His Eminence warns of false pastors conducting sacrilegious services

This week we publish on Page 5, the Circular Letter – 11 of the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, issued on August 4, the Memorial of St. John Mary Vianney, Patron Saint of all Parish Priests.

In this letter His Eminence has called on Catholics to beware of false pastors who are conducting sacrilegious services “at ceremonies they hold in different places including their own ‘churches’ or hotels and banquet halls, inviting at times the members of the Catholic Community to take part in it.” His Eminence also informs all Catholics to desist from believing that such persons are able to ‘bring into being’ the Most Holy Eucharist and to avoid attending such so called Eucharistic celebrations.”

In the Letter His Eminence also calls upon all those Catholic institutions that produce hosts for Holy Communio to provide this facility, hereafter, only to those presenting a letter duly signed by a Catholic Bishop or a priest in order to avoid the blatant abuse of the Sacrament by some of these unscrupulous persons.”

Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith addressing an Extraordinary Presbyteral Meeting last week, highlighting the grave sin of “punishing an innocent child in the womb for something that he or she did not do” stated that the Church has always advocated respect for human life from the very inception in the womb and hence, for a so-called good reason abortion cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Below are excerpts from the address of His Eminence:

Pope St. John Paul II in his encyclical letter Evangelium Vitae or “The Gospel of Life” issued on 25th March 1995 [Feast of the Annunciation] stated: “Among all the crimes which can be committed against life, procured abortion has characteristics making it particularly serious and deplorable. The Second Vatican Council defines abortion, together with infanticide, as an “unspeakable crime” [Gaudium et Spes 51]. “But today, in many people’s consciences, the perception of its gravity has become progressively obscured. The acceptance of abortion in the popular mind, in behaviour and even in law itself, is a telling sign of an extremely dangerous state of things in the unity and harmony that today exists among the races and religions of our country.”

Thus, as a nation we are duty bound to protect our identity rather than be trampled by such neo colonial elements. These elements he said, in the guise of providing aid are only trying to destroy our economy.

Archbishop of Colombo. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith addressing at the 150th Jubilee Feast of St. Joseph’s Church, Balangoda has emphasised the need to get rid of neo colonial concepts and protect our identity as a nation. Addressing the faithful and also an inter-religious gathering, His Eminence said at present there are local and international elements that seek to destroy the unity and harmony that today exists among the races and religions of our country.

While we express our hurt and disgust towards this action we urge those in authority to ensure that no religious founder be unjustly insulted in this disrespectful and insulting action against the Founder of Christianity who is loved and worshipped by millions of people worldwide.

The last 2000 years have witnessed many a martyr who have sacrificed their lives for His Name. Let us rid ourselves of neo colonial concepts...
Cardinal Bagnasco visits Madhu Shrine

His Eminence Angelo Cardinal Bagnasco, President of the European Bishops’ Conference (CCEE) who was recently in the island visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Madhu with the Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith.


Silver Jubilarians felicitated at St. Xavier’s Church, Wewala

Rev. Msgr. Neville Joe Perera, Coordinator for Sri Lankan Migrant in Italy, celebrated the Silver jubilee of his priestly ordination recently.

His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, together with several Bishops, Priests, Religious and the lay faithful graced this occasion, which was organised by Rev. Fr. Sumith Kumara, Parish Priest and the Parish Pastoral Council.

Feast of St. Lazarus’ Church Kurukulawa

The Feast of St. Lazarus’ Church, Kurukulawa was held recently under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Francis Fonseka Parish Priest. The Chief Celebrant at the Festive Holy Mass was Rev. Fr. Felix Shantha, priest-son of Kurukulawa and Parish Priest of Yatiyana.

New Mission House and Car-park

A new Mission House and a car park have been constructed at the premises of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Ja-ela under the direction and guidance of Rev. Fr. Priya Jayamanne, Parish Priest.

The Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith will officially open the newly constructed mission house and car park today, Sunday at 6.00 p.m.

Annual Feast of St. Roch Church, Delatura, Ja-ela

The Feast of St. Roch Church, Delatura, Ja-ela was held recently with the Holy Mass, celebrated by Rev. Fr. Claude Nishantha Nonis, National Director and Archdiocesan Coordinator for Family Apostolate.

Picture shows the procession with the statue, led by Rev. Fr. Thusith Pradeep Fernando, Parish Priest.

Tree planting campaign, Pamunugama Parish

A tree planting campaign was organised by the Pamunugama Parish, at the Seda Uyana Church premises recently.

Picture shows Ms. Stephanie Sorsky of Venezuela, Miss Earth 2016 who participated in the campaign being welcomed by Rev. Fr. Francis Jayakody, Parish Priest.

119th Annual Feast of St. Anne’s Church Beruwala

The feast of St. Anne’s Church, Beruwala was held recently, with Holy Mass celebrated by Rev. Fr. Cecil Joy Perera, Director, Daham Sevana, Kalutara.

Picture shows Rev. Fr. Cecil Joy lighting the traditional oil lamp. Arrangements for the feast were made under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Mahesh Christantha Fernando, Parish Priest and the Liturgy Committee.

Proclamation of Centenary Year of Sacred Heart Church, Melsiripura

Very Rev. Fr. Austin Marcus Fernando, Episcopal Vicar, Kurunegala Diocese, read the proclamation declaring the centenary year of Sacred Heart Church, Melsiripura, during the festive Mass celebrated recently.

133rd Annual Feast of St. James’ Church, Madampella

The feast of St. James’ Church, Madampella was held recently.

Picture shows the beautiful pandal made of coconuts, which adorned the entrance to the Church, erected by the parish youth and other organisers of the parish.
May the womb not become a tomb!

At the recently held Blessing of the Sick at Tewatte, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo, stated: “For quite some time now, newspaper reports appeared at regular intervals that the Governments in Sri Lanka were mulling the relaxation of our abortion laws in which, thanks be to God, had forbidden this practice even until today.”

It is paradoxical that a country which sends Buddhist missions to the world and gives primacy to Buddhism in its Constitution attempts down the decades to relax rules on abortion. The very first precept of the Buddha’s ethical code prohibits the termination of life in any form: ‘Punatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami’ (‘I undertake the training rule to abstain from striking down breathing/any living being that has breath and consciousness’).

In a local newspaper a writer argues that religious leaders, be they Christian or Buddhist, should not interfere in this matter which is the exclusive domain of medical doctors; and that religious beliefs, being devoid of reason and logic, should not be allowed to obstruct the legalisation of abortion. Whoever subscribes to this weird view must convince us that the medical profession is exempt from Moral Law.

Then there are the feminists of the liberal stream, who have been resorting exclusively to the “human rights discourse” in defending the legitimacy of abortion. Arguing that the woman has inalienable rights over her own self, they claim that what is aborted is merely a part of the mother’s own body and hence that it is no man’s business to question what she chooses to do with her own self. The warped reasoning implicit in this argument is “My body belongs to me and I can do what I want with it. Does this not imply that we might have to remove suicide, too, from the Penal Code of our country?”

This way of justifying abortion on the sole basis of the rights theory runs counter to the teachings of all religions whose scriptures emphasise and prioritise our moral obligations to one another. The Holy Bible, too, bases its love-ethics not on one’s individual rights but on our mutual responsibility for one another’s life, as we emphasised in our Editorial on Trinity Sunday. If we refuse to be our fellow human’s keeper, we fall into the category of Cain, the fratricide. Is it not strange that these very persons who appeal to their rights fail to see that the embryo is also a human claimant for the right to life?

We do admit, however, that Moral Theology taught officially by the Catholic Church, mentions situations where it is known as the ‘Principle of Double Effect’ could be applied. George Weigel – the Distinguished Senior Fellow and Chair of Catholic Studies at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. – a strong supporter of Pope Benedict XVI – presents this teaching by citing the example of a pregnant woman who has advanced uterine cancer. The removal of the cancerous uterus will result in the death of the baby but it would be permissible under the ‘principle of double effect’, which requires four conditions to be satisfied:

1) The act itself is good; it is the removal of a diseased organ.

2) All that one intends is the removal of the diseased organ. One does not want the death of the baby, either as a means or an end. Nonetheless, one sees that the unborn child will die as a result of the removal of the diseased organ.

3) The good action, the healing of the woman, arises from the removal of the diseased uterus, not from the regret for death of the baby which is foreseen and unintended.

4) The unintended and indirect death of the child is not disproportionate to the good which is done, which is saving the mother’s life.

Abortion, on the other hand, is a directly and willfully intended murder of an inchoative human person. For the Fifth Commandment – “You shall not kill” (Exodus 20, 13) – does not allow the elimination of even a severely malformed embryo. No Christian can ever refer to the most physically or mentally normal baby in the womb as an ‘unwanted child’. In God’s eyes there are no unwanted children. Even when rape is the cause of conception, God loves what is conceived as His own child and expects us to do the same. The Christian is called to proclaim and witness to this divine love, cost what may. For God who called us to proclaim His message of love by word and deed is a God of Life, not of death.

Abortion is murder says the Catholic Doctors’ Guild

The Catholic Doctors’ Guild expresses its great regret concern and opposition to the proposal of the government to legalise abortion for rape and lethal congenital malformations of the unborn foetus. It is an accepted fact that the teachings of the Catholic Church which the Catholic Doctors’ Guild accepts without any doubt with respect to the scientific fact that life begins with the fertilization of the ovum of the female by the sperm of the male. We wish to reiterate here the tremendously important and sacrosanct notion that fertilisation creates a human being and that this person has a right to life.

Once such a person is created, taking that life amounts to murder. It is against the Fifth Commandment instituted by God which says “THOU SHALT NOT KILL.” There are no exceptions, concessions or exemptions to this rule. As such the Catholic Doctors’ Guild is greatly perturbed to know that the government is attempting to reintroduce a bill to legalise abortion which once failed due to opposition by the religions who continues to oppose it. It may please some to consider that this is only a religious viewpoint and is a statement that does not comply with scientific fact.

Where is the science to legalise abortion? There are no scientific studies to show that abortion has any significant effect on any of the issues that are associated with pregnancies. It is the fundamental cornerstone of any religion that the inviolability and the protection of life of a person is a crucial pivot on which many of the sacred beliefs and the precepts of that religion rests.

With respect to legalising abortions for rape, it has been proved by research and statistics worldwide that the rate of pregnancy arising from sexual assault or rape is as low as 0.1%. This is because pregnancy from rape is so rare that little research is available. Reasons attributed to this rarity are that rape does not always involve a complete act of sexual intercourse, the trauma of sexual assault is likely to inhibit ovulation and the woman may be in the infertile phase of her monthly cycle at the time. She may also be too young or too old to conceive. It is a gross injustice to kill a foetus for a grave injustice done by an adult male. The immoral man who committed the crime should be punished and not the innocent, helpless baby inside the mother’s womb.

An abnormal foetus is diagnosed by different tests carried out in the pregnant mother by testing the water in the womb, viewing the baby with different cameras like ultrasonographs or testing a small piece of tissue taken from the baby. Some of these observations are not always objective but often subjective. Hence an error in the conclusion cannot be excluded. These are called antenatal testing which has become very popular but extremely expensive. Is it fair to carry out a murder of an unborn baby in the above circumstances?

The Catholic Doctors’ Guild vehemently opposes abortion for any reason other than to save the life of the mother.

Let us all Catholics join hands with our brothers and sisters of other religions and request the government not to legalise this heinous crime.

Sent By Dr. Maxie Fernandopulle

The Penal Code of Sri Lanka on Abortion

303. Whoever voluntarily causes a woman with child to miscarry shall, if such miscarriage is not caused in could faith for the purpose of saving the life of the woman, be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both; and if it is proved that the woman with child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.

304. Whoever commits the offence defined in the last preceding section without the consent of the woman, whether she is quick with child or not, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to twenty years, and shall also be liable to fine.

305. Whoever, with intent to cause the miscarriage of a woman with child, does any act which causes the death of such woman shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to twenty years, and shall also be liable to fine.

306. Whoever, before the birth of any child, does any act with the intention thereby preventing that child from being born alive, or causing it to die after its birth, if such act not be caused in good faith for the purpose of saving the life of the mother, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, or with fine, or with both.

Attempts to relax the rule

Abortion is generally illegal in Sri Lanka under the Penal Code of 1883, which is based on the Indian Penal Code.

In 1973, the abortion legislation of the country was studied by a committee of the Medical Legal Society of Sri Lanka, which recommended that the law should be liberalised to allow abortions to be performed to prevent grave injury to the physical and mental health of the mother. A few years later, the life of an aborted pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, and in cases where there was substantial risk that the child, if born, would suffer from severe physical or mental abnormalities that would cause it to be seriously handicapped for life. No legislative action, however, resulted from these recommendations.

Nevertheless the Ministry of Health in 2016 revealed that 658 abortions were performed in Sri Lanka on a daily basis.

“If I tell the wicked man that he shall surely die, and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked man from his way ...” (Ezekiel 33,8)
Pope Francis met peoples and states,” he continued. “We have, therefore, a long journey ahead of us, which needs the cry of so many who reject war and explore greater harmony between individuals and communities of peoples and states,” he continued. Pope Francis met

“I have to hope for the future in which humanity becomes more human, a future which heeds the cry of so many who reject war and explore greater harmony between individuals and communities of peoples and states,” he continued. Pope Francis met

leaders of Korea’s seven major religions, including Archbishop Hyginus Kim Hee-jong of Gwangju, President of the Korean Bishops’ Conference, on September 2. The group’s visit to the Vatican took place as threats of a nuclear war with North Korea continue to grow.

In the meeting last Saturday, Pope Francis said religious leaders are called to initiate, promote and accompany processes for the welfare and reconciliation of all people. He called on them to reject violence and to speak with words which oppose the current narrative of fear and hatred in the world. “The world is looking to us,” he urged, “it asks us to work towards development and women of good will.”

Archbishop Kim also met with Pope Francis in May, when he came to Rome as a special envoy for Korea’s newly-elected President Moon Jae-in.

According to a newsletter from the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Korea (CBCK), during that visit Archbishop Kim asked Pope Francis to pray for peace and the reconciliation of the Korean people, expressing gratitude for the Holy Father’s special affection in North and South Korea, in neighbouring countries, and for the gift of Creation, but also the need for the planet, yielding to the limited resources of our wounded creation. "Let this be our cry for God’s creation. "

The world’s history has manifested itself also in our irresistible desire to manipulate and control the limited resources of the earth. It is a uniquely selfish desire for the "unlimited profits" promised by the market. So we moved away from the original purpose of creation and the first to pay the expense of the betrayal of God’s design are those who live in poverty in every corner of the globe. That is why praying to God to thank him for the gift of Creation, but also to pledge commitment to its care and preservation for the sake of future generations. And it is also necessary for those who have political, economic and social responsibilities to hear "the cry of the earth" and "the cry of the poor" to the plea of millions and support the consensus of the world for the healing of our wounded creation.

This is not just a simple green manifesto. Pope Francis and the Patriarch of Constantinople’s joint message asking all people of goodwill to dedicate a time of prayer for the environment on 1 September; World Day of Prayer for Creation, is a real cry, a true prayer. The successor of Peter and the successor of Andrew invite us to recognize that the world’s affairs interweave with the mystery of creation and the mystery of human nature, hurt by the original sin. And at the same time - and perhaps precisely for this reason- they also suggest an original critical look at the triumphal development model and on the responsibilities of whom is in power.

Vatican Insider

Scottish Parliamentarians propose motion recognising Consecration to Our Lady

A leading bishop has described a motion before the Scottish Parliament celebrating the Consecration of Scotland to Our Lady as "exceptionally significant".

The motion, lodged on August 31, calls on the Scottish Parliament to recognise the Consecration and the fact the bishops will play their part in building a true civilization of love and strive to create a place where all people are valued.

Bishop John Keenan of the Diocese of Paisley said, “I think this is exceptionally significant... I feel this is enormously significant and providential.”

In full, the Scottish Parliament’s motion read: “That the Parliament recognises that Scotland’s Catholic Bishops will consecrate the nation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on September 3, 2017; understands that bishops will pray for Scotland at the Marian Shrine at the Carfin Grotto, near Motherwell, asking that Scotland be energised with a renewed desire to seek the truth, and understands that at the same time they will pray for all parliamentarians and government, so that they will play their part in building a true civilization of love and strive to create a place where all people are valued, a place where poor, lonely and marginalised people are not forgotten, and a place where people are free to pray in peace.”

It is supported by Stewart Stevenson (SNP), Richard Lyle (SNP), Alex Rowley (Lab), Clare Adamson (SNP).

World Day of Prayer for Creation May God help us save His creation

The earth was entrusted to us by the Creator as a sublime gift. But the morally decay- ing scenario that marks the world’s history has manifested itself also in our irresistible desire to manipulate and control the limited resources of the earth. It is a uniquely selfish desire for the “unlimited profits” promised by the market. So we moved away from the original purpose of creation and the first to pay the expense of the betrayal of God’s design are those who live in poverty in every corner of the globe. That is why praying to God to thank him for the gift of Creation, but also to pledge commitment to its care and preservation for the sake of future generations. And it is also necessary for those who have political, economic and social responsibilities to hear “the cry of the earth” and “the cry of the poor” to the plea of millions and support the consensus of the world for the healing of our wounded creation.

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Vatican Insider

Church officials see no hope in India’s first tribal university

A government-funded institute for tribal advancement in the Eastern Indian State of Odisha has become the nation’s first tribal university, however Christian leaders have expressed doubts as to whether it can succeed.

The central criticism is that the focus will continue to be on teaching the Hindu religion and culture rather than on preserving tribal traditions.

The Federal Ministry of Human Resource Development on August 25 awarded “deemed university” status to the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, a facility for indigenous children from kindergarten to postgraduate level.

The institute, based in Odisha’s capital, Bhubaneswar, was established in 1992. It offers residential education to some 25,000 poorest of the poor indigenous children and plans to educate some 200,000 children in the next decade, its website states.

Among those who believe the new status will not help tribal people is Fr. Nicholas Barla, Secretary of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India Commission for Tribal Affairs. He says in the past 25 years of existence the institute had done more harm than good.

“They are supposed to promote tribal language and culture, but they are teaching Hindu traditions and thus are making them celebrate Hindu festivals,” he said. The Ordon tribal priest said the educational facility should safeguard tribal interests and promote their language, culture and traditions.

“That is lacking here,” he said.

UCAN

Church in the Modern World

Pope emphasises peace-building in meeting with Korean religious leaders

In a meeting with religious leaders from Korea Pope Francis said the world is looking to them for an example of how to work together peace-fully in order to combat violence and preserve the dignity and rights of all people.

“We have, therefore, a long journey ahead of us, which needs the cry of so many who reject war and explore greater harmony between individuals and communities of peoples and states,” he continued. Pope Francis met

“… he (the wicked man) shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death”  (Ezekiel 33,8)
VALID CELEBRATION OF THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

For this reason, I wish to inform all our Catholics to desist from believing that such persons are able to bring into being the Most Holy Eucharist and to avoid attending such so-called Eucharistic celebrations.

EUCHARISTIC MATTER

Secondly, what these persons use for such acts of simulation, constitutes an offence against the very dignity of the Most Holy Sacrament. The use of grape juice or other soft drinks and biscuits as the basic ingredients for such celebrations demeans and debases the supremely divine nature of the Sacrament. This would constitute an act of sacrilege too and Catholics who take part in these would be culpable of the sin of sacrilege. The Bread ought not to be of the uncleaned type. The Code of Canon law specifies: “The bread must be uncleaned only and recently made, so that there is no danger of corruption and the wine must be natural, made from grapes of the vine and not corrupt” [Canon 924: 2 and 3].

APPEAL

Considering the seriousness of this matter, I call upon all those Catholic institutions that produce the hosts for Holy Communion to provide this facility, here I refer to the letter duly signed by a Catholic Bishop or a priest in order to avoid the blatant abuse of the Sacrament by some of these unpious persons. The Holy See too has called this type of behaviour gravely indulgent and made it clear in its disciplinary document Redemptionis Sacramentum [25th March 2004: n. 127: b].

I, therefore, urge all our dear Catholic faithful to uphold the divine dignity of the Holy Mass and the Most Holy Eucharist by not allowing anyone to meddle into accepting an abusive simulation of the Most Holy Sacrament they try to imitate or “celebrate” in order to achieve their own selfish ends. Let us always protect and safeguard the dignity of the Most Holy Eucharist, the source and summit of the life of the Church [cfr. LG 11].

“Come then, Good Shepherd, bread divine
Still show to us Thy mercy sign
Oh feed us, still keep us Thine
So we may see thy glories shine”

[13th century hymn of St. Thomas Aquinas]

May God bless you!

* Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith
Archbishop of Colombo

(Issued on 4th August 2017, the Memorial of St. John Mary Vianney, Patron Saint of Parish Priests)
Abortion in cases of rape

A concerned Catholic doctor broadcast his response to a colleague regarding his opinion on abortion in cases of rape. The latter gave a hypothetical case: ‘If your daughter of 16 years got raped or otherwise got pregnant what will you do?’ asked a pro-abortion doctor. Will you send her to Nayakankanda convent, where the unwed mothers are kept for 9 months and the baby given for adoption and come back after 9 months and go to school and face all the consequences or will you not get the pregnancy terminated by going to Singapore, so that the child can go back to school within one week and not face any shame. I have seen enough of the problems in my practice and this is the advice I have given them."

Obviously, after claiming to have preserved conceptions himself in the past, one’s conscience gets anaesthetised from the evil of killing the innocent. The abortion proponent doctor suggests that no woman should be forced to bear a child of rape and the accruing suffering thereof by having to face a ‘choice’ to abort the foetus.

There is no doubt there is trauma accompanying a sexual assault, especially one that results in pregnancy. However, irrespective of the emotional and, probably, physical trauma associated with the rape, killing the innocent child in utero is a separate and distinct act that cannot be justified. Programmatic and secularist views attempt to justify “choice” to abort in the context of alleviating suffering, which they take to be an end in itself. For Christians, the suffering of Our Lord demonstrates the dignity inherent in the suffering that we all experience as part of our humanity.

Allaising suffering is to be praised, but not as an end in itself. It is the moral effect of loving our neighbor, including the unborn child, that calls us to alleviate the suffering of the rape victim. To commit an evil act of killing an innocent person under the guise of alleviating suffering of the mother does not change the immorality of the evil act.

Punishing the innocent

Rape is a violent attack against a human being and a supreme violation of mind, body, and soul. It is one of the worst things that can happen to a person and it is one of the crimes that cries to heaven for redress. Rape is generally wrong whether or not pregnancy ensues. When the victim gets pregnant the aggravation compounds the harm inflicted by rape. Nevertheless, we can pose this question: how does murdering the child who result ed from rape bring justice to the woman who is the victim? Rather than kill the innocent child, the solution should be to find the perpetrator of either rape or incest and penalize him for his crime. He has proven by his actions that he is unfit for civilized society.

If it is too traumatic for the woman to keep the baby, he can be given up for adoption. The child has a right to life. We have all our sympathy for victims of rape. However, the woman’s trauma and psychological suffering will not be relieved by aborting the fetus. A trauma (due to rape) is not cured by another trauma (killing the foetus). If, and when she becomes aware of the humanity of her unborn child, and the act she has taken, she cannot help but suffer.

When a crime, such as rape, is committed should we punish the aggressor or the one who is the victim? If and when abortion law, if passed, would be tantamount to punishing the victim of the crime. The criminal is the rapist. What crime did the fetus commit? If we punish the child-victim by killing him, are doing justice? This is not an injustice.

Should we not pass stricter laws to punish and prevent incest and rape instead? Enacting an abortion law will be equivalent to condoning these crimes.

Consider the hypothetical case of a woman who was raped and conceived. Some years later, she positively identifies and locates the rapist and kills him. Is the justification for killing his life? No, neither in statutory law nor by the light of natural law.

In statutory law, the after-the-fact execution of the rapist can be charged as murder; by natural law, taking a life as revenge or punishment for rape is unjustified, since the ‘punishment’ of killing him is out of proportion to the crime committed.

Those in favor of a law allowing abortion in the case of rape must explain why it is not permissible to kill the rapist but allowable to kill an innocent unborn child. Reputation, vengeance, shame, honor, etc. have values but they cannot be weighed in the same scale as a human life.

Rape conception rate

Are conceptions due to rape in such proportions as to warrant an abortion law? Wilhelm R. Birkeland, the President and adjunct Professor of Statistics at Cornell University, with specialties in medicine and the philosophy of science. He cited a review of studies and literature which reported rape-conception rates from 1% to 5%, with one paper boasting 10%. Their own work on a sample of 405 women from 1982 suggested 6.42% (not 6.41%, nor 6.40%, but 6.42%) is closer to the mark.

What science says, gen erously assuring the thorough ness of their literature review, is that the rape-conception rate is anywhere from 1% to 10%, more probably in the middle of that range. But ‘more probably’ could mean the rate is 1% or even lower; just as it could mean it is 10% or higher. Therefore, to say that any one of these estimates is ‘the’ correct one, is to say what is not warranted and is unscientific behavior.

Those low statistical rape conception figures contrast with the tally of actual data of number of abortions in countries with abortion law. What does that mean? Those abortions are not due to rape nor incest. Once abortion is legalized what prevents any mother or single mother to claim ‘I was raped’ in order to have the fetus aborted? It is an argument of ‘let the sinner live’, a small leak drains the entire lake.

Sentiments of a rape victim

The sentiments of a rape victim are well worth considering. The emphasis (bold letters and caps) were in her original article:

“I was raped, but did not become pregnant,” she said. “Regardless of what percentage of women actually conceive in rape, we need not fall into the trap of sound-biting a 30-second response, because a thoughtfully considered answer would be best, even if not reported by the media. I was raped, but did not become pregnant, this is going to be the most extraordinary test of your beliefs. In my opinion, it requires an EXTRAORDINARILY heroic response. "Only God knows the heart and soul of the woman who must face this and the degree of trauma she has experienced. I believe it is incumbent upon faith-filled people to support a woman in this situation (no matter what she decides to do), and to pray for her discernment. When I say "support," I mean to help her live her convictions, that is, to remind the victim of the rape that one vio lent act upon her, an innocent person, does not justify her sentencing an innocent child who did not ask to be con ceived to death. The rape victim is not forced to raise the child, but she has a chance to redeem a heinous act of violence with an extraordinar ily heroic response of love allowing God’s plan to unfold for that innocent child—let him/her live. Psychologically speaking, abortion in this case, though an understandably appealing op tion in the immediate aftermath of rape-trauma, only causes a double grief for the victim.

"Her spirit was killed by the rape, and she has the ensuing guilt, remorse, and trauma of having killed another in an effort to "heal". Think about it: when humans experience other great traumas, we release balloons, dedicate monuments and plaques, re-build, plant trees in honor of lost loved ones, etc... we have a natural desire to "rise above it," to see something..."
A bouquet for your Birthday dearest Mother

“Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD; cry out to the rock of our salvation” (Psalm 95,1)
Sanctity of Father Jacome Gonsalves

The Beatification of the Venerable Father Jacome Gonsalves, which took place in Colombo on 21st January 1995, turns our thoughts to the sanctity of another Indian missionary in Lanka, who was closely associated with him, Father Jacome Gonsalves.

The greatest Catholic missionary and pastor Sri Lanka has had is undoubtedly Fr. Joseph Vaz. He is rightly venerated as Lanka’s Apostle. He was an esteemed saintly man, for otherwise he would not have been able to do what he did for Sri Lanka. It is understandable therefore that Lanka’s Catholics wished his sanctity to be officially recognised and proclaimed by the Church so that they could offer him their gratitude and veneration by publicly giving him the honours of the altar.

A multidisciplinary and pastor worthy of public honour is Fr Jaconme Gonsalves. We celebrated in 1992 the 250th anniversary of his death, which occurred in Bolawatte on 17 July 1742. At the celebrations held at Bolawatte on 12 August 1992, with Bishop Frank Marcus Fernandez of Chilaw and Bishop Vinnyan Fernando of Kandy officiating, an appeal was made by me in the course of my talk on Fr. Gonsalves which followed the confirmations, that the necessary canonical steps be taken for the Beatification of Fr Gonsalves as well. I am sure Lanka’s Catholics will support this appeal.

We have all along venerated Fr Gonsalves as ‘the Father of Sinhala Catholic Literature’. He wrote, also 15 works in Tamil, 6 in Portuguese, and 1 in Dutch. We have with us anything so concrete as Gonsalves’ writings to give us a glimpse of the personality of the missionary, excepting, in the case of Vaz, his fourteen letters.

Oratorian records speak of Fr. Gonsalves as a saintly priest and give as proof of his holiness, the power he had over evil spirits, the ‘miraculous’ favours obtained by his intercessory prayer, and other extraordinary events in his life (Perniola, Dutch Period, II, 329-336). These are described in the same way as similar events in the life of Fr. Vaz and are narrated in the records. Perhaps, in the case of both, we have to make some allowances for embellishment when Oratorians speak of the sanctity of Fr. Vaz and Fr. Gonsalves continued to hold office until the end of his life. From the letter we see Fr. Gonsalves’ deep humility in submitting his book for censorship.

Fr. Gonsalves gave his explanations, but the prelate was unsatisfied. What did the prelate do next? He tendered an unqualified apology and asked for pardon and punishment. His letter, dated 12th February 1735 (Ibid. 276) reveals the deep humility of the great missionary. He tells the bishop, “Prostrating myself a thousand times before you, I ask for pardon for the serious faults I have committed, which were, no faults but pastoral accommodation to the reality of the situation. Fr., Gonsalves goes on and asks that a punishment be given to him. “I ask that a penance be imposed upon me which will more than make up for all these faults.” That was not all. “Further I ask that the person of all office and dignity as I do not deserve them.” He was Vicar General and Superior of the Oratorians in Sri Lanka. Fortunately this request was not granted and Fr. Gonsalves continued to hold office until the end of his life. From the letter we see Fr. Gonsalves’ humility in submitting himself so unservedly to ecclesiastical authority.

We are unfortunate in not being able to find Fr. Vaz’s tomb. In the case of Fr. Gonsalves we know his burial place, the church at Bolawatte. Moreover, because of his writings we have a material link with Fr. Gonsalves which we do not have with Fr. Vaz. We are concerned, except the latter’s letters. The writings of Gonsalves provide us with a strong link with him and a living tradition. They are moreover a portrait of Fr. Gonsalves. From them we can know so much about him.

This is but a cursory glance at an aspect of Gonsalves’ life which has been somewhat overlooked by us. The Beatification of Fr. Vaz is an occasion for us to give due consideration to it. May we hope that some day we shall have the opportunity of hearing on this matter, not only in the altars not only Fr. Vaz but also Fr. Gonsalves, who were so closely associated in the one goal of their lives which was to extend God’s kingdom in this land.

1. What do we remember on this Holy Gonsalves’ Day (literature)?

2. What do we remember on this Holy Gonsalves’ Day (history)?

By the late Msgr. W. L. A. Don Peter
Scholar, Educationist & Historian

September 10, 2017

“Let us greet him with a song of praise. Joyfully sing out our psalms” (Psalm 95,2)
Exaltatio Sanctae Crucis

O Crux, ave spes unica!

[Image of the Holy Cross]

But Jesus, “becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2,8) turned it to be the symbol and instrument of our salvation, healing and eternal life: ‘And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life’ (John 3,14-15).

Hail, O Cross, our only Hope!

What is special about 14th September?

On the 14th of September, we liturgically celebrate the Feast of the Triumph or the Exaltation of the Cross – traditionally called Exaltatio Sanctae Crucis, ‘The Raising aloft of the Holy Cross’.

What do we commemorate on this feast day?

We commemorate the miraculous finding of the Cross in 326 AD by Santa Helena, the pious mother of Constantine I, the Roman Emperor.

“Santa Helena passionately desired to see, on her pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the sacred places, related to the life and destiny of Jesus. In her search, she could recognize the Holy Cross beside the place of Crucifixion and the tomb of burial.

(The shrine to Saint Helena in St. Peter’s Basilica)

But Jesus, “becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2,8) turned it to be the symbol and instrument of our salvation, healing and eternal life: ‘And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life’ (John 3,14-15).

5. How old is this veneration?

We must remember that the Cross had been a standard Christian symbol much before its discovery in the 4th century AD:

i. Tertullian in his De Corona 3,2 (written in 211 AD) says that Christians seldom do anything significant without making the Sign of the Cross. Certainly by his time, the practice was well-established.

(Tertullian)

ii. Justin the Martyr in chapters 55 and 60 of his First Apology (written between 140 -155 AD) refers to the Cross as a standard Christian symbol.

(Justin the Martyr)

iii. In the ruins of Pompeii, destroyed in 79 AD, there is a room with an altar-like structure against one wall and over the altar the appearance of the plaster shows that a cross shaped object had been nailed to the wall and forcibly pulled loose, apparently shortly before the volcano buried the city. This house must have belonged to a Christian family and they must have taken the Cross and other objects of value to them when they fled the city.

Thus the Christian custom of tracing the Sign of the Cross on persons and things as a sign of blessing is quite old, going back to the very origin of Christianity. Hence let us tread the path of our forefathers – the forefathers of faith, venerating the Holy Cross by ourselves and propagating this noble tradition among our younger ones.

Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus tibi, quia per crucem tuam redemisti mundum

We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee, for by thy Cross thou hast redeemed the world.

Praisefully sing our psalms” (Psalm 95,2)
**Live a simple life**

Your news item headlined “Let us say ‘No’ to the culture of self gratification” in the *Messenger* dated August 20, 2017 needs comment.

Commenting on the heavy rain at the Madhu Shrine, devotees prayed fervently for rain. Our Lady of Madhu answered their prayers by sending an abundance of rain. His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith further expressed his candid opinion that Catholics today prefer to live a life based on material aspects, rather than the spiritual. They are quite oblivious to the fact that there are thousands of people who simply cannot afford to have a square meal a day.

The praises which are brought by Ministers and MPs promising the moon and stars to the people is nothing but sheer gibberish.

In three months we will be on the brink of the festive season - Christmas.

Let us now heed the appeal made by the Cardinal, to change our ways and come closer to our religion and follow the path set out by Jesus Christ to live a simple life.

J.T. Miranda
Negombo

**Death and hate are not the final words**

"Death and hate are not the final words pronounced on the parable of human existence. Rather, there is a new beginning that entails a new perspective: A gaze full of hope. Some believe that life retains all its happiness in spite of wars; there is still the sun that is Jesus Christ's life and love, which all shall be fulfilled, in the morning in which tears shall fade away, in the very instant in which God shall proclaim His final word of blessing: "Behold - says the Lord - "I make all things new" (v. 5). Yes, our Father is the God of newness and of surprise. And that day we will be truly happy and we will weep with joy.

L'Osservatore Romano

**God's blessings on the Silver Jubilee of the religious life of Rev. Fr. Camillus Fernando**

You have climbed the silver ladder of your religious life and stepped on to the first rung of the golden ladder. On this great occasion May God shower on you His blessings to continue your service in His Vineyard until you reach the last rung of the golden ladder.

You served as parish priest of St. Francis de Sales, Dalugama for a period of two years from 2008-2010, but during this short span you did wonders, for which the parishioners are grateful.

Rev. Father Camillus, you introduced "Pawana Gee" during the Lenten services. It was a touching sight to see the people walking up the aisle of the church in two lines to pay homage to the Holy Cross. The musical part of Pawana Gee was of such a high standard. The event was also telecast on Swarnawahini.

Father, you were instrumental in drawing out their talents, for as the poet says:

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.
Full many a flower is born and dies,
And waste its sweetness in the desert air"

The Way of the Cross at the Ampitiya seminary is another event that will last in our memories. Twenty three bus loads of parishioners went on this trip. All this was possible owing to your untiring efforts.

A monthly magazine, the ‘Dev Janatha’ where various events pertaining to the parish and how funds received were spent was also published. Having consulted the Parish Pastoral Council, you settled matters related to the Church amicably. May God give you the strength to carry on your good work for many more years to come.

Gladys Abeywickrama

"If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone" (Matthew 18:15)
The Archbishop of El Salvador Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating Holy Mass on March 24, 1980. Like Jesus, he was a son of a carpenter and trained by his father to follow his profession. But the son decided to enter the seminary to study for the priesthood. After his studies at the National Seminary in El Salvador, Romero was sent to the Gregorian University in Rome to complete his theological studies. He was ordained in Rome in 1942. He served as a parish priest in his own country and later appointed as the Rector of the inter-diocesan seminary in San Salvador. He served as the Director of the Archdiocesan newspaper, Orientacion.

In 1970 he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of San Salvador. In 1974 he was appointed the Bishop of the Diocese of Santiago de Maria which is a poor and rural region in El Salvador. He was transferred as the Archdiarch of San Salvador on February 23, 1977. A month later his good friend Fr. Rutilio Grande, S.J., who was involved with the apostolate for the poor and the marginalised in the country was assassinated, with the knowledge of the government. Archbishop Romero’s plea to investigate Fr. Grande’s murder fell on deaf ears. The press and media who were under strict censorship were silent on this matter.

It was at this point that Romero took up the cause against poverty, social injustice, assassinations, disappearances and torture. Later he even wrote to the President of the United States about these injustices and political repression of the ordinary citizens by the government and asked the US not to send military aid to the oppressive government. President Jimmy Carter ignored his plea and continued to send arms to the Salvadoran government.

Archbishop Oscar Romero’s efforts to uplift the marginalised and poverty-stricken Salvadoran people, was recognised by the other countries in the world, University of Louvain, Belgium, offered him a fellowship. He represented the Pope at the funeral. He eulogised Archbishop Romero as a “beloved peacemaking man of the history of Latin America.” Cardinal Ernesto Coripple, a young Romero

Oscar Romero

and immorality. Christ’s redemption was not limited to pure material or political liberation. He said that the Church cannot ignore the injustices leveled against the poor and the marginalised Christians of his country. He also denied that there is a dichotomy such as the church of the poor and the Church of the rich. He said: “There is only one Church that adored the living God.”

On March 23, 1980 Archbishop Romero delivered a sermon urging the Salvadoran soldiers not to follow the orders of the repressive government which was involved in carrying out repression and violation of human rights. This was the last straw for the oppressive junta. On the following day the Archbishop was following a day of recollection with the other priests of the diocese. The preacher was concentrating on the priesthood.

In the evening he celebrated Holy Mass at the Chapel of the Divine Providence Hospital for the terminal cancer patients. After the sermon he stepped down from the lectern and took a few steps towards the middle of the altar. A gunman stood at the front door of the chapel and shot at the Archbishop. One bullet struck his heart and he fell down beside the altar.

The remains of Archbishop Oscar Romero were buried in the Metropolitan Cathedral of San Salvador on March 30, 1980. The funeral was attended by more than 250,000 mourners from various parts of the country and representatives of the world. John Dear, a priest who attended the funeral said, “Romero’s funeral was the largest demonstration in El Salvador history; some say in the history of Latin America.” Cardinal Ernesto Coripple represented the Pope at the funeral. He eulogised Archbishop Romero as a “beloved peacemaking man of God. His blood will give fruit to brotherhood, love and peace.”

On March 24, 2010, during the thirtieth anniversary of Archbishop Oscar Romero’s assassination the President of El Salvador, Mauricio Funes accepted the government’s involvement in the killing of the Archbishop.

Among the thousands of dignitaries who visited his tomb were Pope John Paul II and the US President Barack Obama. The United Nations Organisation declared the day of his death 24th March as ‘The International Day for the Right to Truth concerning Grave Human Rights violations and for the Dignity of Victims’.

On May 23, 2015 Archbishop Oscar Romero was beatified in Plaza Salvador del Mundo before a congregation of 250,000 people. On behalf of Pope Francis, Cardinal Angelo Amato presided over the ceremony. The Catholics of the world expect this symposium for the cause of justice and equal rights and opportunities to the poor and the marginalised people of the world, to be canonised.

Archbishop Oscar Romero’s efforts to uplift the marginalised and poverty-stricken Salvadorian people, was recognised by the other countries in the world.

Oscar Romero

Francis Madiwela

“We must be careful, when we have the opportunity of doing a kind act to someone, to think about the beautiful tapestry of life? This is an example of the kind of people who wear slippers on their heads and kick the crown.

It is a tragedy that we don’t identify our priorities. We neglect those who really deserve our love and pay homage to the wrong people. We mistakenly make some people our priority when we are just an option in their lives. We cry for those who do not care for us, and we care for those who do not cry for us. We ignore those who truly care for us and love those who hurt us. And worst of all, we hurt those who love us.

Relationships need constant attention of both parties. If one is constantly sacrificing and the other doesn’t care, then that relationship will naturally die down. Not caring for some people is not being ‘heartless’. It is just using your ‘heart less’ for those who don’t really care for you but take advantage of you. Give your heart to those who really care for you. Specially your mother, father, siblings and all those who helped you to be what you are today. Let your feet feel the slippers and your head the crown, and not vice versa.

Michael Angelo Fernando

Slippers on the head – Crown on the feet?

Have you ever seen anyone carrying a pair of slippers on the head, or using a crown as a foot-stool?

No sensible person would do such a crazy thing. Crowns should shine on heads and slippers are meant for feet.

But, we observe that psychologically some people are doing just that.

That is to say that some people give undue importance to certain things in their priority list and neglect certain things which should be kept on top.

Sometimes people take things and persons for granted and do not treat them with love, respect and concern they deserve.

For example one may be very pleasant, kind, helpful and supportive towards outsiders, but very uncaring, unloving and even nasty towards one’s wife or children. The members of the family are the ones who truly love and care for him and work for his happiness and success. But some husbands are blind to this fact and neglect to give back the love and concern they deserve.

This example applies to any person in any walk of life. This kind of topsy-turvy ‘slippers-crowns’ focus is ubiquitous in our society.

Half-paralysed mother is kept in a chair in the verandah of a house. Her son lives next door and in the evening she languidly waits for him to return home after work. The son returns, parks his car in front of the house and walks into his house without even looking at the sick and feeble mother. Silent tears dribble down her cheeks. It takes only a minute for the son to just smile and say ‘Hello’ to his mother. But he just neglects her and for a mother it’s just unbearable. The son is a big shot, but utterly ignorant of his attitudes. Isn’t he an ignoramus about the beautiful tapestry of life?

This is an example of the kind of people who wear slippers on their heads and kick the crown.

A little bird told me

September 10, 2017

If he listens to you, you have won over your brother’ (Matthew 18,15)
A s usual this year too our family went on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Madhu Church, a shrine located in the North of the Island. My brothers, sisters and relations together with their families proceeded a week ahead of the feast day August 15. Due to commitments at home I was able to join them a few days later. I boarded the Talaimannar night mail from Fort railway station at 7.15 pm reaching Madhu Road at around 2.15 am the following day. The train was packed to capacity. Although it was a 7-hour long journey, I never felt tired but looked forward eagerly to reach my destination enjoying the company of passenger pilgrims from all parts of the Western Province.

From the beginning of the pilgrimage, during and even while prior preparation for this spiritual journey it is an unique inner joy that you experience deep within you.

As much as the Madhu Church has a four century long history, our family pilgrimages to Madhu too has a long history. I recall my mother narrating about how they travelled to Madhu Church in bullock carts with her parents and siblings, when she was young and never felt the strain of that dangerous long journey through thick jungle. She also did not fail to mention the many blessings, personal favours they received year after year. Today we continue in the same journey of faith seeking the intercession of Our Lady of Madhu, the spiritual power within which one’s worldly burdens seem to lift away. However our journey is very much more comfortable with better transportation and other facilities available in modern times.

Many miracles are associated with the statue of Our Lady of Madhu. The faithful have attributed to it countless powers, the strongest being that of the power of healing giving the statue the name Our Lady of Good Health.

It is amazing to see the non-stop flow of devotees inside the Church, under themerciful gaze of Mother Mary, devotees kneeling, sitting and standing for long hours. In an act of both penance and prayer for blessings, many travelled down the aisle on their knees with eyes locked on the statue and arms outstretched. In silence or aloud they were seeking the Mother’s intervention in their plea to God. The continuous recitation of the rosaries echoes a non-stop vibrating sound. After the intentions, they head to light candles as an offering. Just past it they visit the holy chamber where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for devotion.

Though this shrine is venerated by the Catholic community, it’s known to attract believers of other religious faiths too. It is unbelievable that in our house and the surrounding tent 10-12 families living together sharing the same food, toilet, sleeping on mats etc., enjoying each other’s company, living in harmony, when these days mostly even members of one’s own family are unable to live together peacefully at home. Thoughtfully I recollected the words of Pope Francis when he visited Madhu Church on January 14, 2015.

“We are in our Mother’s house,” Pope Francis said “Here she welcomes us into her home. At this shrine of Our Lady of Madhu, every pilgrim can feel at home, for here Mary brings us into the presence of her Son Jesus. Here Sri Lankans, Tamil and Sinhalese alike, come as members of one family. To Mary they commend their joys and sorrows, their hopes and needs. Here, in her home, they feel safe. They know that God is very near; they feel His love; they know the tender mercy of God. One pilgrim from Moratuwa whom I met stated that their family arrived two weeks ahead and they as always did in the past, camped out a few metres away from the Church premises clearing the jungle. I was really touched when he said we love living in a tent more than in a house as our biblical forefather Abraham and his clan too lived in tents moving from place to place during their 40-year long journey to the promised land.

The weather was good the first few days and the Church authorities were cautious about the usage of water as Madhu area had experienced severe droughts for a long period. In fact the villagers have been praying for water as there was a grave shortage of water which threatened their livelihood. As though answering their prayers there was a heavy down pour around 2.00 pm on the 14th of August lasting for 2-3 hours which resulted in areas surrounding the Church going under water. Most of the areas where pilgrims were camping went under water. Rain accompanied by mighty thunder and lightning sent panic waves among all of us. Some quickly dismantled their camps and shifted to high ground areas towards Madhu Road. A few may have returned home.

Church authorities been unsure about the weather conditions quickly arranged a blessing with the statue of Our Lady of Madhu for the departing pilgrims. Vespers was cancelled and it was announced that the feast procession will not take place. However, the weather condition improved dramatically the next day and the Festive Mass, procession and the blessing were held as usual in the presence of a large crowd of the religious, dignitaries and pilgrims. I was more than surprised to see such a large presence of pilgrims given the weather conditions that prevailed the previous day. It shows the depth of faith people have in Our Lady of Madhu.

As Archbishop of Colombo, His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith stated in his homily it is no doubt a Miracle, especially that the rainfall had been only in the Madhu area where people were praying for water and Our Lady’s response to their prayers. Reflecting upon the life of Mother Mary he emphasised the need to ‘have simple faith and practical faith like Mother Mary.”

As all good things must come to an end, we watched people leaving Madhu in large numbers in rows of vehicles causing a severe traffic jam lasting for a couple of hours. However we stayed on and departed the following day thanking Our Lady of Madhu for the protection and blessing she gave all of us especially this year under trying conditions, for those who experienced it, it will surely remember it for a very long time.

Mother Teresa
Mother Teresa, a woman of great fame, of rare qualities, a virtuous dame. Thus she didn’t work for fame or name. Her heart was in love of God alone. Everywhere she went, love was her aim, readily speaking, our aim should be the same.

Thank God for the lesson Mother Teresa taught, even princes and princesses, her loving action taught.仁ely and willingly consolation brought. E mously for others, with love she sought. Sainly Mother, her “Nobel Prize” she wrote, A for the poor, always their happiness she sought.

Emilda S. Douglas

Contd from Pg. 6

Justifying the ...

enduring and living after one’s trauma or death. What’s more hopeless than the promise of new life?

“The saddest tragedy is that no one has this kind of expectation for women. No one asks women if they would consider rising to this level of heroism. In reality, even if they did, few would accept the challenge. We’re a bankrupt culture and moral virtue has no appeal. People have lost their sense of compassion for BOTH victims, and modern-era politicians lack the demonstrated ability to INSPIRE others to greatness in any area of life—especially the taboo of suggesting that any innocent child conceived in rape should not become the “sacrificial lamb” of another’s violence and degradation but might actually deserve a chance to live—brin- ing hope out of a terrible evil.

Abortion is never the answer. It only destroys an innocent life and very often leaves a deeper, more painful emotional scar than the rape itself does, or it makes the rape scar worse. While we pour our hearts in sympathy to rape victims, we likewise have to defend the rights of the defenseless fetus, who is a human person.

“if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you ...” (Matthew 18:16)
The First Commandment

171. Does the first Commandment not forbid the making of images?
The first Commandment does not forbid the making of images, but it forbids us to make images to be adored or honoured as gods.

172. Does the first Commandment forbid dealing with the devil and superstitious practices?
Yes, it forbids all dealings with the devil and superstitious practices, such as consulting fortune-tellers, and trusting in charms.

173. Is it forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the Angels and Saints?
It is forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the Angels and Saints, for this belongs to God alone.

174. What honour do we give to God and Angels and Saints?
God alone is honoured by the worship of adoration. Angels and Saints are special friends of God and the honour given them is called veneration.

175. What honour should we give to relics, crucifixes and holy pictures?
We should give to relics, crucifixes and holy pictures a relative honour, as they relate to Christ and His Angels and are memorials of them.

Mary, Yes, truly blessed is he who loves thy sweet name, O Mother of God, for thy name is so glorious and admirable, that no one who remembers it has any fears at the hour of death.

Saint Anthony of Padua:
“O name of Mary! Joy in the heart, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear of her devout clients.”

Saint Louis de Montfort:
“The salvation of each individual is bound up with the Hail Mary.”

Saint Alphonsus de Liguori:
“Mary herself promised Saint Gertrude as many graces at death as she should have said ‘Hail Marys.’ Blessed Alan asserts, ‘that as all heaven rejoices when the ‘Hail Mary’ is said, so also do the devils tremble and take to flight.’”

So, dear friends, let us whisper quietly and lovingly: “Mary... Mary... Mary...” And as we call out to her, “Hail Mary,” remember the meaning of that title, “Beloved of God.” Then we can understand why the Church has selected this verse from Scripture for the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary:

Deacon John

The First Commandment (Contd)

176. Does the second Commandment not forbid the making of images?
The second Commandment does not forbid the making of images, but it forbids us to make images to be adored as gods.

177. Does the second Commandment forbid文化艺术 or superstitious practices?
Yes, it forbids all dealings with the devil and superstitious practices, such as consulting fortune-tellers, and trusting in charms.

178. Is it forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the Angels and Saints?
It is forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the Angels and Saints, for this belongs to God alone.

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Deacon John

The first thing we should do is to celebrate the holy name of Mary, because it is through her that we are all saved.

The Second Reading, St. Paul gives us an example of how we should worship the Lord. He says: “...so that ‘every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses’” (Matthew 18:16)

THought for the Week

“Speak in such a way that others love to listen to you. Listen in such a way that others love to speak to you.”

When Someone Hurts You

The puzzle is based on the Gospel of St. Matthew 10:15-20.

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

Bible Riddles

1. Who was the most successful doctor in the Bible?
2. Who was the most popular actor in the Bible?
3. What time of day was Adam created?
4. What animal took the most baggage into the ark, and what animals did least?
5. Who was the strongest man in the Bible?

Answers

1. Job, because he had the most patients (patience)
2. Samson. He brought down the house.
3. A little before five
4. The elephant took his trunk, but the fox and the rooster took only a brush and comb between them.
5. Joseph, because Pharaoh made a ruler out of him.

“...so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses” (Matthew 18:16)

Girls, come and help us! Boys, come and help us!

The First Commandment does not forbid the making of images, but it forbids us to make images to be adored or honoured as gods.

The second Commandment does not forbid the making of images, but it forbids us to make images to be adored as gods.

It is forbidden to give divine honour or worship to the Angels and Saints. For this belongs to God alone.

We should give to relics, crucifixes and holy pictures a relative honour, as they relate to Christ and His Angels and are memorials of them.

Mary. Yes, truly blessed is he who loves thy sweet name, O Mother of God, for thy name is so glorious and admirable, that no one who remembers it has any fears at the hour of death.

The word “cross” can also mean the sufferings that come our way. When we accept them lovingly and with willingness, Jesus did his cross, we become “cross-bearers” like Jesus.
First Reading: Ez. 33: 7-9
God makes himself clear to the prophet. The prophet has to proclaim the Lord’s message very clearly to the people.

Second Reading: Rom. 13: 8-10
It sums up all commandments that relate to one’s self and his neighbour when it says, “you shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

Gospel: Mt. 18: 15-20
The disciples are reminded of the importance of winning a sinner over to God. There are many steps that are to be taken to convert him before he is condemned.

Reflection
Love is the axiom around which the whole Kingdom of Christ rotates. For a Christian, love of God surpasses every other obligation whether temporal or spiritual. From this flower the Love of self and neighbour. For you can love your neighbour without loving God, but you cannot love God without loving your neighbour. It is not that neighbour is more important than God. But it is imperative that one who loves God also loves his neighbour. There are so many ways of showing your love towards your neighbour, but today we are reminded of the importance of showing this love by way of trying to save our neighbour from his sinfulness.

We as Christians are bound to save each other. It is an act which we could see among men. Today’s Second Reading makes it clear that it is one of the most important obligations in our life. It puts it on an equal footing with the commandments. In short it says that we are bound to make our brother who is in sin to repent, mend his ways and receive Lord’s forgiveness. It becomes an obligation by the very commandment, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

In the case of the First Reading the Prophet is reminded of his obligations. As a prophet of God he is to announce the message of God. Where there is a need for repentance he is to proclaim repentance. Whether the sinner would repent or not should not be the concern of the Prophet. His duty is to preach repentance. It is like this; God tells His prophet to warn the sinner of certain damnation that will follow if he did not mend his ways. If the Prophet does not do so the sinner will die in his sins, but the Prophet will have to share in his damnation. On the other hand, if the Prophet gives God’s warning to the sinner and the latter still dies in his sins, the Prophet will not bear any responsibilities. For that man’s damnation.

In this manner we are duty bound to try to save our brother who is in sin. The Gospel shows us the different steps that we have to take in order to convert a sinner before we condemn him. First of all we have to talk to the sinner alone. Having failed that, we have to inform the church. If he does not respond to the church then we could condemn him. All this is because the church loves even sinners. It believes in conversion than on condemnation of a sinner. So having tried all the said means one is free to condemn a sinner: But still when he says, “And if he refuses to listen to them, tell the church” (Matthew 18,17) then the Lord does not want us to condemn a sinner. He gives us some hints to save our brother. The first is the power of the Church to forgive sinners. The other is the power of prayer. Christ is present in the Christian Community when it gathers in His Name. Therefore we could even try prayer for the conversion of sinners. Therefore we are to show our love, care and concern towards our erring brother and we should in no way condemn him.

Aid Story 1
An old man by the name James, with a torment ed look, was begging at a church door in Paris. Through his ragged clothes one could see on his chest a little gold cross. A young priest by the name Paul used to say Mass regularly in that church and never forgot to help James. One day he noticed his absence, learnt that he was sick and went to his garret. “Ah,” said James, “You are so good to come and visit such a wretched man.”

Overcome by kindness of the priest, James revealed his mystery, a tragic story: “I was a caretaker of a wealthy family when the French Revolution broke out. My masters were goodness personified and I owed everything to them, but I betrayed them. They were hiding, but I exposed them for fear I would get all they had. All of them, the Count, the Countess and their two daughters were sentenced to death, all except the youngest son. The priest gaped and James went on. I watched them hang, I tremble to the guillotine and saw their heads cut off. I am a monster and ever since then I have had no peace of mind. I still keep their pictures behind that cloth. The crucifix at the head of the bed belonged to the Countess and this small Cross to the Count. God cannot forgive me.” The young priest Paul pale as a corpse, knelt by the beggar’s bed for about half an hour then he got up, drew aside the dirty cloth that covered his parents pictures and kissed them. “In the name of God, I am here to forgive you as the sole survivor of that sacrificed family and also as a priest.” And sitting by the bed he heard the beggar’s confession.

Aid Story 2
A grandmother tells a secret of her long and happy marriage. “On my wedding day, I decided to make a list of ten of my husband’s faults which, for the sake of marriage, I would overlook.” A guest asked her what the woman what some of the faults she had chosen to overlook were. The grandmother replied, “To tell you the truth, I never did get around to making that list. But whenever my husband did something that made me mad I would say to myself, lucky for him that’s the way I was taught.”

By Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

1. In Rabbinic thought, when Jews converse about God’s Law, Torah, at meal or in any social gathering, then the divine presence (Shekinah) rests upon them. Let us quote Pirque Ahot 3:2-3:

2. In a similar language, Jesus utters this Sunday into our ears, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18,15-20)

3. Here’s a testimony: Fr. George Anderson SJ was a chaplain at New York’s Riker’s Island prison. One night he was praying with a small group of prisoners. A mentally disturbed prisoner, Richard, was present for the first time. The room was cold. Richard was wrapped in two blankets. The prisoner opposite him was hopping mad. I would say to myself, lucky for him that’s one of the ten.”

4. Can we recall a time when we felt moved by Jesus’ words or His presence in a group? How many times have our prayers been made efficacious by His abiding presence (Shekinah)? When the Body is broken and the Cup poured, scales fall from our eyes and we see the Christ among us visible and tangible in the faces of each other. How much is this true in our lives?

Liturgical Calendar Year A
10th Sept. - 17th Sept. 2017

Sun: 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Exk. 33:7-9; Rom. 13:8-10; Mt. 18:15-20
Mon: Col. 1: 24-2:3; Lk. 6:6-11
Tue: Memorial of The Most Holy Name of Mary
Col. 2:6-15; Lk. 6:12-19
Wed: Memorial of St. John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor
Col. 3:1-11; Lk. 6:20-26
Thu: Feast of Exaltation of the Holy Cross
Num. 21:4b-9 or Phil 2:6-11; Jn. 3:15-17
Fri: Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows
Heb.5:7-9, Jn. 19:25-27 or Lk. 2:33-35
Sat: Memorial of Ss. Cornelius, Luke & imperial, Bishop & Martyrs
Col. 1:1; Tim. 1:15-17; Lk. 6:43-49
Sun: 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Sir 27:23-28:9; Rom. 14:7-9; Mt.18:21-35

“The Messenger
September 10, 2017

“Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

“If for two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18,15-20)

By Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

1. Rabbi Chishin son of Tradyon, had said: “Two who sit and no words pass between them, this is a session of scorners, as is stated, “And in a session of scorners he did not sit” (Psalm 1,1). But two who sit and exchange words of Torah, the Divine Presence rests amongst them, as is stated, “Then the God fearing con versed with one another, and God listened and heard, and it was inscribed before Him in a book of remembrance for those who fear God and give thought to His name” (Malachi 3,16). From this, I know only concerning two indi viduals; how do I know that even a single word which he does not speak words of Torah, that he occupies himself with the Torah, God designates reward for him? From the verse, “He sits alone in meditation; indeed, he receives reward for it” (Lamentations 3,28).

ii. Rabbi Shimon son of Tradyon had said: “Three who eat at one table and do not speak words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten of idolatrous sacrifices; as is said, “Indeed, all those who are filled with vomit and filth, devoid of the Omnipresent” (Isaiah 28,8), but those who eat at one table and speak words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten at God’s table, as is stated, “And he said to me: This is the table that is before God” (Ezekiel 41,22).

Again, I say to you, two of you agree on earth about anything… it shall be granted.” (Matthew 18,17)”

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos
Pope Francis discusses Amoris Laetitia, money, just war and psychoanalysis in new book-length interview

By virtue of its very definition, marriage can only be between a man and a woman. Pope Francis has said in a new book-length interview: “We cannot change it. This is the nature of things, not just in the Church, but in human nature.”

When asked about marriage for same-sex couples, the Pope said: “It’s a ‘no, this is wrong, we do not joke around with truth.’ Teaching children that they can choose their gender, he said, also plays a part in fostering such mistakes about the truth or facts of nature.

The Pope said he wondered whether these new ideas about gender and marriage were somehow based on a fear of differences and he encouraged researchers to study the subject. Pope Francis also said his decision to give a papal audience to deny abortion to women who sought it was “determined to grant absolute freedom to those who confess to having procured an abortion was not meant to trivialise this serious and grave sin.

Abortion continues to be murder of an innocent person. It can never justify the deliberate killing of an innocent child, one could avoid a lifelong journey of suffering by allowing it to happen; our humanity is corrupted. Speaking about women, the Pope said they have an important role in society because they help unify and reconcile people.

Some people mistake women’s demands to be represented and heard in the world with a kind of machismo in a skirt, but machismo is a form of brutality that must be represented and heard in the world with a kind of feminism.

At the pinnacle of human dignity and to do with them whatever one pleases, taking their lives and passing laws preventing anyone from standing in the way of this. Frequently, as a way of ridiculing the Church’s effort to defend their lives, attempts are made to present her position as ideological, obscenist and conservative. Yet this defence of human life does not consist in the presence of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development.” [EG 211] Pope Francis has always condemned abortion.

No Mitigating Circumstances

One of the arguments commonly presented by the advocates of relaxation of the stringent rules on abortion is that it is needed to assist mothers whose pregnancies had been caused either by rape or incest where there is a sense of involuntariness in the act and a sense of public shame which is held to be harmful to the mother. And in case of a pregnancy likely to result in the birth of a deformed or severely impaired child, one could avoid a lifelong journey of suffering by aborting the child, the Pope said. What is clear is that a person whose existence has already begun even in tragic circumstances or is likely to be a source of pain for the families is permitted by society to be done away with – a life will require to be terminated or in short murdered without a fair chance being given to him or her to be a source of blessing. The stark reality is that lives, however valuable, can be lost.

Another temptation, the Pope said, is to seek uniformity with rules, for example, in the debate concerning his apostolic exhortation on the family, Amoris Laeti- ta. Those who legislate are used to furnishing a single set of standards, but when they ask, “Can we give Commu- nion to divorcees?” I reply, Speak with the divorced man and woman, welcome, accompany, integrate and dis- cuss, which opens a path and a way of communication to lead people to Christ. Encountering Christ is what leads people onto a path of a moral life, he said.

When asked about the Church’s “just war” theory, Pope Francis said he understood it as a Christian way to decide “because “no war is just. The only just thing is peace.” Concerning the persecution of Christians, particularly in Iraq, and the question why God would allow such tragedy, the Pope said, “I do not know where God is, but I know where man is in this situation. Men make weapons and sell them.” It is easy for people to ques- tion God, he said, but it is we who commit all this and allow it to happen; our humanity is corrupted. Speaking about women, the Pope said they have an important role in society because they help unify and reconcile people.

Saint of the Unborn Babies

At this point I must introduce you to the exemplary life of St. Gianna Beretta Molla, the patron saint of unborn babies. She was born in 1921 to poor parents in Italy. She was considered by the Church today as the patron of unborn babies. She was born on 4th October 1922 in Italy as the oldest of five children. At this point I must introduce to you the exemplary life of St. Gianna Beretta Molla, the patron saint of unborn babies. She was born in 1921 to poor parents in Italy. She was considered by the Church today as the patron of unborn babies. She was born on 4th October 1922 in Italy as the oldest of five children. Gianna Emmanuela - was delivered via a caesarean section. But Molla continued to have severe pain and died of septic peritonitis in the morning of 28th April 1962 one week after giving birth. Her daughter Gianna Emmanuela still lives and is a doctor of geriatrics today.

In De 1955 she married Marco Molla. They had three children. In 1961 Beretta Molla became pregnant again and discovered that there was a fibro- ma in her uterus. The doctors gave her three choices: the examination to carry out a complete removal of the uterus or the removal of the fibroma alone. The first two options would have meant death to the woman and her child. The third option was to leave the fibroma since she wanted to somehow save the child’s life. Molla did not want an abortion or the termination of her child’s life on the basis of her profound faith in God. On the morning of 21st April 1962 – Holy Satur- day – Molla was sent to the hospital where her fourth child Gianna Emmanuela - was delivered via a cesar- ean section. But Molla continued to have severe pain and died of septic peritonitis in the morning of 28th April 1962 one week after giving birth. Her daughter Gianna Emmanuela still lives and is a doctor of geriatrics today.

Concerning the persecution of Christians, particularly in Iraq, and the question why God would allow such tragedy, the Pope said, “I do not know where God is, but I know where man is in this situation. Men make weapons and sell them.” It is easy for people to ques- tion God, he said, but it is we who commit all this and allow it to happen; our humanity is corrupted. Speaking about women, the Pope said they have an important role in society because they help unify and reconcile people.

Appeal

“If you refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector” (Matthew 18,17)
It's true - I love my Paul - and kids like to hear his beaming smile. I looked in the rear view mirror and saw his face - maybe more powerful than we really know. In this moment he met two youth who were 'healthily inquisitive'.

"What youth is a satisfied youth, without a search for meaning?" the Pope asked, adding that "young people who do not search for anything are not youth, but they have aged before their time.

In off-the-cuff remarks, Pope Francis addressed the youth in the square and those watching the audience through the media, asking them, 'What are you looking for? What are you searching for in your heart?'

In the day's Gospel, Jesus appears as an arsionist of hearts, who with His question to John and Andrew brings out the desire for life and happiness that every young person carries inside.

The vocation of the two disciples begins with a friendship with Jesus - "strong enough to impose passion with Him", he said. In fact, they barely begin their time with Jesus and immediately they are transformed into missionaries.

This, Pope Francis said, is evidenced by the fact that their respective brothers - Simon Peter and James - also begin to follow Jesus. "It was an encounter so moving, so happy, that the disciples will forever remember that day which illuminated and oriented their youth.

Asking those present how to find one's vocation in modern society, Pope Francis said it can happen in many ways, but, as shown in the Gospel, a first indicator is the joy of the encounter with Jesus.

"Every vocation - whether to marriage, consecrated life or the priesthood - begins with an encounter with Jesus who gives us new joy and hope", he said. The Lord then brings us, even amid trials and hardship, to an increasingly full encounter with Him and to the fullness of joy. "Jesus wants people who have experienced that being with Him gives immense happiness, which can be renewed every day of life," he said, adding that a disciple who is not joyful does not evangelize this world, and is ultimately a sad disciple.

"You become a preacher of Jesus not by refining the weapons of rhetoric," Pope Francis noted, saying that you can talk and talk and talk, but if there is no joy, it won’t be effective. Because of this, Christians, like Mary, must guard the flame of their ‘falling in love’ in love with Jesus.

"Of course there are trials in life, there are moments in which we can feel the opposing cold and wind," the Pope said. "But as Christians, we know the path which leads to that sacred fire that He has lit once and for all."

After his address, the Pope greeted pilgrims present from various countries around the world and issued an appeal for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, celebrated September 1 to coincide with the event on the Orthodox calendar.

The event was instituted by Pope Francis in 2015, and in honor of the shared day of prayer, he and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople wrote a joint-statement calling for a merciful approach to caring for creation.

In his comments, Pope Francis noted that in their statement, both he and Bartholomew invite everyone to assume a respectful and reasonable and attitude toward creation.

"We also make an appeal to those who have an influential role, to listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, who suffer the most from ecological imbalances."
Writing Skills Programme at Melwatte Church

A writing skills programme was held at St. Michael’s Church, Melwatte in the Haal-danduvana Parish in the Diocese of Chilaw. The programme was conducted by Mr. Kumara Nayanjith of the Lama Pradeepaya.

Chrishanthi

First Holy Communion at Diyalagoda

Seventy one children received First Holy Communion at St. Sebastian’s Church, Diyalagoda. Holy Mass was presided by Rev. Fr. Indra Ratnasiri Parish Priest Kalamulla.


D. Anselm Fernando

St. Nicholas’ International Students excel at the Cambridge Examinations

St. Nicholas’ International College, which started its journey 25 years ago has produced professionals in all fields such as Medicine, Engineering, Law, Management etc., and today the College is proud to announce that it has obtained 99-100% results in all the subjects in the May/June 2017 Cambridge Exams. “An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” The Director of the College, Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Fernandopulle congratulated the students and posed for a photograph at the event of their achievement.

Franciscus Ludowyke

A visit to Kala Oya Elders’ Home

As a preparation for students receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Nat-tandiya Parish, a visit was made to the Kala Oya Elders’ Home.

Picture shows the students in a group photograph with Rev. Fr. Dilan Perera SJ, Assistant Parish Priest, Nattandiya.

Shriyanganie Felicia

St. Piux Xth Pre-School is 25 years

St. Piux Xth Pre-school of St. Anthony’s Church, Thodyuwawa celebrated 25 years recently. The School presently caters to the pre-school education of over 60 children.

Above is a group photograph taken at the celebrations held to mark the School’s 25-year journey.

Francis Paul Perera

Something......

As it is with endeavours artistic, so also with undertakings athletic, entrepreneurial, domestic and with all of life. Kind words are more than just nice to hear, they can be important - especially when the rainy days come (as they always do). Scripture tells us, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Prov. 18,21).

The kind words we give to our children and the other people in our lives can help leave them with the legacy of knowing, with the “absolute confidence” Mary Higgins Clark spoke of, that they are good, valuable, loved and worthy of love. That way they will always know, even in the midst of the tough times, the truth that they are the intentionally handmade and beloved creations of God, irreplaceable and precious for all eternity. That sort of life giving power is in the kind and generous words that are ours to share.

Contd from Pg. XVII

“Again, (amen,) I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray …” (Matthew 18,19)

Courtesy: Messenger of St. Anthony
Questions

The Resurrection Narrative (Luke 24,13-35)

313. Which of the disciples were on the road?
314. Where were they heading?
315. On which day were they making this journey?
316. What were they doing on the road while travelling?
317. Who drew near and started walking with them?
318. But did they recognize Him immediately since they were His disciples?
319. For the disciples, who was Jesus of Nazareth?
320. What sort of Jesus did He introduce to them while on the walk?
321. What did Jesus interpret to them?
322. What did they urge Jesus?
323. What did Jesus do, while He was with the two disciples at table?
324. What happened to them then?
325. What did Jesus do then?
326. What had happened to the two while Jesus spoke to them on the way and opened the scriptures to them?
327. What did the two do then at once?
328. What were the eleven saying at that time in Jerusalem?
329. At which point did the two disciples recognize the Lord?
330. At which point did the eleven come to believe 'The Lord has truly been raised'?

The Pentecost (Acts 2,1-13)

331. What is Pentecost?
332. What does 'Pentecost' mean etymologically?
333. What is Pentecost basically as a feast?
334. Why is the Lord thanked during the feast?
335. What is Pentecost?
336. In which place were they staying?
337. What came from the sky?
338. What did it do?
339. What was the two happening at that time in Jerusalem?
340. At which point did the two do then at once?
341. At which point did the eleven recognize the Lord?
342. What did Jesus do, while He was with the two disciples at table?
343. What happened to them then?
344. What did Jesus do then?
345. What had happened to the two while Jesus spoke to them on the way and opened the scriptures to them?
346. What did the two do then at once?
347. What did they urge Jesus?
348. What did Jesus do, while He was with the two disciples at table?
349. What happened to them then?
350. What did Jesus interpret to them?
351. What did they urge Jesus?
352. About how many were baptized and added on the very first day?

Peter’s Speech on the Day of Pentecost and its Outcome (Acts 2,14-41)

353. Who spoke on behalf of the disciples to those gathered in Jerusalem?
354. What did Peter insist?
355. What did they ask the Apostles?
356. What did Peter interpret to them?
357. What did the disciples believe?
358. What did Peter insist?
359. About how many were baptized and added on the very first day?

Responses

313. Cleopas and the unnamed disciple
314. Towards Emmaus
315. On the first day of the week = Sunday
316. Conversing and debating
317. Jesus
318. No
319. i. “a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people”
ii. “the one to redeem Israel”
320. “It will come to pass in the last days, ‘God says, ‘that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. And I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below: blood, fire, and a cloud of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and splendid day of the Lord, and it shall be that everyone shall be saved who calls on the name of the Lord.”
321. “These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.”
322. “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over”
323. “he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them”
324. “their eyes were opened and they recognized him”
325. “he vanished from their sight”
326. Their hearts had burnt within.
327. “So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem”
328. “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!”
329. “in the breaking of the bread”
330. When He appeared to Simon Peter
331. A Jewish feast, second only to the Passover in significance
332. Pentecost = 50
333. A thanksgiving feast
334. i. for the harvest, given in the Land of Promise
ii. for the Ten Commandments, received on Mt Sinai
335. 11 disciples + some women + Mary the mother of Jesus + brothers of Jesus (Acts,1-13)
336. “upper room” in Jerusalem (Acts,1,13)
337. “a noise like a strong driving wind”
338. “it filled the entire house in which they were”
339. “tongues as of fire”
340. “parted and came to rest on each one of them”
341. The Holy Spirit which filled them enabled them to do so.
342. i. Some, having been confused, astounded, amazed and bewildered, asked, “What does this mean?”
ii. Others scoffed, “They have had too much new wine.”
343. Peter
344. “These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.”
345. Of Joel (3,1-5)
346. “It will come to pass in the last days, ‘God says, ‘that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. And I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below: blood, fire, and a cloud of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and splendid day of the Lord, and it shall be that everyone shall be saved who calls on the name of the Lord.”
347. i. “Jesus the Nazorean was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God worked through him in your midst”
ii. “This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him”
iii. “But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death”
iv. “Exalted at the right hand of God”
v. “he received the promise of the holy Spirit from the Father and poured it forth, as you (both) see and hear”
vi. “Therefore let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified”
vii. “Of this we are all witnesses”
348. David (Psalm 16)
349. “they were cut to the heart”
350. “We are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning.”
351. “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit”
352. About 3,000 persons

“... it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father” (Matthew 18,19)
Dear Readers,

This is our lesson 27. In our last lesson we looked at a lesson on structure-based teaching language using the present continuous tense focusing on prepositions near, on, in, under, between.

In this lesson let’s learn more about modals can and could and learn a beautiful inspirational poem with visuals on If can.

You are welcome to express your views.

NJ

Activity 1 - Play the roles of Sumaga and his Sir with a partner with correct stress and intonation.

Sumaga: Good Morning, Sir. May I come in?
Sir: Yes, Sumaga.
Sumaga: Thank you, Sir. We looked at structure-based teaching language using the present continuous tense focusing on prepositions near, on, in, under, between in our last lesson.
Sir: Yes, How do you like it?
Sumaga: It is very useful for us. We need a lot of examples and model lessons to teach language.
Sir: Yes, Sumaga, while describing modern grammar I would gradually include different types of lesson from my next lesson.
Sumaga: What are you going to give us in this lesson?
Sir: I am going to describe the uses of can and could.
Sumaga: Can and could are two modal verbs that I like to learn well.
Sir: That’s fine. You’ll get the uses of can and could and not the form of the modals.
Sumaga: Sir, will you give us more and more lessons to teach the language in a modern context.
Sir: Yes, Sumaga. I shall describe the grammatical items briefly and give lessons each from my next series of lessons.
Sumaga: I would appreciate it very much.
Sir: Yes, Sumaga. Give me your feedback after the lessons.
Sumaga: The first lesson I tried out last week and it was quite successful.
Sir: I’m happy to hear that.

The uses of can and could

Can /Could – Could is sometimes used as the past tense of can and in such situations it refers to ability. e.g. When I was young I could run miles. You can also use could for something possible in the past. About 30 years ago you could buy a pound of bread for 25 cents.

Both can and could are modal verbs expressing different concepts. Can is considered more polite (formal) than can.

Uses of can and could

**CAN**

(A) Expresses ability (physically able to do something or to know how to do something)
(i) Birds can fly. Elephants can’t fly. I can speak two languages.
(B) Expresses possibility (a theoretical one)
(i) It can get cold there at night so take a sweater.
(ii) I know you can win the game.
(iii) I think your car can be repaired but it’s going to be quite expensive.
(C) Offers to do something (help someone)
(i) You don’t need to walk, I can give you a lift.
(ii) Can I carry your bags for you?
(D) Asks for or give permission / request something
(i) Can I sit in that chair please?
(ii) Ann you can play outside if you like.
(iii) Can I ask you a question?
(iv) Can’t go to the park that’s still muddy and wet.
(E) Can’t expresses something forbidden
(i) You cannot park the car here.
(ii) You can’t smoke in the restaurant.
(iii) You cannot drive a car without a license

**COULD**

(A) Expresses ability in the past
(i) I could ride a horse when I was younger but now I can’t.
(ii) She could read when she was three years old.
(B) Is a polite word to ask for permission or request something
(i) Could I please you your bathroom?
(ii) Could we move on to the next topic?
(iii) I’m busy right now. Could you call back later?

(C) General permission in the past
(i) In high school, I couldn’t leave the classroom without a pass.
(ii) She couldn’t go to the concert because her mother wouldn’t let her.

(D) A suggestion when asked what to do (choices and opportunities)
(i) We could try and fix it ourselves.
(ii) We could go to the movies if you are interested.

(E) Could + have + past participle (express a possibility in the past)
(i) We were lucky because it could have rained but it didn’t.

(F) Could + have + past participle (can express unrealized past ability)
(i) She could have married anyone she wanted.

**Can / could summary chart for quick reference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>COULD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Expresses ability (physically able to do something or to know how to do something)</td>
<td>(A) Expresses ability in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Birds can fly. Elephants can’t fly. I can speak two languages.</td>
<td>(i) I could ride a horse when I was younger but now I can’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Expresses possibility (a theoretical one)</td>
<td>(ii) She could read when she was three years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) It can get cold there at night so take a sweater.</td>
<td>(B) Is a polite word to ask for permission or request something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) I know you can win the game.</td>
<td>(i) Could I please you your bathroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) I think your car can be repaired but it’s going to be quite expensive.</td>
<td>(ii) Could we move on to the next topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Offers to do something (help someone)</td>
<td>(iii) I’m busy right now. Could you call back later?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) You don’t need to walk, I can give you a lift.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Can I carry your bags for you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Asks for or give permission / request something</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Can I sit in that chair please?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Ann you can play outside if you like.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Can I ask you a question?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Can’t go to the park that’s still muddy and wet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) Can’t expresses something forbidden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) You cannot park the car here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) You can’t smoke in the restaurant.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) You cannot drive a car without a license</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you **can** keep your head when all about you Are losing theirs and blaming it on you, If you **can** trust yourself when all men doubt you, But make allowance for their doubting too; If you **can** wait and not be tired by waiting, Or being lied about, don’t deal in lies, If you **can** bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken And treat those two impostors just the same; If you **can** make one heap of all your winnings And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss, And lose, and start again at your beginnings, And never breathe a word about your loss; If you **can** force your heart and nerve and sinew To serve your turn long after they are gone, And so hold on when there is nothing in you Except the Will which says to them: ’Hold on!’

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*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matthew 18,20)

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Your suggestions are welcome.
Your comments are deeply appreciated.

You can contact me on 22911540 or 0718004580 as I am in Sri Lanka now for any clarifications.

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