Hrotsvitha’s argument is that Men without the help of women help men, therefore men by helping men will help themselves in the end.

Philosophy as Poetry and Drama

A number of classical scholars have suggested that Plato’s philosophical dialogues were performed as live dramas at some of the great Athenian dramatic festivals such as the City Dionysia. But while there have been many famous philosophical dialogues since Plato’s time, for example by Anselm, Berkeley and Hume, they are not drama but just talking heads. More truly philosophical are those plays by the French Existentialists, Sartre, de Beauvoir and Camus which not merely often featured philosophers as characters in a play but explored philosophical themes. Hrotsvitha could not have written dialogues without a reason if not at least an implicitly philosophical one. Her poetic dialogues were more dramatic than philosophical one could say, yet it was a medium least exploited at that time for the dissemination of a philosophic discourse about issues of importance. In a vastly illiterate society she was using the only potent medium with the widest outreach into the hearts of people.

It is undeniable that Philosophy itself has been influenced by literature, and specifically by poetry since its inception. Contemporary thinkers, such as Diltzey and Nietzsche, praise the wisdom of poets and see poetry and philosophy as mutually beneficial. Skepticism of poetry as something opposed to philosophy begins with Socrates where he criticizes poetry in Plato’s dialogues: as a form of imitation, Socrates thought poetry is removed from the truth and has the power to corrupt people by appealing to their irrational parts of their souls. While poetry cannot make people wise, it can lead them to wisdom. Thus, poetry was tolerated in Socrates’ polis as long as it was capable of serving philosophy’s ends. For Kant, it is human genius that allows individuals to move from nature to poetry, which, as the highest art form, permits access to the phenomenal world and insight to God and the ultimate cause of the moral feelings. It is only in the writings of Diltzey and Nietzsche where poetry becomes fully rehabilitated and in Heidegger it reaches its zenith which contends that poetry is the most potent place where something to which people must return in order to escape scientific attempts to understand, control, and manipulate reality. For Heidegger poetry illuminates (un-conceals) reality that is truly exists, wiping away the layers that scientific and other artificial modes of language have imposed upon it. Postmodern philosophers like Ferdinand de Saussure, Paul de Man, and Jacques Derrida continue to argue for poetry’s rightful place as a source of truth. But perceiving all these great men-philosophers was the woman Hrotsvitha who believed in the power of poetry and drama in the pursuit of knowledge and truth.
Dungalpitiya turns

This year the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, nestled in the Mesopotamia, the Land between the Sea and the Lagoon, celebrates

St. Mary Magdalene's Historical Church at Dungalpitiya - Negombo

Dungalpitiya is a calm and quiet village, situated between the sea and the Negombo Lagoon. It is located about 9 km from Negombo and 12 km from Ela. There is a beautiful historical Church at Dungalpitiya, which is the only Church in Sri Lanka dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene.

Dungalpitiya village is 2 km long and the maximum depth from sea to lagoon is 600 m. The majority of the work force is engaged in the fishing industry and agricultural activities. A symbol of repentance is St. Mary Magdalene. Available evidence confirms that the construction of the historical Church had commenced in 1906 and completed in the year of 1919. Rev. Fr. Sylvester Papili OSB, had put in a great effort to provide a Church to Dungalpitiya and had constructed a temporary Church building on March 18, 1873. Subsequently a permanent building for a Church was constructed during the period of Archbishop Andre Melzian.

The laying of the foundation stone for the building was carried out by Rev. Fr. Paaris and his Assistant Rev. Fr. Peron had given full support to make the project a success.

Today we can see a strong Church building at Dungalpitiya. Recent excavation work for renovations has revealed that the foundation of old building had been constructed with large stones broken from the sea shore using human labour of villagers, our ancestors. Mogopowwa, the front external wall and carved design work and internal construction have historical value that has been conserved by various generations of villagers.

A symbol of repentance is St. Mary Magdalene and the villagers of Dungalpitiya and anxiously making preparations to celebrate the Jubilee event by participating in various religious activities; prayers, and physical structural developments to the Church building. It is wonderful to look back and realize the blessing of God during past decades.

During this period villagers have received many gifts from God through St. Mary Magdalene who is a powerful mediatrix between God and the mankind. God’s love covered the village protecting people from many disasters such as the Tsunami.

St. Mary Magdalene was so fortunate as to witness the miracles of Jesus with her naked eye. She attended the great preaching of Jesus Christ and followed and lived accordingly, until her death in Sainte-Baume (‘Holy Care’) in France.

St. Mary Magdalene’s name is mentioned more than 10 times in the Gospels in connection with the Passion, Death and Resurrection of lord Jesus.

The Holy Mother was accompanied by St. Mary Magdalene on the way of the cross to Golgotha. She was one of the few who remained with Christ during His agony on the cross. She wept and cried at the great offering of life of the Son of God on a cross on the top of Golgotha. Her tears were absorbed by the soil of Golgotha and are still in existence witnessing the great event.

It was to St. Mary Magdalene that Lord Jesus first appeared after His Resurrection.

St. Magdalene is known as the Apostle to the Apostles because of her role in the accounts of events surrounding the Resurrection. She was fortunate enough to be called by her name “Mazia” by Lord Jesus at the Resurrection. From the lips of Mary Magdalene came the most wondrous news of all time that would ring throughout our lives in many more centuries to come, ‘Christ is risen’.

Older than the Blessed Virgin Mary, no person in the Gospels demonstrated more courage and commitment to Lord Jesus than Mary Magdalene. She would be among the few with Lord Jesus at the suffering, crucifixion and the Resurrection and her presence would garner for ever woman. She is a patroness of converts and repentant sinners.

We, the villagers of Dungalpitiya with utmost gratitude to our ancestors have gathered to a cluster, to celebrate the Centenary to thank God with the mediatrix St. Mary Magdalene.

It is a great responsibility for us to make our Church the centre of our eternal life with the Holy Spirit. We hand over the responsibility to the youth to create a peaceful and religious environment through the grace of St. Mary Magdalene.

In heaven we may be sure, our St. Mary Magdalene is at the feet of Lord Jesus. We beseech her to implore Him to give us the best and that it may never be taken away from us.

Dr. Nimalchandra Hettiarachchi
Dungalpitiya

Dungalpitiya, the Pearl of 19 Prolific Writers of Pamunuwa

In the year 1988, the Church of St. Mary Magdalene earlier belonging to the Parish of Pamunuwa was separated and a new combined Parish of Kepungoda and Dungalpitiya was created. Later on Kepungoda-Dungalpitiya was absorbed into the Negombo Deanery. Rev. Fr. Nishan Wilathagama, a highly competent Administrator was the current Parish Priest of the Kepungoda-Dungalpitiya combined Parish.

When a brief study of Church History is made in Sri Lanka, it is found that the Portuguese set up the first Diocese in Goa in 1534 AD. Then the Portuguese were in control of the maritime provinces in Sri Lanka and also parts of Asia. Then Sri Lanka also belonged to that Diocese. Later in 1558 AD, Sri Lanka belonged to the Diocese of Cochin, a place geographically closer to the island. In 1834, Sri Lanka was separated from the Diocese of Cochin and became an independent Diocese. At that time the first Bishop of the Diocese of Sri Lanka was His Lordship Vincent De Rozario, of the Oratorian Missionary Order of India.

In 1847 the Propaganda Fidei, the Pontifical Arm of Propagation of Faith divided the then Ceylon to Southern and Northern Vicariates. Gradually the Catholic Church in Ceylon was separated based on geographical provinces and then into Parishes. Pamunuwa belonged to the Archdiocese of Colombo. Accordingly the geographical area bordering Kelani River, Negombo Lagoon and Dandugama River was made into one Parish, the newly established St. Joseph’s Church at Pamunuwa being considered the main Church of the Parish. The villages of Hendala, Nayakakanda, Kandana, Neduruwippitiya, Kala Eliya, Weewala, Weligampitiya, Kanuwana, Tedella, Delatura, Dehiyagatha belonged to the old Pamunuwa Parish. Along the Sea Coast the Parish stretched from Hendala Palliyawatta to Pitipana. As the need to expand the administrative machinery of the Catholic Church arose, the then large Parish of Pamunuwa became a smaller Parish. During the decades 1980/90 the area in the Eastern boundary in Muthurajawela was also separated from the Pamunuwa Parish, and the Parish became limited to the area Negombo Lagoon in the North, Muthurajawela in the East and the Indian Ocean in the West.

To that Parish with limited geographical area only the Churches of Dungalpitiya, Kepungoda, Bopitiya, Usuwatelaya and Pamunuwa belonged. Usuwatelaya became a separate parish in 1962 and Bopitiya became a Parish in 1978 and in 1988 Kepungoda and Dungalpitiya merged into a separate Parish.

In the Year 1994, the 75th Jubilee of Dungalpitiya was celebrated and the Parish has brought forth 17 Priest Sons. Later Rev. Fr. Martin Gunaratne OMI among them was a Vicar General of the Archdiocese and was also a theologian and popular preacher. Former Editor of Gananarsa Pradeepaya Rev. Fr. Santha Sagara Hettiarachchi is also a Priest Son of Dungalpitiya. In preparation for the centenary celebrations, the parish has set up several committees viz. Centenary Jubilee Committee, Media Committee and other committees for several other areas of work. Improvements have been made to the cemetery by enlarging it and a parapet wall round it has been built with a locked entrance gate. Rev. Fr. Nishan Wilatgamuwa has by now launched a retreat covering the entire Parish for the spiritual upliftment of the parishioners.

Joe Sangapalaarachchi
Pamunuwa

God’s acre
Descendants of St. Peter

“Blessed are you who are poor, for the Kingdom of heaven is yours.”

The Messenger February 17, 2019
The kingdom of God is yours” (Luke 6:20).

Malcolm Cardinal Ranjit
Archbishop of Colombo

Message of His Eminence for the Year of the Youth

February 17, 2019

The Messenger

It is the Archdiocesan Year of the Youth. How best should we celebrate it as a diocese? The Holy See has shown us the way. The Instrumentum Laboris, of the XV ordinary general assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in Rome from the 3rd to the 28th October 2015 entitled “young people, the faith and vocational discernment”, puts a strong argument before us: “What do young people really ask of the Church in your country?” [IL 64] and ventures to provide also an appropriate answer to this query. It states: “listening is the truest and boldest kind of language that young people are vehemently seeking from the Church”. [IL 65]. The document goes on to explain what the listening is all about when it states: “Many of them (youth) feel that their voice is not considered interesting or useful by the adult world, either in the social or ecclesial domain” [ibid.]

The document lamants “the unpreparedness of ordained ministers, who do not know how to adequately grasp young people’s lives and sensibilities; the passive role given to young people within the Christian community; the difficulty the Church has in explaining her doctrinal and ethical stances in contemporary society” [ibid. No. 66] and calls them obstacles to that openness, truth and readiness to listen, which the youth expect from the Church. The document asserts that today’s youth wish to have convincing answers to their questions on life, faith, its meaning, on morality, on interpersonal relationships, on love and on death. They wish to know more. It is the Church that has to help the young people to better discern the meaning of their existence, that has to help them set their steps in line with God’s love and with their fellow co-journeymen. The Church should not see it merely as a challenge but also as an opportunity. The Church should offer our youth, “our willingness to accompany them in the process that will lead them to achieve clarity and truth about themselves, welcoming the gift of life and finding the contribution they are called to give to society and the world.” [ibid. No.109].

The discernment process of what each young person wishes to and should achieve in life has to be discovered, especially by Catholicism, through a constant evaluation of God’s will for them, which surely is latent discernable through the examination of the revealed word in the Sacred Scriptures and the Tradition of the Church, through the life of sacramental enrichment and prayer through one’s commitment to clear and transparent moral actions and in line with one’s openness to relationships and to guidance dictated to by one’s conscience.

In each case every young person who is a gift of immeasurable value to the Church should be assisted to discover, accept and correspond to God’s own plan for self, reaching up eventually to heights of holiness in a life of self-giving in the very footsteps of Christ. The attempt should be for the Church to accompany each youth to not only strive for perfection in the earthly sphere but much more in the spiritual. They need to be helped to discover for themselves that specific purpose for which God had created them and the excellence for which they should always strive.

The Church in doing this cannot and should not impose pre-conceived modes of perfection on our youth but instead accompany them to listen to their own conscience in the light of their own God experience and to discern the purpose for which God has created them and then strive to achieve perfection in an authentic manner.

The Church should help in this process the role of mentors who “are called to respect the mystery that all persons carry in their inner dignity, nobility, the core that God is currently at work in them. They are invited to realize that they are a model that can influence others through what they are, rather than for what they do or suggest.” [ibid. 130]. Indeed it is a demanding service that is expected from the mentors who accompany the youth. The document clarifies this further stating: “Young people are asking for effective and reliable mentors, who are filled with faith; imitators of Christ who live a life of personal communion with God and the Church” [ibid. No. 131].

The document goes on to accurately specify, as explained by young people themselves, the profile of a mentor helping them: “someone who constantly seeks holiness; is a confidant without judgment; actively listens to the needs of young people and responds in kind; is deeply loving and self-aware; acknowledges their limits and knows the joys and sorrows of the spiritual journey.” [ibid. No. 132].

Thus the document does not expect the Church and its pastoral agents to be mere teachers and formators of youth, making them the objects of our concern but wishes the Church to help the youth themselves, to discover their innate dignity, nobility, the core of God’s call to them, their own capacity to rise up to that call and grow into holiness in and through a process of authentic and committed witness to the Gospel. So it states: “A true spiritual dynamism and a fruitful pedagogy of holiness do not disappoint young people’s deepest ambitions: i.e. their need for life, for love, expansion, joy, freedom, future and also for mercy and reconciliation.” [ibid. 213]. In other words, we need to change our approach and encourage them to come closer to the Lord and the Church and to grow into their full stature as Christ’s disciples and allow God to realize in them the dream he has for them - that of holiness. The sky is the limit for our youth.

Dear fathers, brothers and sisters in this Year of the Youth let us work hard to make our young people to trust the Church and coming closer to it, to discover God’s very purpose for them. Let us strive to make our youth appreciate more and more their inner calling to love the Lord and His Church. Let us ensure that they come closer to the Church by organizing them at the zonal level, in our parishes, into communities of youth assisting, accompanying and making them our co-journeymen in a discovery of the treasures of holiness God has called them for! I thank you for any initiatives you could take to make your parish youth activities broad-based even further, and intensified.

I thank you once again and wish you God’s abundant blessings.

Yours devotedly in Christ,
Rev. Fr. David Wijetunge from the Diocese of Chilaw was from Dummaladeniya, Weerappana. He worked in many parishes since his Ordination, where he sacrificed himself for the people whom he had as his flock. He had a keen interest in seeing that the people were always united and consequently they cooperated wholeheartedly with him in all the parishes where he served. His friendly ways attracted the people although there were times when he was strict and demanded the best in everything that they did.

Having known him for many years and worked with him very closely in different parishes – the A.C. Sisters in Katukurunda and the General Hospital Co-lombo – he had a sense of humour, and would make people feel at home by his jokes, especially when dealing with children, youth, and adults. He knew each of them very closely and made them feel that he too was part of them, especially when he took them on outings to various places. He was strict because he wanted the very best for them.

Having visited many countries and gone on pilgrimage with people, he had a vast number of friends, who took a liking towards him and they in turn visited him when in Sri Lanka, thus introducing them to us also.

Our late Sr. Bennette had very close contacts with him, as her own brother was a priest in the Diocese. When Sr. Josephine Wijesinghe’s Home was being constructed in Katamandu, she visited the place to check on how the work was going on. He did this in spite of the heavy work in his own parish.

His acting with judgment when he was in charge of them was visible, especially in the way he dealt with them – caring, loving and yet strict. Today they speak very highly about Fr. David who worked, and had the full support of the A.C. Sisters and the Sisters of other Congregations too. When he was in charge of Education in the Diocese he visited the schools. He took a keen interest to get Catholic teachers for the staff through the Education Department.

Fr. David was a very self-sacrificing person. He was always ready to help others at the expense of his own health as he was diabetic. As a true Shepherd, he tried to keep his flock together by his uniring zeal and love for Christ.

As Sr. Stella’s family members visited her from Australia he met them when Sister was teaching in Chilaw. As Fr. David had his nieces and nephews in Sydney, Australia, one of Sister Stella Maria’s brothers invited Fr. David for their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Here is an extract of what was said by Sister Stella Maria’s brother when he was informed about the death of Fr. David. “Friends and family heard the news about the death of a man who was dearly loved and who was a generous person. We were privileged to have him with us. We have many happy memories of him. Having him at our Golden Wedding Anniversary was certainly a highlight for us. We will always remember the days he spent with us when he came to Melbourne. We have often thanked Almighty God for his life at Holy Mass on his first death anniversary on second February 2019.

He was the Founder President of the Association of Plastic Surgeons of Sri Lanka, which is today a recognized medical association.

Joe was a highly accomplished surgeon but his outstanding qualities were his great humility and alluring presence. He was a role model to us as a leader of a Catholic organization.

The Guild awarded him the Dr M P Gooray Oration in 2005. He spoke on 'The Healing Ministry'. I first met him as a student selected to study medicine in the then only medical faculty in Colombo, in the University of Ceylon. He was University Medical Officer and I went to him for my medical examination. He was nice to me and asked me from where I hailed. When I told him that I hailed from Katukurunda he told me that he is from Katukurunda which is place nearby. We found him very agreeable and he could not find me space in the General Hospital Colombo. He was a very devout Catholic who followed the teachings of the Church with much enthusiasm. He was a role model to us as a leader of a Catholic organization.

She was my Counsellor, she was my guide, Whenever I needed her, she was at my side. Even physically present to soothe the mind Or when far away, her spirituality will abide She was my preacher, my spiritual director, When prayers were requested, my prayer partner. She was my friend, she shared my joys and sorrows. She was my mother! How I miss her, nobody knows.

Lourdes Pushpam Douglas led a very fruitful life. As a mother of ten children she had a lot to do and around the house. This was possible due to her prayerful life. She started and ended the day talking first and last to God.

She was a very efficient seamstress. While the helpers in the house did the house and kitchen work, she found comfort and consolation in comforting and consoling others. She had an ear for anybody and everybody, who she commended all to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

She was my preacher, my spiritual director, When prayers were requested, my prayer partner. She was my friend, she shared my joys and sorrows. She was my mother! How I miss her, nobody knows.

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Lourdes Pushpam Douglas led a very fruitful life. As a mother of ten children she had a lot to do and around the house. This was possible due to her prayerful life. She started and ended the day talking first and last to God.

She was a very efficient seamstress. While the helpers in the house did the house and kitchen work, she found comfort and consolation in comforting and consoling others. She had an ear for anybody and everybody, who she commended all to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
I feel Bandula Nonis’ letter in the Messenger of 09-12-2018 is misleading. He may have mis-directed himself to Prof B J Dissanayake’s informal and most interesting topical address in the Shenton Weerasinghe Oration which, unfortunately, is not published for verification that Anagarika Dharmpala (AD) was born on 17th September 1864. Two places were mentioned as his birth origins: Matara and Colombo; but he was brought up mainly in Colombo. He attended Colombo’s St. Mary’s School in girls to put the facts in context. He did not settle down and in his school was run by Dutch Burgher ladies. He then moved a Catholic infant’s school for girls (St Mary’s School in girls to put the facts in context. St Benedict’s College (SBC) recently published its Sesquicentennial 1865 to 2015, which is an impressive souvenir with useful historical articles, all of which are worth reading. There is no record of a ‘kindergarten’ at SBC (see articles in the College souvenir). Nazi German’s was showing its ugly face and it was thought it was Form I or the old Sixth Standard. Several dates given by Guruge in this book are highly suspect because they give the impression that he spent 11 years at SBC. He has written in his own words he was there for two years. From SBC he went on to a Christian boarding school in Kotte where he met with further difficulties relating to his religious faith and education. After this he moved to St Benedict’s College and Colombo Academy which later became the Royal College.

His early formation was in a Sinhalese Buddhist school and that was well nurtured and encouraged by his parents. He himself said, “I had learnt a lot in these two years” was all solid.” I think that’s what drove him as a strong Sinhala National Buddhist Patriot in the Ceylon British colonial environment. To put it mildly it was an outspoken young man (he resigned from his Ceylon Government Service job to become a full-time Buddhist activist) to join the worldwide movement to free the world from British colonialism. It was a senior secondary English school, and it was reflected in his whole life going throughout the colonial period landing himself in prison in India. He had to be rescued by a sympathetic Tamil member of the Ceylon Legislative Council. There were two world wars, I and II, during his life span. There were four Popes and five Archbishops of Canterbury in England. New Bishops were appointed for Ceylon under (1913-1879) and Christopher Bonjean (1823-1892); both were great leaders in the formation of denominational schools like SBC (see articles in the College souvenir). Nazi German’s was showing its ugly face and it was hardly fortuitous that the restoring of the sacred shrine of Buddha Gaya for Buddhists. He died in 1933 at the age of 69 as a newly ordained Buddhist Monk, thus missing out on the great independence strides in India and Ceylon to show more of his true colours as a Sinhala Buddhist National Patriot. If Mr Nonis wishes to compare and contrast, like with life, with strong religious personalities of AD era or thereabouts to recognise their personal zeal and positive contribution to the society at large, perhaps, his contemporaries could be of a local national patriotic culture and the education and the higher education (1822-1879) and the Catholic activist Fr Xavier Thaninagamy (1913-1980). The former translated the King James Bible into Tamil, and the latter was a great literary universties’ like to refrain from robbery other’s property in not knowledge. Our culture is not disseminated in the classroom. Our technical training should cover language or even a foreign language for survival. We need principles to protect our education as the case may be. Our stakeholders are getting increasingly alert on educational reforms. There is a global explosion of knowledge due to the opening of the social media and the internet. There is a reasonable assumption that the contemporary educational institutions are not producing the products to the needs of the economic market. Hence there is the need for a paradigm shift in the educational institutions and the national curriculum which can bring this gap whilst the Higher Education Sector is continuing to operate in the colonial policy framework. With the ongoing closure of some of the State schools in remote areas for the ex-colonialism for tactics. Education is not a saleable commodity in the marketplace. We are not ready for the tough task of the creation principles treating the genetic cells of the brain alike. Even the children in a box would not behave equally. This theory of the diversity of human genes is the magnificent factor for the future. The education tool is not the proper mechanism for appraisal. Unless our academics, scholars and the stakeholders of the present-day education open their dialogue on reforms, which are worth the millions of our students in present-day schooling. As the Professor observed at the Oration, education is just upbringing the child for 13 years and that we cannot guarantee 4 As. It is the NVQ that will strengthen his hope of renewal of human energies and regeneration of the millions of our students in present-day schooling. We feel that Bandula Nonis wishes to contrast and compare, like with life, with strong religious personalities of AD era or thereabouts to recognise their personal zeal and positive contribution to the society at large, perhaps, his contemporaries could be of a local national patriotic culture and the education and the higher education professions to refrain from robbery other’s property in not.
Since the fourth century the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter has been celebrated in Rome as a sign of the unity of the Church, founded upon that Apostle. The purpose of this Feast is to highlight the importance given by Christ Himself in appointing Peter in His place bestowing upon him authority in governing and leading. “I now say to you, Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of the netherworld shall never prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:18-19). It is by this solemn declaration that Jesus bestowed on Peter the rights to succeed Him as the Head of the Universal Church, exercising the power in governing His Church.

According to the famous Medieval lives of Saints there, St. Gregory the Great says “The whole Church is a golden image of Jesus. He was right about Jesus as he confessed, that I am?” (Matthew 16:15). St. Peter used the word “rock” because he was the shepherd of all clerics; and on the magisterial chair because he was the teacher of all Christians.

On February 22, we celebrate the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter because on this day St. Peter is said to have been raised to the seat of honour in Antioch. St. Peter founded the See of Antioch, and he remained as its bishop for seven years from 33 A.D. to 40 A.D. He was the first Bishop of the Kingdom of Cappadocia. St. Peter succeeded St. John the Baptist. Others saw Him as Elijah or Jeremiah the prophet. John 20:19-27.

Jesus said, “The one who does not have the key to the kingdom of heaven…in the same way, true lovers will automatically subdue and make money…”

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude and insult you” (Luke 6:22).
I usually read books. This is my favourite hobby.

Catholic Lingo

Ex cathedra
Latin, “from the (Teacher’s) chair”. The term is commonly applied to the special and explicit exercise of Papal Infallibility.

When the Pope speaks from the chair (cathedra) of authority, as visible head of all Christians, his teaching is not dependent on the consent of the Church and is inerrable.

The following three requirements ought to be fulfilled to invoke Papal Infallibility:
1. The pronouncement must be made by the official successor to Peter.
2. The subject matter must be in the area of faith and morals.
3. The Pope must be speaking ex cathedra (from the chair of Peter), and must be intending to proclaim a doctrine that binds the entire Church to assent.

The doctrine of Papal Infallibility is a dogma of the Catholic Church, officially defined at the Vatican Council II (1870). The Council stated that Pope has “full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church,” and that when he “speaks ex cathedra, that is, when, in the exercise of his office as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, that infallibility which the divine Redeemer willed his Church enjoy in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals” (Dei Filius Chapters 3:9 and 4:9).

There have been two instances of an officially declared Papal Infallible doctrine. The first was in 1854, when Pope Pius IX declared the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception (The blessed Virgin Mary was conceived in St. Anne’s womb free from original sin), and then in 1950 by Pope Pius XII when he declared the doctrine of the Assumption (the blessed Virgin Mary was assumed body and soul into Heaven).

Do-It-Yourself (DIY)

Lentil Soup (Serves 04)
Ingredients:
• 1 cup dry brown lentils, soaked (for at least 06 hours or overnight)
• 1 fennel diced (approx. 1/2 cup)
• 1 onion, diced (approx. 1 cup)
• 2 carrots, peeled and chopped (approx. 3/4 cup)
• 3 cloves garlic, minced
• 1 tablespoon oil
• 2 teaspoons cumin
• 1 teaspoon turmeric
• 1/2 teaspoon coriander
• 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
• 2 cups vegetable broth
• juice of 1 lemon
• salt to taste (if needed)

Method:
1. Warm the oil in a large pot over medium heat then toss in the onion and the fennel. Cook for 2-3 minutes.
2. Add the carrots, garlic, and sweet potato along with the spices. Stir together and cook for 1 minute.
3. Pour in the remaining broth along with the rinsed lentils and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes, or until they are tender.
5. Turn off the heat and then squeeze in the lemon juice and stir together.
6. Ladle into individual bowls for serving.

Reading Books
Reading books is a good hobby. I like to read story books. Everyday I read a story book. Books are our true friends. They give us knowledge.

H. G. Oshani Avindy
Grade 05
St. Anthony’s Maha Vidyalaya, Alagollewa.

Interesting facts:
• When the Pope cautions world leaders, pleads for peace, or condemns social injustice, people listen and respond. What makes the world listen to this man? The answer lies in Scripture and Tradition.
• This feast commemorates Christ’s choosing St. Peter (Simon) to sit in His place as the servant-authority of the whole Church.
• St. Peter was one of the three who witnessed Christ on special occasions, such as the Transfiguration of Christ and the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.
• St. Peter was the only Apostle to whom Christ appeared on the first day after the Resurrection.
• Peter was the first of the apostles, the head of the Twelve, to whom they accompanied Jesus, he was the first on the list and usually spoke on their behalf.
• Jesus appointed Peter as “chair.” Jesus changed his name, which means “rock,” to a new name: Peter (Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14), which means “rock.” Jesus installed Peter as chair when he declared, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18).
• Jesus wanted Peter to be a firm foundation, a solid, unshakable footing. As chair, Jesus desired that Peter would be strong but not heavy-handed or dictatorial. He commissioned Peter as a servant-leader, a shepherd, a chair who would feed his lambs and tend his sheep (see John 21, 15-17). Jesus conferred upon Peter the authority that he would need to serve as chair when he said, “I will give you the keys,” and added, “Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” (Matthew 16, 19).
• St. Peter was not without faults. He was rash and reproached often by Christ. He had fallen asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane instead of praying. Jesus had asked him to do. He also denied knowing Jesus three times after Christ’s arrest.
• The Chair of Saint Peter symbolizes the special mission of Saint Peter and his successors, the popes, to shepherd Christ’s flock, keeping the Church united in faith and charity.

It signifies also the teaching authority of the Pope.
• In the apse of St. Peter’s Basilica, there is a great bronze throne sculpted by Bernini. It en- closes a wooden chair from the ninth century, long thought to be St. Peter’s own chair. This “chair of Peter” is supported by four statues of great Fathers of the Church (Saints John Chrysostom, Athanasius, Ambrose and Augustine).

Above the throne is an oval window, surrounded by angels, with the image of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. The symbolism of this great work of art is clear: the Holy Spirit guides the Church through Saint Peter and his successors, who authoritatively teach the Word of God transmitted in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

Sources - Catholic Hot Dish, Today’s Catholic, Catholic News Agency.
By Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

1. Harvey LeRoy “Lee” Atwater (February 27, 1951 – March 20, 1996) was a US political consultant and strategist for the Republican Party. He was a consultant to US presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush and chairman of the Republican National Committee. Atwater aroused controversy through his aggressive campaign tactics, such as race-baiting, or appealing to racial prejudice to maintain Republican support in the Southern states.

2. On March 5, 1990, Atwater suffered a seizure during a fundraising breakfast for Senator Phil Gramm. Doctors discovered a grade 3 astrocytoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer, in his right parietal lobe. In the months after the severity of his illness became apparent, Atwater said he had converted to Roman Catholicism. In repentance, he issued a number of public and written letters to individuals to whom he had been opposed during his political career.

3. In a June 28, 1990, letter to Tom Turnipseed, he stated, “It is very important to me that I let you know that out of everything that has happened in my career, one of the low points remains the so-called ‘jumpin’ jackie-bille’ episode,” adding, “My illness has taught me something about the nature of humanity, love, brotherhood, and relationships that I never understood, and probably never would have. So, from that standpoint, there is some truth and good in everything.”

4. In a February 1991 article for Life magazine, Atwater wrote: “My illness helped me to see that what was missing in society is what was missing in me: a little heart, a lot of brotherhood. The 1980s were about acquiring – acquiring wealth, power, prestige. I knew I acquired more wealth, power, and prestige than most. But you can acquire all you want and still feel empty. What would power not trade for a little more time with my family? What price wouldn’t I pay for an evening with friends? It took a deadly illness to put me eye to eye with that truth, but it is a truth that the country, caught up in its ruthless ambitions and moral decay, can learn on its dimes. I don’t know who will lead us through the ’90s, but they must be made to speak to this spiritual vacuum at the heart of American society, this tumor of the soul.”

5. Finally Lee Atwater found peace at the age of 40.

1. The heart of American society, this tumor of the soul.”

2. Friends? It took a deadly illness to put me eye to eye with power wouldn’t I trade for a little more time with my friends? It took a deadly illness to put me eye to eye with that truth, but it is a truth that the country, caught up in its ruthless ambitions and moral decay, can learn on its dimes. I don’t know who will lead us through the ’90s, but they must be made to speak to this spiritual vacuum at the heart of American society, this tumor of the soul.”

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4. New Testament cleansing Naaman, a leper from Aram (2 Kings 5) and returning life the breadth to the son of the widow of Zarephath in Sidon (1 Kings 17). Now it is Jesus turns in these words: “If someone can bless the Lord, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind shall see it together” (40,5) is thus fulfilled.

5. What does Jesus mean by His miracles? Jesus sees His exorcisms as signs of liberation and hope. His miracles destroy the evil power that causes sickness, death and natural disasters. Read Luke 10,18: “If Jesus has power, all the infirmity from the sky. The effect of the mission of the 72 is characterized by the Lord to the Israelites. They enter the Kingdom. Therefore one must not be treated as evil.

6. Today we agree with “Lee” Atwater having seen moral decline and spiritual vacuum in our society. This proclaim our of our society calls for our action to turn the woes to blessings by making Jesus’ Word and healing touch accessible to all. “Who loseth the life, lose much ... but who loseth the spirit loseth all” (Elbert Hubbard).

7. How can we turn the woes to blessings? The repentant Zacchaeus (Luke 19,8: “Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted from anyone I shall repay it four times over”) and the nascent Christian Community in Jerusalem (Acts 2,4-45: “All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one’s need”) are perennially the shining examples for us to imitate and thereby to hear the Word of the Lord, “Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham” (Luke 19,9).

Blessings and Woes (Luke 6,17-26)

In the Second Reading St. Paul explains that the Resurrection is an act of God and is beyond human power. As Christ was raised up, we too shall be raised up one day. This means that there is life after death, but not of this world. This implies that we do not live as if everything were to end up with this world but hope to attain a lasting nature, for a life after death. This raising up of our bodies is assured because of the Resurrection of the Lord. Therefore we should not depend solely on the things of this world. Neither should we depend on the powers of the flesh. We must depend on God and His kingdom. Hence, I am certified that out of everything that has happened in my career, one of the low points remains the so-called ‘jumper car’ episode,” adding, “My illness has taught me something about the nature of humanity, love, brotherhood, and relationships that I never understood, and probably never would have. So, from that standpoint, there is some truth and good in everything.”

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Liturgical Calendar Year C

17th Feb. - 24th Feb. 2019

Sun: Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Jen. 17: 5-8; 1 Cor. 15: 12, 16-20; Lk. 17: 16-20
Mon: Gen. 4: 1-15, 25; Mk. 8: 11-13
Tue: Gen. 6: 5-8; 7: 1-5,10; Mk. 8: 14-21
Wed: Gen. 8: 6-13, 20-22; Mk. 8: 22-26
Thu: Memorial of St. Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor
Gen. 9: 1-13; Mk. 8: 27-33
Fri: Feast of Chair of St. Peter, the Apostle
1 Pt. 5: 1-4; Lk. 16: 13-19
Sat: Memorial of St. Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr
Heb. 11: 1-7; Mk. 9: 2-13
Sun: Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time
1 Sam. 26: 2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23; 1 Cor. 15: 45-49; Lk. 6: 27-38

“Rejoice and leap for joy on that day!” (Luke 6,23)
The Pamunugama Men’s Presidium established a Women’s Presidium at the Pamunugama Church. Then they pioneered the Senior and Junior Presidium in Bambalapitiya, Kottawa, and Dambulla and in the surrounding parishes of Pamunugama.

The Men’s Presidium during a period of 75 years held meetings continuously and served the parishes. The Parish Priests in their pastoral work. They also undertook pastoral family visits, visits to the sick people and assisted the Parish Priests in Sacramental Communion to the sick. They also assisted in the liturgy of the Church and sale of Gnanapratha Pradeepaya and Bakthi Probodanaya. The assistance received from the Parish Priests and Assistant Parish Priests by this presidium known as "Presidium of Queen of Confessors" needs to be specifically mentioned here. The spiritual nourishment provided by Rev. Fr. Francis Jayakody, Parish Priest and Rev. Fr. Sachitha Kelum, Assistant Parish Priest at present also needs to be mentioned here. High appreciation needs to be given to Rev. Fr. Bernadino Perera, Archdiocesan Chaplain of the Legion of Mary and Rev. Fr. Linton Joseph, Parish Priest Tudela and Deaneary Coordinator of the Legion for their support to the activities of Legion of Mary. Mr. Benny Jayamamne and Benjamin Kirihetti, too, are Legionaries from the Pamunugama Presidium who hold responsibilities as Archdiocesan Legionaries.

Mr. Preeti Rupasinghe, the President, J.D.Noel Frank, Vice President, Chandana Tirimanne, Secretary and Nimal Siris Silva, Treasurer are the current office bearers and 22 Legionaries serve in the Pamunugama Parish. In the Pamunugama Parish, a Men’s Presidium, two Senior Women’s Presidium and a Junior Presidium of students operate presently.

In the picture the Jubilarian Legionaries appeared for a group photograph on the occasion with His Lordship and Episcopal Vicar, Charity with Rev. Fathers and Rev. Sisters.

If you are silent you become

S • Simple, Sensitive, Smiling, Spiritual Straight forward
I • Illuminative, Intellectual, Inspiring, Impartial
L • Listening, Lovable, Leading, Life giving
E • Enthusiastic, Energetic, Empowering, Enlightening, Enduring
N • Nice, Noble, natural, Neighbour oriented, Nurturing,
C • Cooperative, Charitable, Caring, Common sense, Creative
E • Edifying, Emotionally balanced, Exemplary, Effective

Silence Leads us:
• To Pray, to Reflect, to Meditate, to Imagine, to be Hopeful to be Compassionate, to be Concrete, to be Authentic

Silence helps us:
• To think, to reason, to feel, to love, to be Sacrificial

Silence is a weapon:
• To be happy, to smile, to taste God, to be spiritually strong

Silence is a Power:
• To be lovable, to be patient, to be kind, to be truthful, to be peaceful to be united, to be faithful

Sr. Jayanthi C.R.
Rosarian Monastery of St. Anne’s, Talawalla

"Behold, your reward will be great in heaven" (Luke 6,23)
Conversion of a Buddhist Monk

I was chosen as a lecturer to teach in a Teacher’s Training College in Sri Lanka. Majority of my students were Buddhists. There were a few Rev. Brothers, Rev. Sisters and also Buddhist monks. Some of my students were much older than me.

I tried my best to lead an exemplary life. I loved all my students, young and old. They too loved me. If someone did something wrong, I pointed out their mistakes or misbehaviour but I tried my best never to put anyone to shame in public.

One day an incident happened in class where a Buddhist monk was also involved. I solved the problem amicably then and there, without making a fuss. After my lessons I quietly told the monk, “Rev. Reverend, meet me after your lectures!”

The Buddhist monk came to me saying, “Sorry Madam.” “So, Reverend you know why I called you. You can go.” “Madam I’m really very sorry. I will see that it will never happen again,” said the monk.

“Thank you very much. Forget about the incident. It is all over” I said.

A month or two before the training period was over this same monk, who was older than me approached me and asked. “Madam can you spare me ten to fifteen minutes please?”


The Buddhist monk started by saying, “Madam we can see that you are a strong Catholic and you live up to your Christian teaching. Everyday I worshiped my parents, brothers and sisters... I was leading a very happy and contented life, till I met you.”

“When I saw the exemplary life you were leading, I was disturbed. I thought that if a young person like you, not a religious, leading an exemplary and a happy life, why can’t I be a Buddhist monk?” Madam I feel ashamed to have put on this yellow robe.”

“Why Reverend? I asked him calmly. When I was a youngster I used to feel very angry. I thought I worshipped everybody, but there was no one to worship me as I was the youngest... So I put on this yellow robe. I listened in silence with great interest, “Madam you don’t look surprised” said the monk.

“No not at all.” I answered. “But you will be surprised if you hear what I have to say” Reverend who was speaking with head bowed down, looked up and asked, “What is it madam?”

“Reverend we all make mistakes, but all don’t own up. Yes! you say I am very good... why I too make mistakes. When we Catholics sin, we go to a priest confess our sins and receive forgiveness. The priest will advise us how to lead a better life.”

“In Buddhism you don’t have such a thing do you? I’m glad you came to me”

“Not you should do now Madam? Remove this robe!”

“No! you should have removed it the day you put it on. Not after today” I continued.

“All of you have in your view and requested a church dedicated to St. Sebastian be built there. I am glad you have come to me”

“A month or two before the training period was over this same monk, who was older than me approached me and asked.

Yes, Lord Jesus, this is what we yean for
Grant us Peace, not turmoil nor despair,
which we abhor
The most salient factor which eludes us in our mundane lives
Is Peace, tangible Peace, in moments of strife.

Dona Nobis Pacem – the vital invocation
But no one at Mass heeds this suplication
When we cry out to the Lord in unification
"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Dona nobis pacem!"

It’s only a habitual gesture, sans feelings too.

Dona Nobis Pacem – the vital invocation
But no one at Mass heeds this suplication
When we cry out to the Lord in unification
"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Dona nobis pacem!"

At the end of the Sunday Mass
The priest descends from the Altar.
He walks towards the main door
sprinkling Holy Water
On all the faithful
who then make the sign of the Cross.
I earnestly wait to get few drops on me.
Once the Holy Water is sprinkled on me
I feel energized.
I feel rejuvenated.
The day is enjoyable.
If I miss the spray
I feel hopeless.

Holy Water
is a wonder water.

J. Antony

Emilda S. Douglas

Joe Sangapalaarachchi, Pamunugama

Victor Jayamaha, Proprietor of Victoria Group of Companies.
I also connived with their idea”. Few of Rev. Fr. Ignatius Gamlath. Then I suggested to St. Sebastian be built there.

The Parishioners of Elenegoda are deeply grieved that our beloved priest Rev. Fr. Aba Costa was killed cruelly and we pray that his soul rest in peace.

Though 44 years have gone by after building the original church, the credit of building the complete church should go to Rev. Fr. Bensiri Perera, the then Parish Priest of Pamunugama presently living in retirement at ‘Piyyasevnya’, Trinawatte.

After him Rev. Fr. Ruben Leslie Fernando the then Parish Priest of Pamunugama who is no longer living amongst us, completed the balance work of the Church with complete support of parishioners and in the year 2000 the Archbishop of Colombo, His Grace Rt. Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando, blessed the fully completed Church.

Dona Nobis Pacem – the vital invocation
But no one at Mass heeds this suplication
When we cry out to the Lord in unification
"Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
Dona Nobis Pacem!"

Rienzie Ivan Perera

"But wo to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation" (Luke 6:24)
His Lordship in his homily, elaborated the meaning of ‘Salt’ and ‘Light’ mentioned in the Scripture passage that was read during Mass, stressing the importance of saltiness, the quality of our life as Christians. It is the quality that we share with others in our relationships. eg. Our understanding, sharing, forgiving, asking pardon and respecting others. In the same way our ‘Light’ must shine, so that those who approach us will see the light of Christ in us: and they will be drawn towards Christ through us.

On the same day, the Statue of Our Lady of Victories was blessed by His Lordship at the entrance to the school, which was a replica of the Statue that was handed over to Our Lady of Victories Church Welgama in 1954. It had been a gift from the F. M. M. Congregation in France. Very Rev. Fr. Betram Ranjith arranged the gift replica of that same Statue to be given to Convent of Our Lady of Victories Moratuwa. Our Lady’s gaze inspires every student when they enter the school. In the picture the Prefects with Rev. Sisters and also His Lordship delivering the homily.
Mary, the young lady was en-acted in fear in various instances. People like Jacob, Peter, the political situation and fear of not being found a suitable job, fear of technological changes there is a feeling to the youth? There is a certain degree to the Church play a leading role in relation to the youth. Can we find out what our talents are teaching. We have so many things to offer. Can we listen to the youth? They may be our own ideas about their beliefs, about the attitude of the Church and the Parish Priest etc. As adults we have to make the youth feel important and recognised. We should come with an open mind and should not set our own agendas. We have to treat the young people as follows:

1) Make them loved
2) Understand their grievances
3) Understand their point of view
4) Represent youth in the Parish Council
5) Appoint a youth vocations director
6) Organise a youth choir in the Parish
7) Get the youth involved in the various church organisations-Legion of Mary, Vincent de Paul Society, Catechists etc?

In this Year of Youth our motive should be to get the youth involved in the act of evangelisation and make them missionary disciples. To make this a success we should also focus on the youth who are disconnected from the Church.

2019 The Year of the Youth a reflection

By Sirohmi Gunesekera

"Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep" (Luke 6,25)

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2019 The Year of the Youth

Eric Perera - Sydney

The Catholic Church of Sri Lanka declared 2019 as the year of the youth. What challenges do the youth in Sri Lanka face? In this uncertain situation in Sri Lanka where do the Sri Lankan youth stand? Does the Catholic Church play a leading role in relation to the youth? There is a certain degree of fear among the youth. With the latest technological changes there is a feeling of isolation among the youth. There is a fear with the uncertainty of the work, fear of not finding a suitable job, fear of not finding a suitable partner, fear of financial instability, fear of very uncertain political situation and fear of not being able to fulfil their ambitions and obligations. Even in the Bible we can see how people like Jacob, Peter, the Apostles, acted in fear in various instances.

Mary, the young lady was entrusted a particular task by the Heavenly Father. That is to be the Mother of Jesus. Being a virgin, without any fear she accepted Angel Gabriel’s message by saying ‘yes’. Mary is a very good example to all young people to meet all the challenges they are facing and to move forward.

“You have heard o virgin, that you conceive and bear a son. You have heard that it will not be by man, but by the Holy Spirit. The Angel awaits an answer. We too o lady are waiting for your word of compassion. In your brief response we are to be remade in order to be recalled to life. This is what the whole earth waits for prostrate at your feet. Answer quickly o virgin”(St Bernard’s sermons 4:9-8 Opera Omnia).

As youth we can entrust our lives to Jesus? Whatever the circumstances are, Jesus is always there at the life’s important events.

“Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest”(Matthew 11:28).

As young people we have got various talents. Some are very good in music. Some in public speaking. Some in teaching. We have so many things to offer. Can we find out what our talents are so that we can spread the good news of the Lord? It could be by joining the Parish Sunday School as a catechetical teacher, by getting involved in the church music, by joining the Parish Pastoral Council, by offering your services as a reader, commentator or as a special minister of communion, by joining a church organisation like the Legion of Mary, St Vincent de Paul Society, etc. Each youth can be a disciple of Christ, can be a messenger of the good news. People cannot hear about Jesus without a messenger. At the end of a Holy Mass, all of us are sent to the world as messengers of the good news of the Lord. Sometimes one may feel that one has not got the confidence in becoming a messenger. But as Christians we know that Jesus is walking with us always.

As youth how can we encounter Jesus? One way of encountering Jesus is by reading the Bible daily for a few minutes. Pope Francis suggests to read the Scripture at least two minutes daily.

The most direct way of encountering Jesus is faith. The New Testament character of Bartimaeus is a very good example. He is a blind man who is not loved by anyone. He was a person who was abandoned by the society. Sitting by the road he heard that Jesus is passing by. Having recognised that Jesus is the Saviour he calls Jesus “Son of David, Have mercy on me”. By calling Jesus “the son of David” he knew that Jesus is the Saviour. Many in the crowd asked him to keep quiet. But he kept repeating his request. Jesus knew that he was blind. But still Jesus asks Bartimaeus “what do you want me to do for you?” Jesus wants him to demonstrate his faith more strongly. Jesus also wants him to listen to him. Here one can see the importance of listening when we pray. By saying “I want to regain my sight”, he showed complete faith on Jesus about his ability to heal him. Jesus heals him by saying “go, your faith has made you well”.

1) Make them loved
2) Understand their grievances
3) Understand their point of view
4) Represent youth in the Parish Council
5) Appoint a youth vocations director
6) Organise a youth choir in the Parish
7) Get the youth involved in the various church organisations-Legion of Mary, Vincent de Paul Society, Catechists etc?

In this Year of Youth our motive should be to get the youth involved in the act of evangelisation and make them missionary disciples. To make this a success we should also focus on the youth who are disconnected from the Church.
Read the prayer and experience “A Miracle Every Day,”

Task 1 Analyze the structure of the phrases underlined. One is done for you.

Our Heavenly Father God Almighty, here I am at thy feet at the dawn of a new day. I consecrate it to You with our whole heart. You are my strength, my life, my entire being and the divine light that guides me. You are within me, the light in You brings harmony to every situation I face today and heals every painful wound. Throughout this day, I want to do all my tasks according to your sweet will. All my plans, hopes, and dreams are set on You, for I know that in You, all things are accomplished. I ask You to use me according to Your will, to contribute to the accomplishment of Your marvelous works for Your glory. I have a sweet awareness of Your loving presence, and I realize that through the Holy Spirit, I am going to shine with love, strength, and joy throughout this day.

In the name of Jesus, Your Son, amen!

Example: A new day = a [determiner] new [adjective] day [head word]

Jesus, You are my Strength, my Life, and the Light, that Guides me.
I love You.

Task 2 Read the text and be familiar with simple sentence patterns

Sentence patterns - Let’s examine different types of texts at different levels. A sentence is also a simple text. It has intra sentential relationships. First let’s learn the relationship of clause elements in simple sentences.

The clause elements are Subject, Verb, Object, Adverbial and Complement [S- Subject, V – Verb, O- Object, A – Adverbial, C - Complement]. The possible combinations of the structure of simple sentences are

(1) S + V + O; e.g. The wind blows. In this pattern the verb is intransitive. It does not take an object. (2) S + V + O + A; e.g. The wind blows hard. In this pattern the third element is ‘hard’ and it is an adverb. (3) S + V + O + C; e.g. The guard blows the whistle. In this pattern the verb ‘blows’ is transitive because it takes an object. (4) S + V + O + A; e.g. The guard blows the whistle hard. (5) S + V + O + O; The guard gave me a whistle – This sentence pattern has two objects one direct and the other indirect. ‘me’ in the indirect object and ‘the whistle’ is the direct object. This type of verb is called a di- transitive verb. (6) S + V + O + C; e.g. John made Jane happy. In this pattern the verb ‘made’ is called Complex Transitive and it takes the object Jane and has ‘happy’ as the complement. (7) S + V + C; e.g. The guard is happy. In the pattern ‘happy’ is called the complement and it is the subject complement.

Task 3- Study some more examples – 1) Mary laughed. (SV Pattern) 2) Mary loves John (SVO pattern) 3) John is tall (SCV pattern) 4) Mary gave John a present (SVOC) Mary made John angry (SVOC) 5) Mary sat down (SVA) Mary put the hat down (7) (SVOA)

Task 4 Sentence Skills – Identifying the clause elements. Underline the correct answer

1. The dictionary is a valuable tool.
   a. [S + V + O] b. [S + V + A] c. [S + V + C]
2. Lisa answered the telephone.
   a. [S + V + O] b. [S + V + A] c. [S + V + B]
3. I gave a sister a valuable gift.
   a. [S + V + O + A] b. [S + V + O + B] c. [S + V + O + C]
4. We learn English happily.
   a. [S + V + O + A] b. [S + V + O + B] c. [S + V + O + C]
5. She swam quickly.
   a. [S + V + O + A] b. [S + V + O + B] c. [S + V + O + C]

Task 5 Read the text aloud. Identify the clause elements of the sentence structures.

Example: I am Kamal. I am a banker. My office is in Colombo. I work in the Head Office. Our bank offers a lot of opportunities for our customers. It has a lot of branches. Some branches are in Colombo. Some are in the regions. Each region has a regional manager. The regional managers look after the branches in the regions.

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Task 6 - Cohesion - Cohesion refers to the unity of the text. A text is hung together through cohesive devices. They create coherence in texts. They are Reference, Ellipsis, Substitution, Lexical cohesion and Conjunction.

Read the text given below and identify the cohesive devices that show a backward relationship in inter-sentential relationship. The words are underlined. Find out what or whom they refer to. The reference is backward and it is called anaphoric reference.

Senior Citizens
Senior citizens are a treasure for a country. Most of them have a wealth of experience in different fields. Some are very knowledgeable. Some are very talented. They can sing, act, dance, do a lot of things like handicraft, write articles and books and are very creative.

As we belong to the younger generation we can learn a lot from them. There are the people who pass knowledge, attitudes and skills to us. Many countries in the world provide relief to elders. There is a special day dedicated for the elders. It is named as World Elders’ Day to felicitate them. In Sri Lanka seats in trains and buses are reserved for them. Elders are given discounts at pharmacies.

With the development of the world I think that there is a gap between elders and the youngsters. Everyone is busy in the modern society. Today children have no time to be with the elders. But we cannot leave them. We must visit them and spend some time with them and that’s what they expect from us too.

A simple sentence will lead to a complex or a compound sentence. In reading different types texts it is important to establish inter-sentential and intra-sentential relationships. Linking words play a key feature in cohesion of these texts. Let’s examine a few important linking words now.

Task 7 - Linking Words - Cohesive Links

Linking words signal how one idea leads on from another. Knowledge of linking words is essential to understand texts. Here are some simple linking words. They are also useful in writing.

1. Position in the text. Some linking words normally form a link between clauses within a sentence or a link between sentences.

Activity 3: Read the text and underline the linking words.

Amila is a very rich girl but she leads a simple life. She is an officer in the Sri Lankan Army. She gets up early in the morning and prepares her lunch until 6.30 a.m. Then she gets ready to go to her office. She gets transport because she works in the head office. She does different kinds of work such as attending to leave records, preparing letters to reply and preparing notices, and announcements for internal communication. Her work is so important that she cannot afford to take leave.

Linking words of time - still, yet and already

‘Still’ tells us that an action is continuing, or hasn’t happened yet. It has positive, negative and question forms. e.g. It’s 10 o’clock and John’s still in bed.

or She said that she would be here an hour ago and she still hasn’t come.

Are you still living in London? ‘yet’ asks if something has happened, or to say that something hasn’t happened. It is mainly used in negatives and questions and comes at the end of a sentence. ‘yet’ is usually used with the present perfect tense.

e.g. He hasn’t finished the report yet. OR Isn’t dinner ready yet?

‘Already’ is used to say that something happened before expected, it usually comes in mid position, but can also come in final position. ‘Already’ is not used in negatives and in British English is only used in questions to show considerable surprise.

e.g. I’ll tell her that dinner is ready. She already knows. Have you finished already?! I thought it would take you longer!

In order to understand this type of linking word, you must be clear about the concepts of a ‘point in time’ and ‘a period of time’. A point in time is the answer to a ‘when’ question, and a period of time is the answer to a ‘how long’ question.

e.g. Points of time = 6 pm, Wednesday, she arrived, summer, 1999, Christmas, five minutes ago. Periods of time = 3 seconds, 4 days, ages, 100 years, the Christmas holiday.

Task 8 Underline the linking word in the sentences.

i. After the lady opened the door she switched on the light.
   a. The man lit a cigarette before he boarded the car.
   b. Since I have known her we have been firm friends.
   c. We will wait here until the next train arrives.
   d. I cannot say definitely till I hear from him.
   e. The boys were going to school when we saw them.
   f. Whenever it is possible we shall visit her.

Inspirational quote

“A friend who understands your tears is much more valuable than a lot of friends who only know your smile.” (Luke 6,26)