Today we celebrate Vocations Sunday, the day we pray for religious and priestly vocations. It is a day when we ponder over the selfless work of the ‘Shepherds moulded after God’s own heart’ who feel and live with the ‘Smell of the sheep’ around them. In this context we remember the meek and humble priest of God who shepherded His flock for many years in many parishes of the Archdiocese and who, in deed and word, lived with the smell of the sheep around him until the day his Master called him to His heavenly abode. Rev. Fr. Ruben Leslie Silva, the late Parish Priest of Enderamulla who died at a relatively young age of 60 on April 10 was a true priest of God who selflessly dedicated his life to serve in His vineyard.

In his formative years in the seminary, Fr. Ruben proved that he was steadfast and obedient to this call by overcoming all obstacles with determination to achieve his goal to become a true shepherd of the Lord – a seasoned priest who fostered the vocations of many priests and seminarians.

At his funeral on April 11, the flock he loved so much braved rainy weather to bid farewell to their beloved shepherd. Tears pouring, his priest friends and the faithful bade him goodbye at St Anne’s Church, Weligampitiya. His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo in his eulogy at the funeral liturgy expressed these sentiments last Monday at the special meeting convened at Archbishop’s House for the consecration ceremony, scheduled in June.

**EPISCOPAL MOTTO - MSGR. J. D. ANTON JAYAKODY**

Dominum servire cum gaudio

“Serve the Lord with gladness”

“Then Peter, filled with the holy Spirit, answered them, “Leaders of the people and elders” (Acts 4:8)
### Holy Week - 2018

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*Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Prasad Harshan*  
Benjamin Kirihetty

### Easter Vigil

**St. Mary’ Church, Katukurunda, Moratuwa**

*Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Rashka Lawrence De Silva, Parish Priest*

- **Adult Baptism**  
  Asika Priyadharshana

### Aquinas spends a Day in Lenten Prayer

On Friday, March 23, 2018, Aquinas College of Higher Studies spent a prayerful day at St. Benedict’s Church, Maduravita. The programmes were conducted by Rev. Frs. Nishantha Ranjula Fernando, Assistant Parish Priest, Ragama and Sriyananda Fernando, Parish Priest, Kotugoda, Ja-ela, while the Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Susith Silva, Rector, Aquinas.

*Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Emacy Priyashantha*  
H.A. Caldera

### Feast of Divine Mercy

**St. Mary’s Church, Maggona**


*Rev. Fr. Anushka Fernando  
Secretary to the Bishop of Ratnapura*

### Pastoral Transfers and Appointments of the Diocese of Ratnapura - 2018

- **Rev. Fr. Srilal Fernando**: Parish Priest, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Kudagama.
- **Rev. Fr. Shane Wickramasinghe**: Assistant at St. Joseph’s Church, Balangoda  
  *Rev. Fr. Anushka Fernando*  
  Secretary to the Bishop of Ratnapura

*Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Emacy Priyashantha*  
H.A. Caldera

### Stations of the Cross at Kalutara

Newly constructed Stations of the Cross at St. John’s Church premises Kalutara, was declared opened and blessed by Rev. Fr. Suran Attiliya, Parish Priest and Rev. Fr. Tresun Silva, Staff, Holy Cross College Kalutara, recently. The event was organised by the Parish Priest and the Liturgy committee of the Parish.

*Chief Celebrant Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva OMI  
D. Anselm Fernando*

*Rev. Fr. Rasika Lawrence De Silva, Parish Priest*

Asika Priyadharshana

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“If we are being examined today about a good deed done to a cripple, namely, by what means he was saved” (Acts 4:9)
Fare thee well, dear Fr. Ruben!

On Easter Sunday we celebrated the glorious Resurrection of our Lord which strongly reminded us that we our followers are not simply Good Friday Christians mourning at the entrance to the tomb but a people, filled with hope, who joyfully celebrate our Lord's victory over death. The Alleluia of Easter had just passed by when the news of an untimely death of a dear brother, friend and priest Rev. Fr. Ruben Leslie Silva makes us ponder on the real meaning of life in the light of the Sacred Scriptures and the promise of the resurrection for God's faithful ones.

Among the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament, we find the Book of Qoheleth, which literally means 'one who convenes an assembly.' Written probably three centuries before Christ, the author deals with ultimate questions of life and death while talking about routines of daily life. He tells us quite logically that we are living under the sun, including human wisdom, is vanity unless man acknowledges His Creator who has given him all and returns due gratitude to Him through a life lived according to God's plan for him.

True wisdom redounds with God, who is the final Judge of the good and the bad whose reign endures forever. Hence true wisdom, which is spiritual, can be perceived only in the light of faith. Faith brings to light the divine plan for human beings, which lies otherwise hidden. If life does not realise God's plan for it, it is reduced then to an enigma beyond human potency to resolve.

Qoheleth instructs: "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant ... He has made everything beautiful for its time" (3:1-15). So we find solace and comfort in these words of wisdom, in our effort to mitigate the pain and sorrow overwhelming our hearts due to the demise of our dear brother, friend and priest Fr. Ruben Leslie Silva. We seek to surrender ourselves to this divine plan, just as Fr. Ruben did throughout his life very much in keeping with God's plan for him. We thank God for the gift of his fruitful life he lived with us.

Qoheleth instructs further, "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth ..." (12:1). Today's youth uphold the false notion that they could do whatever they like in the prime of their youth and that it is too early to think of God in their spring. It is only in the twilight years of their life that they might think of God. St. Augustine whose enthusiasm for the created things of this world held him back from his Creator was one such youth who later lamented "Late have I loved you, beauty so ancient and so new." The Sacred Scriptures exhort us to be connected to God in all times and seasons and that if we are not connected to God then "all things are vanity." (Qoheleth 1:19-21)

Qoheleth uses symbols in his treatise on life: "Before the silver cord is snapped and the golden bowl is broken ..." (12:6). The golden bowl suspended by the silver cord is a symbol of life, while the snapping of the cord and the breaking of the bowl symbolize death. Hence we ought to be connected to God - "Remember your Creator" - to find purpose and meaning of life. Fr. Ruben lived in constant communion with his Creator and hence, found purpose and meaning in his priestly life.

"I first met Fr. Ruben in the seminary" recalls His Lordship Rt. Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis, who was always very friendly, kind and humble. Hence we became bosom friends in no time. He was gifted with a philosophical mind and was able to grasp things easily, especially the philosophical subjects and categories. In his generosity, he helped us, his close associates, in our studies. Our friendship took us as far as Talawila, where we worked during seminary holidays in a boutique, St. Anne's Stores, owned by Rev. Fr. Meri Shanthi Perera, a friend of the family that we used to visit now. But the sweet memories of this long and cherished friendship will never fade away. We shall rest assured that Fr. Ruben is now with his Creator and his Lord and Master the Risen Christ in whose vineyard he had served faithfully.

"I can still remember, His Lordship wakes up the memory, what Fr. Ruben was wearing on the very first day we met each other in the seminary." He was attired in a white shirt. Today, the last day we see him on earth, too, he is neatly dressed in spotless white; perhaps a sign of his purity of heart and a life lived in holiness. In between, we have all seen the whiteness of his face in the presence of God, his loyalty to his dearest Catholic Church, your correspondence and commitment in service. Hence we know and believe that God will say to him: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, we will rest assured that Fr. Ruben is now with his Creator and his Lord and Master the Risen Christ in whose vineyard he had served faithfully.

"... then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that" (Acts 4,10)
Pope Francis is a man of surprises and he never disappoints. This past week, the Pontiff released a relatively quiet apostolic exhortation, titled Gaudete et Exsultate. Unlike his previous documents, which were preceded by speculation, commentary and a sense of anticipated content, this magisterial teaching was given, well, almost by surprise.

In the introduction of the exhortation, Pope Francis tells us that his modest goal is to repurpose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. By itself, the content of the document should not be a surprise. We would assume that popes and religious leaders of any kind, would regularly speak about the ways of prayer, holiness and goodness. And yet, every time a pope says something like ‘All this is important. Yet with this Exhortation I would like to insist primarily on the call to holiness that the Lord addresses to each of us, the call that He also addressed to St. John the Baptist...’ Christian believers are sincerely surprised because it comes across as news.

How is that possible? Over fifty years ago, the Second Vatican Council retrieved and strongly echoed the universal call to holiness of all believers. Has this surprised because it comes across as news. The Lord addresses to each of us, the call that He also addressed to St. John the Baptist...” Christian believers are sincerely surprised because it comes across as news.

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The Call is still there. It is been given to believers since the beginning of the Lord Jesus’ work among us. And while we can blame and debate what happened after the Council, the recent exhortation breaks through the ecclesiastical banter and blaming. It redirects us to personal accountability and emphasises the intimate call we have all received to be holy.

Rather than excuses, distractions, polemics and the plays that come with Church politics, Pope Francis is leading us back to the heart of faith, namely, to an encounter with God and a real attempt to live according to a path of righteousness. The Pope is calling believers back to the liberating first call of the Lord Jesus given to every man and woman.

This invitation is the foundation of all other areas of the Church’s life (at least, it should be). This summons is the reason why believers seek to worship God, pray, study the Bible, live in holy fellowship with others and selflessly serve the poor and those in need.

It is this hearkening by God that is the light of faith, the joy of the Gospel, the reason why we praise and care for creation and the cause of our joy in love. Obviously, by citing the names of the Pope’s other teaching documents, the argument is made that Pope Francis is reminding all of us, believers and friends alike, of holiness, which is the source and impetus of his work and of the entire mission of the Church.

The Pope writes: “This is a powerful summons to all of us... Allow the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today’s world... Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen, lest you fail in your precious mission. The Lord will bring it to fulfilment despite your mistakes and missteps, provided that you do not abandon the path of love but remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens.”

And so, what will we do with this new exhortation? Will it merely be one more document that is briefly read, dismissed because it lacks hot topics and left behind for issues that are thought to be more pressing or important?

If we follow this incomplete path, then we will not be giving a holistic and accurate portrayal of Pope Francis or of the Catholic Church. We will not be fair to our deepest identity and call as the children of God. And, if the exhortation is handled so haphazardly, then we should not be caught off guard if believers are surprised again in the future when a pope talks about holiness.

The exhortation is an opportunity. It is a beautiful exposition, based on the Beatitudes, of what holiness looks like. It is our chance to remind the Church and world of why Francis does what he does, why he loves what he loves and why he serves those that he serves.

The exhortation, therefore, is a signpost, a reminder and a prophetic call. It points us all back to a love for God and neighbour. It is a summons once again to the way of holiness. What will we do with it?

Mumbai Catholics demand justice for rape victims

Catholics in various parishes of the Mumbai Archdiocese launched protests demanding action against the criminals who raped girls in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir and Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.

The Archdiocese of Bombay in a statement issued on April 14 summarising the anger and disappointment of the Church said, “Evil exists and perpetuates because good people are silent. We hope to speak the collective conscience of the community and the nation and say this to us: “My own love. We do not want well-crafted advertising statements or campaigns but action on the ground that provides for a safe India.”

Fr. Nigel Barret, the Parish Priest of St. Jude Church in Malad East, urged parishioners to wear black outfits to protest against the criminals who raped girls in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir.

Representatives of various sects of the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist religions and sexual minorities attended the event on April 11-12 in Indore. It was jointly organised by three organisations working for religious harmony.

Mumbai Catholics demand justice for rape victims

Religious leaders in India pledge to check hatred and violence

More than 1,500 religious leaders in India concluded a two-day conclave resolving to reach out to the masses with true teachings of their faiths to check increasing religion-based hatred and violence.

Representatives of various sects of the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist religions and sexual minorities attended the event on April 11-12 in Indore. It was jointly organised by three organisations working for religious harmony.

India has been witnessing increased religious polarization since the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in 2014. It projected itself as the champion of Hindus, bolstering Hindu groups to accelerate their action to turn India into a Hindu-only nation.

Religious minorities like Christians and Muslims have been complaining of increased violence against their people. At least 10 Muslim men have been lynched and many injured by vigilante cow protection groups, many of which seemed to operate with the support of the BJP, rights group Amnesty India said in a report early this year.

Persecution Relief recorded 736 attacks against Christians in 2017, up from 348 in 2016. Christians were often attacked after being accused of converting Hindus. The issue was addressed in the conclave by Reverend Jacob Carepisopa, a priest of the Kerala-based Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church who now works in Central India.

He explained to the gathering that no true Christian will force anyone to become Christian. Our charitable works are also not for religious conversion. “This is the way we share our Christian love with others. Such things are misrepresented as efforts to religious conversion,” said the priest.

Some 80 percent of India’s 1.3 billion people are Hindus but Muslims number 14 or 15 percent or 180 million, making them the largest religious minority. Although Christians comprise just 2.3 percent, they are the third-largest minority.
Family planning is the term used to describe the procedure adopted to decide the number of children a married man and woman hope to have. Most often it implies the limitation of the number of children. The other terms used to describe this phenomenon is contraception and birth control. It can also mean to have another natural method or two. It is effective only for the first six months.

Temperature method: Our basal body temperature is between 97 to 98.4 degrees centigrade. During ovulation, the woman is fertile and the basal body temperature rises by 0.5 degrees. The temperature must be checked first thing in the morning before any other activity. It has to be taken at the same time and position. This method too is not 100 per cent sure. There are other body symptoms that are noticeable by a woman when she is in the ovulatory period (fertile period). They are feeling bloated, backache, tender breasts, and pain in the lower and outer areas of the abdomen, where the ovaries are situated.

Calendar or rhythm method or the safe period: This method the woman is made use of. The information gathered from the monthly menstrual cycles. The duration of a woman's monthly cycle is not constant and varies. Over a period of six months her shortest cycle with 21 days, and longest cycle 35 days. From the shortest cycle e.g.: 27 days deduct 18. The result is 9. From the longest cycle e.g.: 30, deduct 11. The result is 19. Taking the day one as the first day of your menstruation, the woman is fertile or can get pregnant if she has sexual intercourse from day 9 to 19. Unfortunately this method too is not 100 per cent sure.

Billings' Ovulation or the mucus method: This is a more reliable method and nearly 99 per cent effective if carried out perfectly and accurately. There are cyclical hormonal changes that take place in woman's genital system during her monthly cycle. As a result secretions are produced in the cervix or the neck of the womb. These secretions flow out of the vaginal canal and produce a moist sensation which is felt at the external genital opening. The area on the inner side of the outer genital lips should be felt with the index finger and thumb. You must avoid relationship on a wet day even during the dry period. The duration of the different periods mentioned and the appearance could vary from one woman to another.

Child Abuse

At the beginning of this year the parents of 13 children were taken into custody due to child abuse charges. They had chained and shackled their children to beds and the children had not been released even for use of any toilet facilities. The police found that the children between the ages 2 to 29 were malnourished, starving and dirty and were not allowed to go out of their rooms. The 17-year-old child escaped from their home where they were imprisoned and reported to the police. Only then the world came to know about the dire state of these children and rush up by their two abusive parents.

The World Health Organisation defines child abuse as "all forms of physical and emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse or neglect or economic exploitation, abandonment or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity, in the context of relationships of responsibility, trust or power." According to the definition child abuse could take place in homes, schools or in communities in which a child is growing up. Certain armed groups in Sri Lanka were accused of recruiting children as child soldiers and as child labourers in commercial and agricultural establishments. Any utilisation of a child under the age of 14 of age could be considered as child abuse in this country. According to the national code this is the legal age up to which a child should attend school in Sri Lanka.

Child Labourers

Kailash Satyarthi, the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner, in an interview to the Indian media said that India had highlighted child abuse in his own country. He was way-laid, as stooled and wounded thugs hired by the rich factory owners. He and his colleagues managed to alert their government to the situation and the Indian and world media of the child rights laws of India. They alerted the police and other child's rights agencies about the employment of children in factories, brick kilns and carpet-making workshops. Some of the children were working in these places for no pay because they were re-paying the loans that their parents had borrowed from these rich business magnates. According to the surveys done by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Sri Lanka education system starts this type of child torture at the age of 9 and 10 when the survey done by the students have to sit for Grade 5 scholarship examination. To prepare children to face this competitive examination they are sent to tuition classes after school and during weekends. These growing children do not have any time for play or other leisure activities.

Lop-Sided Educational System

Every human being and every child has a right to be healthy and to have basic physical facilities. They have to be developed simultaneously. Our system of education is lop-sided and the schools concentrate on developing only the mental faculties, neglecting emotional and physical aspects of growth. Due to the emphasis put on passing exams at any cost, the human and emotional aspects of life are totally neglected. Up to the age of 9 and 10, for the natural growth of children they need play time, leisure, relaxed observation of natural surroundings, interpersonal skills such as verbal communication skills with other children of their age. All these essentials are sacrificed for the sole development of the mental faculties of a child. The competitive examination system is also useful to couples who have difficulty in conceiving a child by concentrating on a

Contd. on Pg. 15

Health related Issues in Sri Lanka

By Dr. Masse Fernando Da Police
Email: massefernandopaule@gmail.com

Child Abuse

We are paying the toll for this lopsided education system. The health care system’s toll in treating youth who are dependent on illegal substances and alcohol to bolster their self-image is high. The escalating figures of family break-ups, divorce and separation are on the increase because our youngsters are psychologically and emotionally immature. Our health care system is unable to cope with psychiatric problems such as substance abuse, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder. This type of abuse can also lead to physical ailments such as hyper tension, cardiac and endocrine disorders such as diabetes, at a very young age.

Contd. on Pg. 15
Jesus Christ lives

“The Lord has indeed risen, alleluia!” sang the priests with him “for ever and ever,” proclaims an Easter Antiphon (cf. Lk 24:34, Rev 1:6). “He has risen! Jesus has risen? He is not in the tomb. Life has overcome death (St. J. Escrivá, Holy Rosary).”

The key to interpreting Jesus’ whole life is the glorious resurrection of the Lord. At the same time, it constitutes the very foundation of Christian faith. “Without this victory over death, without the resurrection, our faith with joy and meaning. Jesus, who died, rose again” (St. J. Escrivá, Christ in Passing By, 102).

The life of Christ

St. Leo the Great says that Jesus hastened to rise as soon as possible because He was in a hurry to console His Mother and the disciples (See Acts 20:12-13). Jesus was in the tomb strictly as long as was necessary to comply with the three days that had been foretold. He rose on the third day, as soon as He could, just before sunrise, when everything was still dark (Jn. 20:11). In the presence of the dawn, every one of our eyes is open.

Meanwhile, the world was benighted. Only the Virgin Mary was a light in the midst of that darkness. That resurrection is the great light for the world: “I am the light” (Jn. 8:12). Jesus had said. He is truly the light for the whole world, for all ages of history, for every society, for each man.

The Easter Vigil liturgy is dense with meaning. It begins in total darkness inside the church, this being the image of the profound darkness in which humanity was plunged without Christ. Then, there is the revelation of God. Then, in an instant, the celebrated proclaims the exhilarating, wonderful news: May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds (St. J. Escrivá, Holy Rosary).

The Resurrection of Christ

The Resurrection of Christ is a powerful call to do apostolate. Our Lord told us: “You are the light of the world” (cf. Matt 5:14). In our eyes, of this dawn to, every light. It is extra proof of this. That day, a student feast day, he that St. Joseph’s church. He decides to go to make his confession. He does not know that the priest there, has never met him before, but something happens when we are not able to comprehend, He showed Himself to His Mother in such a way that she would have known Him instantly in His glorious state. He would also have shown her that He would not continue the same life as He had done before in earth (cf F.W. Willam, The Life of Mary).

It is said that each year on this holy day St. Thomas Aquinas promised to write about Jesus. He did not fail to congratulate the Blessed Virgin on the Resurrection of her Son (Fr. J.F.P, Life of St. Mary, according to St. Thomas Aquinas). And this is exactly what we do when reciting the Regina Coeli or “Queen of Heaven,” which takes the place of the Angelus during Eastertide.

Queen of Heaven, Rejoice. Alleluia! For He whom you did not receive when he was said... And we as to be raised up forever from all sin, to reign in intimate union with Jesus Christ, and with God. For Bergoglio, no. And the first person to be surprised by this is himself.

So, at the origin of the choice to become a priest, there is an intimate call, one which is spectacular, hidden but all-encompassing, really overwhelming. The young Jorge emerges from the church so completely overcome that he returns home at once. He gives up his evening with his friends (in that group there was also his girlfriend). He will not talk about his life-changing experience with anyone for four years.

In the meantime he finishes high school and continues his studies. He was ordained a priest in 1973. Let us resolve to live this Easter period very close to Our Lady.

How God called Bergoglio

An operation for two chalazions (sites) on the eyelid was performed on November 25, 2017 at 9.35 a.m.

Once the eyelid was removed after 24 hours out of the two chalazions only one had been removed. The one which was still in the eyelid was very noticeable and prominent, it was an eyestore to all around me, and they wanted me to go for another operation.

I was asked to come in two weeks as usual to see the eye surgeon for post operative consultation.

But, I was determined not to go as they would see the eye surgeon for post operative consultation. They are the fruit of a natural process born so unexpectedly. He feels himself to be called by God, who ‘was waiting for him’. It is very rare to encounter vocations which are detected something. At the age of 21 he enters the diocesan seminary and then, almost immediately, chooses the Jesuits with the dream, which he was never able to achieve a seminary and then, almost immediately, chooses the Jesuits with the dream, which he was never able to achieve.

He is the stone rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone” (Acts 4,11)

Testimony

An operation for two chalazions (sites) on the eyelid was performed on November 25, 2015 at 9.35 a.m.

Once the eyelid was removed after 24 hours out of the two chalazions only one had been removed. The one which was still in the eyelid was very noticeable and prominent, it was an eyestore to all around me, and they wanted me to go for a second operation.

I was asked to come in two weeks as usual to see the eye surgeon for post operative consultation. But, I was determined not to go as they would want to operate the second chalazion. Because of the first operation November 25 to 29 I missed daily Mass which is part and part of my life. I missed Mass for four days for that year 2017, if I get it operated it will be a case of missing Mass again, for several days. So I told Jesus after the Commission from the time the I was not able to see the operation is healed, I would start signing with crosses on the chalazion with my finger. My target was 10,000 crosses but the good Lord willing otherwise by the 25th of March (today) I had signed 1800 crosses and the chalazion which was very prominent has decreased in size and now it is unnoticeable.

Today April 10, it is no longer there. Praise be to the divine cross of Jesus.

Assunta Mendis

The 21st of September 1953 is the day on which Bergoglio’s life changes completely. That’s all. He gets up in time, takes coffee and then he goes to Mass which is part and part of my life. I missed Mass for four days for that year 2017, if I get it operated it will be a case of missing Mass again, for several days. So I told Jesus after the Commission from the time the I was not able to see the operation is healed, I would start signing with crosses on the chalazion with my finger. My target was 10,000 crosses but the good Lord willing otherwise by the 25th of March (today) I had signed 1800 crosses and the chalazion which was very prominent has decreased in size and now it is unnoticeable.

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Assunta Mendis
THE CHALLENGES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FACES IN ASIA

The Holy Bible tells us Abba, our Maternal Father, sent Jesus to this world in order to manifest Abba's unconditional love and forgiveness to the people so that they may be saved. Jesus, and thereby to the person of Jesus. His reverence for Jesus and the place he attributed to Him are clear from the public address he gave to the Hindu students for Jesus and the place he attributed to Him are clear. (The Pope speaks to India P. 16).

THE CHALLENGES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FACES IN ASIA

1) The reality of poverty with all the connected problems such as injustice, oppression, marginalisation, migrants, refugees, sex tourism, divorce,Throwaway culture, environmental degradation, etc. More than 60 per cent of the population's wealth lives in Asia. It is the continent of the poor. The poverty of these treasuring millions is not one that is voluntary but enforced on them by the socio-economic structures both national and international, although some are poor due to their own faults.

2) The reality of the major Religions and cosmic religions exists much influence on the people. The major Religions are also called 'living faiths'. They are well institutionalised and organised. The Second Vatican Council has said, "The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions, and, although the Church, which is the New People, witnesses to them their own faith and way of life acknowledges, reserves and encourages the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, also through its own area of mission (NA 2).

3) The reality of cultures and civilisations. Asia is rich culturally. It is rich in its languages, literature, arts, drama, music, architecture, images and symbols. The institutional Church still looks so foreign in some Asian countries. 4. The reality of modernisation with its consequences such as liberation, liberation from the caste system or certain dubious forms of sacrifice" (cf. The Genesis of an Asian Theology of Liberation, Tulana Ray, Centre, Kelanji, 2013, p. 124-125). Inter-religious dialogue is a Christian way of witnessing to the Spirit of God.

3. Faced with the reality of cultures, the Church is becoming aware of the wrong image that is being projected.

4. Faced with the reality of modernisation, the Church is more conscious of the effects of modernisation on the people of Asia. More individual efforts are made by organised group work in this regard. Some Religious Congregations are trying to preserve as far as possible the rich heritage and spiritual values which are present in the Asian cultures.

5. Faced with the reality of modernisation, the Church is becoming aware of the wrong image that is being projected.

6. The Church is conscious that the Asian countries is adopting different ways according to local needs of the peoples because the problems are so varied. However, there are some commonalities.

1. Faced with the reality of poverty and related issues, the Church is becoming noted for her spirit of sensitivity and compassion by identifying with the poor and by being the voice of the silent masses. The Religious are the voice of the silent masses. The Religious are trying to preserve as far as possible the rich heritage and spiritual values which are present in the Asian cultures.

2. Faced with the reality of major Religions and cosmic religions, efforts are being made to understand these Religions. At least the Federation of Asian Baptist (FABC) has accepted four forms of dialogue with the major Religions, namely dialogue of life, of action, of theological exchange, and of religious experience.

3. Faced with the reality of mega-religious and cosmic religions, efforts are being made to understand these Religions. At least the Federation of Asian Bishops (FABC) has accepted four forms of dialogue with the major Religions, namely dialogue of life, of action, of theological exchange, and of religious experience.

4. Faced with the reality of modernisation, the Church is more conscious of the effects of modernisation on the people of Asia. More individual efforts are made by organised group work in this regard. Some Religious Congregations are trying to preserve as far as possible the rich religious and spiritual values by educating the people. Since the above-mentioned realities are affecting the young people very much, the present Church should seize the present moment of energy in ministry, they deserve special attention from the Church. It is the task of the Church to channel their energies into the service of God and humanity. It is a call to young people to search the lost and the neglected, touching people's lives with love, tenderness and mercy, never setting for simple administration.

Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Fernando, OMI, Rajabima Oblate Centre, Anuradhapura.

“there is no salvation through anyone else” (Acts 4.12)
"Shepherds after the Heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd"

The image of the Good Shepherd Jesus identified in Himself has been the inspiration for the Church He founded and the ministry He gave His Church and the ministers whom He calls. (Cf. John 10:1-18 to continue His ministry). Isaiah 40:11 Ezekiel 34:11-16.

The famously quoted newly coined phrase of Pope Francis “The smell of the sheep” was given to the Church at his first Chrism Mass in March 2013 two weeks after his election as Pope. Later on he develops it even to apply it for all who are trusted with leadership in the secular order.

Any shepherd must smell like his/her flock. Bishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio who was known as the “Bishop of the slums” must have certainly smelt like his flock! Therefore, there is nothing to be surprised when, as the Universal Shepherd of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis urges with passion all shepherds both in the Church and outside to “be shepherds with the smell of the sheep.”

That being the theme of “Vocations Sunday 2018” we address
1. The need for vocations to priesthood and religious life.
2. Those who are already in formation.
3. All formators responsible for formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life.

The entire Church therefore, is called to prepare “shepherds with the smell of the sheep” including parents, siblings, relatives, friends, benefactors, parish priests and parish communities of the prospective candidates for priesthood and religious life. The others are the Bishops, Religious Superiors and, priests and religious in formation houses. All concerned have to shun clericalism, careerism and materialism to form “shepherds with the smell of the sheep” for the Church. This is one of the answers to today’s maladies in the Church. All the resources made available with the generosity of the lay faithful are for the formation of shepherds after the heart of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

On the eve of the Ordinary Synod in October 2018 when the whole Church shall focus on the Youth under the theme: “Young people, the faith and discernment of vocation” given by the Holy Father Pope Francis we cannot but go back to the question he posed to the Brazilian Bishops at the World Youth Day in July 2013 in the first year of his Pontificate. He addressed thereby the entire Church and all the Bishops in the Church. The question was: “Unless we train ministers capable of warming people’s hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoguing with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what joy can we have for our present and future?”

That question sheds light on what is expected of all the formators and the ordained ministers or the Religious called to share in the shepherding mission of Jesus Christ.

Being “shepherds with the smell of the sheep” means being involved in the lives of the people and going after the lost sheep (Luke 15:4-7) to bring it back to the fold.

Let our prayer to the Good Shepherd be: To send shepherds who know and love their sheep and are known and loved by their sheep (Cf. John 10:14), inspired by the Lord who laid down His life for His sheep.

+ J. Winson S. Fernando, sss
Bishop of Badulla
Chairman
Catholic National Commission for Seminaries, Clergy and Religious

Like in all Formation Houses, under the ‘Friends of the National Seminarian Programme,’ prayers are offered for the intentions of the faithful. You are welcome to send your intentions for special prayers.
Among the chosen people of Israel from which God promised that He would send a Saviour, the priesthood had a prominent place. The entire nation of Israel is described as a priestly people (cf. Exodus 19:6). From among this people, the tribe of Levi is set aside by God for special priesthood. Only they are to enter the holy places (2 Chronicles 23:6;35:5). Their role is primarily in sacred worship, but they also had a hand in prophecy and governance of the people.

In the fullness of time, the Eternal Father sent His only Son to be our Saviour. The Son of God took on human nature for love of us and for our salvation. By the fact of the Incarnation itself, Jesus Christ is a consecrated priest. He is “the one whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world” (John 10:36). His priesthood is unique. He offers Himself in sacrifice and reigns over the whole world. He is priest, prophet and king. He is our mediator between God and people. His priesthood transcends that of Aaron and Levi and was symbolised by Melchizedek, since this new and unique priesthood has a dimension of profound mystery, without traceable human origins. Christ the High Priest, acts on behalf of men in relation to God, makes expiation for the sins of the people, gains an eternal redemption and mediates a New Covenant.

The letter to the Hebrews, which is to the Church a precious reflection on the priestly ministry of Jesus Christ and consequently of every priest, outlines the basic theology of the priesthood: “Every high priest is chosen from the fellow-men and appointed to serve God on their behalf, to offer sacrifices and offerings for sins. Since he himself is weak in many ways, he is able to bear the sins of the people but also for his own sins. No one chooses for himself the honour for being a high priest; it is only by God’s call that a man is made a high priest - just as Aaron was” (Hebrews 5:1-4). Thus, the letter to the Hebrews poetically vividly twin characteristics of the office of a priest - God chooses freely those whom He wants indicating a purely divine action and God does not choose angels to fulfill this task but men who experience the fragile nature of humanity.

The order of the New Testament priesthood, of which Christ Himself is the perfect expression, is purely a gratuitous and free choice of God. It is, therefore, a mission that is supremely divine but which is strongly bound to the service of humanity.
President’s concern about Local Government machinery

The President expressing his concern recently said that the present increase in the number of ward members to the Local Government (LG) bodies should be brought down by half to 4,000 members. No doubt, the current confusion aggravated by horse-trading prevailing during the LG elections and selections, would have spurred him to moot this proposal.

He has realised that increasing the number of ward members would breed bribery and corruption and that merely expanding the political fraternity at exorbitant cost would only serve to impede productivity in LG machinery. His proposal any way will have to wait till the next LG polls. However, from the day this huge increase in the number of ward members was disclosed to the public, we as citizens and tax payers expressed our grave concern through the media about its adverse consequences but to no avail to the authorities.

Now, the result as we can see is more and more chaotic with bribery, corruption and horse-tradingAIN.

Paradigm shift in political and public service culture

However, taking the cue from the President’s conviction, we exhort that a paradigm shift in our hugely unproductive political and public service culture should commence immediately to ameliorate the imminent danger that can be caused by the newly elected local politicians. Even if the current debate period is over, we must understand this end, proper systems and procedures will have to be introduced to prevent potential bribery and corruption acts by these politicians. We have repeatedly stressed that political reality can be objectively improving the services offered by the Grama Sevakas, Divisional Secretaries, Local Councils, Police and the Judiciary which directly relate to the needs and problems of people at ward level. It can be achieved by motivating and increasing the productivity of all government and local government servants through customer service oriented training and target setting mechanisms linked to incentive schemes. The new cadre of politicians should be deployed to identify and meet the development needs arising at local level in collaboration with the Grama Sevakas and the Divisional Secretaries. In this context, the job description of Grama Sevakas too demands revision. We also must remember that the local government machinery functioned for more than two years sans its political counterparts without much hiccups and the government must have saved a tidy sum in the process!

Depoliticize Local Government governance

With the realisation of aforesaid cultural change, this layer of local politicians becomes redundant and can be totally removed. Now that smaller wards have been demarcated by the latest delimitation exercise, if still necessary, the savings can be utilised to introduce a system akin to ‘Ganshiba’ method with wards being represented by an elected cadre of independent, acceptable and respectable development facilitators who meet the eligibility criteria set by the Elections Commission which will conduct the Elections.

Strengths Provincial Council System

At the same time, more role responsibilities should be accorded to the councils under the irrevocable provincial council system to make the ‘white elephant’ also produce results meeting its objectives. We reiterate that the need of the hour is improving the decentralised Public Service and not increasing the numbers in the unproductive, high cost poltical machinery which churns out false ‘demgi gods’ to the people! The resulting direct and indirect savings also could be ploughed back to improve the welfare of the people at grass root level.

Bernard Fernando
Moratuwa

Ragging in Sri Lanka’s national universities

Being a parent of two university students, I take this opportunity to write this letter with regard to ragging in the Universities.

While speaking to a student counsellor and to a marshal officer at one of the Universities, I found out that ragging is still very much prevalent in the University. There should be a clear-cut system to stop this. We can ask them that they should be just talking. This is because the freshers are afraid to say anything against the seniors as they fear them.

I also met and spoke to the person at the University Grants Commission (UGC), under whose jurisdiction falls the ragging in Universities. This lady told me that for the UGC to take any action, a complaint should be made. I also told this lady that ragging should be ended not by punishing senior students but by giving them guidance on how to be helpful to freshers.

When I spoke to one of the senior lecturers she said that some of the freshers are ragged and are apprehended to stand what the seniors ask them to do. She also told me that is difficult to withhold this ‘Tharuna Javaya.’ This, I thought was an indifferent attitude to the whole ragging issue.

It is shocking that these lecturers have overlooked the fact that students who did not have the ability to withstand ragging have even committed suicide; otherwise, given the opportunity and have ended with depression. Are we waiting till such a thing happens?

Punishing students after they are caught for ragging is not the answer to this problem. We can ask why ragging only takes place in government higher educational institutes and not in private institutes. If the private higher educational institutes can handle such things without the government institutes handle them? Only about 1/3 of the students are initiating this ragging.

Sometimes freshers are kept by force after 5.00 pm stating that the ragging period is ended. This happens to some IT Faculty students of the University of Moratuwa in Katubedda. The fresher has no option, whether you like it or not the fresher has to stay.

The ragging period is ended by bucketing them with waste water. This happened to some students of the University of Colombo, School of Computing (UCSC).

How can students get back home after being bucketed? Boys are being hit by 2x2 wooden rods. This happens in the Management Faculty of Colombo.

The seniors say that the first years should respect seniority, but, are they doing it in the first place? Are we training a set of terrorists in the universities?

I feel what is necessary is to have counseling sessions for the student leaders who initiate these things and ask them to do something worthwhile to enhance their career or do a part-time job (tuition, online-jobs) so that they can support their parents economically rather than go running behind freshers and tormenting them with their harsh vocabulary.

Here are some sites that the students can use so that their “Tharuna Javaya” can be productive.

For part time work:
https://www.upwork.com/
https://www.fiverr.com/

For free online courses:
https://www.coursera.org/
https://www.edx.org/

Hope the university authorities will be able to maintain an environment conducive to study for the freshers in the future.

Mrs. Anne Perera
Gampana

I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10,11)

What Cricket for the unsportsman!

Well, sportsmanship qualities are, to play fair; respect opponents and to accept the outcome with the sporting spirit of the game

However, Friday March 16, will be remembered forever as a sad ‘Black Friday’ for Cricket. Some unsporting elements spoiled the gentleman’s game by their unruly behaviour and misconduct in public. It is a well-known fact that donkeys never drink fresh, clean water; instead their habit is to jump about on water and make it muddy before drinking.

Similarly, we saw a war of sorts from some visiting Bangladeshi players and their hosts, provoking their opponents.

Well, umpires are also human and liable for human errors. That is why they seek the assistance of the Third Umpire with modern technology; to solve uncertainties.

However, the unruly behaviour, to the extent of smashing the entrance door of the dressing room by the Bangaladeshi team is unacceptable.

Sorry to say, they certainly acted like “mad donkeys” forgetting their responsibilities in upholding the spirit of cricket, especially as guests of honour.

Finally, towards the end of the Nidahas Trophy curtain raiser, in the finals, they were punished by nature to lose the much expected win, to India.

Scientific approach of faith

The Gospel reading on Sunday, April 8 was on St. Thomas’ conflict between science and true faith when the rest of the apostles as a congregation were engaged in praise and worship of our Lord after His resurrection - the focal point of Christian faith. This happened in the absence of St. Thomas, whose faith of the Risen Christ was fading away. Thomas insisted on a scientific approach in order to believe this greatest of all miracles.

In fact to prove something, as per the basic rules of science, in order to come to a conclusion, one must perform an experiment with control, experiment impartially and thoroughly observe, prior to the inference; as an unchallenging proof of the scientific fact.

However, St. Thomas was an extraordinary person when compared with the rest of the apostles. According to Pope Francis, “All must be free to express concern.” So, St. Thomas would have followed this principle in his days. Anyway, as per the golden words of Elbert-Hubbard, “One machine can do the work of 50 ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man”.

When considering all these with the Almighty God and His existence as a sustainable supernatural Creator of the Universe; St. Thomas seems to be an ordinary man with a scientific approach to any situation.

Well, Pope Francis also told, “Healing is the triumph of good over evil.” Similarly, St. Thomas’ conflict vanished with true faith; which reminds me of the words of the chorus of the famous Sinhala hymn, that was sung on Sunday at the end of the Holy Mass: “Don’t let the light of the lamp of faith to extinguish”
On Monday or Thursday of the Holy week, the college of priests of every diocese all over the world performs the Blessing of Holy Oils. Within this ceremony  the priests renew their personal vows/promises given on the day of their ordination. It symbolizes the communion among priests, communion with the Bishop of the Diocese and also with Holy Mother the Church. Above all it is the reminder of the priests' personal commitment to God Almighty, who called anointed and ordained them, the weak human beings, to be the "Shepherds after his own heart."

All the servants of the Church are instruments through whom God continues the mission of Jesus Christ, in the world today. It is the work of "making disciples of all nations." What does it mean to "make disciples of all nations?" Since the first disciples and apostles heeded Jesus' command and went about preaching the Good News, the faith in the living creator God and the hope for the eternal life, the Good Shepherd and the Lord of the sheep goes and finds the lost one, even if it means going into a bush, fallen into a ditch or followed a wrong shepherd. There will be sheep that go astray due to their own weaknesses; they leave their flock and go into the desert and go after the missing one till he found it?" (Mt. 18:12-14). That is how we [priests] have to see ourselves: poised between our utter shame and our sublime dignity. Dirty, impure, mean and selfish, yet at the same time, with feet of clay, [we] treat for Priests, on June 2, 2016.

The Shadow of the Servant Shepherd

That is why that in every Catholic's life there was and will be a priest who nourishes and shows him/her the way to true happiness in this world and the sure way to heaven. Because the life of a priest is spent for God and his people. The triple exhortation, “Peter do you love me, then tend my sheep” (Jn. 21:15-17) is the spiritual motivation of the life of a priest.

A Servant: Weak yet made Strong

Every priest chosen from among men to be a servant in the Church and anointed by the Lord is an ordinary, weak human being. He also offers sacrifice for the forgiveness of his own sins. Like the Good Shepherd, the Lord will chip away a lot of unwanted "marble" in giving shape and figure to a priest to bring about the true replica of the Lord Himself.

That is how we [priests] have to see ourselves: poised between our utter shame and our sublime dignity. Dirty, impure, mean and selfish, yet at the same time, with feet of clay, [we] treat for Priests, on June 2, 2016.

This dignity given by the Lord to a priest de- mands that he will always be in "a frame of mind and soul" to know and do the will of his Lord who called and not his own will. "God chooses the weak things of the world to confound the strong" (1 Cor 1:27). A aware of his own weakness therefore, the priest has to take upon himself the work of Christ in humility and do what is pleasing to God. 

Prophetic image of the Good Shepherd Sunday which is celebrated in the Catholic Church on March 28, 2013. The precious oil which anoints the head of Aaron does more than sanctify; it endows the one who receives it with a holiness which flows down to "the edges". The Lord will say this clearly: "the anointing is meant for the poor, prisoners and the sick, for those who are sorrows and among..."
The reign of Pope John the XXIII was barely five years long from 1958-1963. He was a jovial, hardworking man who would have made an excellent parish priest in a small country town or a Bishop in a small Italian diocese. This large hearted, pastorally bent and smiling Pope had a vision. The future of Christianity would not have been the same if he had not been this great man.

It was the closest the instigator of the Second Vatican Council which brought in sweeping changes to the traditional Catholic Church. What Pope John the XXIII initiated was carried through by Pope Paul the VI (1963-1978). The deliberations and the new changes adopted by the Council Fathers were gradually introduced in the Catholic Church. Our late Cardinal Thomas Benjamin Cooray OMI (the Servant of God) had the privilege of participating in these sessions. He was one of the Second Vatican Council and contributing his share for its successful completion. We were still Seminarians studying for the priesthood when the Council sessions were on.

Latin was the official language of the Church at that time. Some of the subjects of our curriculum were in Latin. We had no other alternative than to study in Latin. Subjects like major logic, minor logic, cosmology were lectured in Latin. On the other hand the liturgy too was conducted in Latin. When we were altar servers in parishes the Mass was said in Latin and we together with the choristers answered the prayers in Latin.

It is said that some council Fathers were of the opinion that the Holy Spirit was moving the Church for a better grace filled future. It was actually so, but a few dissident felt that the evil had crept into the Church affairs to destroy the good old traditions of the Church. But on the whole the Council Fathers were triumphant in their endeavours to make the changes to suit the modern times.

We as seminarians studying for the priesthood felt the changes taking place gradually. When we entered the major seminary we were adorled with a clerical garb. When we went on a trip we had to wear the robes. As we reached the first year theology changes in dress came into effect. When we attended lectures we were permitted to wear the civil dress. Even the members walked down in Ampitiya town in civil and some people in the area were a little embarrased and critical.

When the Church authorities instructed the parish priests to switch on to the vernacular, the parishioners were disturbed and they thought that the Catholic Church was treading on a wrong footing. The parish priests had a lot of hardships in convincing the people about the real nature of liturgical changes. It was a herculean task for the parish priests to educate their flocks and accommodate them in the new transition. In the new format the celebrant had to face the congregation when he offered Mass. Some priests were nervous to face the people at the beginning, but eventually they overcame that difficulty.

When Rev Fr Joseph Perera (the Senior) who entered heavenly glory last year was the Parish Priest of Palangaturu, he started saying Mass in Sinhala and the Tamil congregation began to say their prayers in the Tamil language as is to substitute the Sinhala prayers. There was commotion in the church till the service came to an end. Rev Fr. Joseph Perera who always promoted peace and harmony among the parishioners decided to have a Mass in Tamil on every Sunday to avoid clashes between Sinhala and Tamil speaking parishioners.

The young clergy of today do not know the difficulties the old priests had to go through during the transition period. Although Latin was replaced by vernacular languages, the sweet Latin melodies of the past still keep on lingering in our hearts and ears. It is really commendable that once a year or so His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith strives to uphold the Latin Tradition by way of Latin Mass with sweet sounding Latin hymns sung by a famous choir at St. Lucia’s Cathedral.

It is with great loyalty and obedience I remember the late Cardinal His Eminence Thomas Benjamin Cooray OMI (the Servant of God) who with a farsighted vision contributed immensely to implement the new trends and changes in liturgy and other spheres to make the Sri Lankan Catholic Church more vibrant and pastoral. We should also commit to memory those Bishops and Rev Fathers who using their musical talents have composed and made sweet melodies for church singing. The late Bishop Edmund Perisir, OMI, the late Rev Fr. Marcelline Jayakody OMI, the late Rev Fr Joseph Cabraal, the late Rev Fr. Cecil Kumara, Rev Fr Moses Perera, Rev Fr. Bensiri Perera were some pioneers in the field of Catholic sacred music. The late Mr J.K.S. Perera and the late Mr Peter Mark are some lay Catholic musicians who too contributed in their own way to make our religious services more meaningful. There are also some budding musicians among the young Catholic clergy who will definitely demonstrate their musical prowess in composing new hymns for future generations. May those who have gone before us rest in peace.

The Pastoral letter of the Archbishop declares that the Year of the Good Shepherd intends to lay the foundation for a renewal in the Archdiocese especially of our shepherding mission. Let us keep that thought in our minds.

Rev. Fr. Athanasius Samarasinghe

A family of five Religious Shepherds

By Padminie Nanayakkara

How fortunate we are to hear of a family of thirteen, out of which five are female nuns. All five are called by God, to walk along the royal road of the cross.

To get the following information I met Rev. Sister Flavia, who is presently at Holy Family Convent, Wennappuwa. Now she spends eve of her life in ‘Shantha Samaya’ institute in the same convent. There she recalled her sweet memories of their past. She said that everyday all the family members get together in front of the family statue at home to pray. Our mother and father taught us to help the poor and needy. My father’s sisters were religious nuns. They encouraged us to become nuns. We were in the church choir, thus we were in a Catholic environment.

My father cried when I and my sister asked the consent to be nuns, but my mother agreed. She under - stood that it was a blessing given by God. Pope was giving in the nunnerly was not that easy. We had to change our lives according to the rules of the order. Poverty, humility, chastity are our promises. The five religious nuns are Rev. Sisters, Flavia, Jenma, Francois, Angel Gardian and Winifreda.

The eldest in the family is Rev. Sister Flavia, who served in different parts of the island and now is at ‘Shantha Samaya’, Wennappuwa. Before retirement she was at Holy Family Convent, Kirimitiyagala. Teaching, looking after the destitute children, counselling families are their services.

A family of sisters, serving the vineyard of the Lord.

A fisherman was hauling his net from his small boat on the shore. Enmeshed in the net a few big fish were jiggling. A man stopped by and complimented the fisherman on his catch.

“How long did it take you to catch them?”

“Only a little while,” the fisherman replied.

“Why don’t you stay out longer and catch more fish?”

“I have enough to support my family’s immediate needs.”

“What do you do with the rest of your time?”

“Well, I read a little, rest a little, play with my children, take a walk with my wife, sleep a little more, stroll into the town and play guitar with my friends,” replied the fisherman.

The man scoffed: “I have a Masters Degree in Business Management. I think I can help you to improve your situation. Would you like some advice?”

“Go ahead,” said the fisherman humbly.

“...you should spend more time fishing, make more money and buy a bigger boat. With the proceeds you can buy several boats. Eventually you would have a fleet of fishing boats. You can start your own canning factory and do the processing and distribution. Then you can leave this small fishing village and move to a bigger city...As the owner of a big company you can have a large comfortable house with pool vehicles and you can expand your enterprise.”

“But, how long will all this take?” asked the fisherman.

“Around 10 years.”

“What happens after that?”

The man laughed and said: “Can’t you imagine? You can become richer and richer, make millions, become popular as a magnate and get respect from the public...”

“Then what?”

The man said slowly, “Then you could do whatever you like. Have holidays on a beach, where you would sleep late, fish a little, play with your kids, take a walk with your wife, stroll to the village in the evenings, sip a beer and invite your friends to play your guitar and sing...what a fabulous life you can have!”

“What should I become a multi-millionaire and spend more than 10 years to have all what you said?...I already have all what you said right now and I believe I am much happier than most of the tycoons and MBA holders...”

Crystal clear message! Isn’t it?

Money, power or high qualifications cannot decide our happiness. Happiness has nothing to do with climbing up the ladder of the so called ‘success’.

It is not the latitude or the altitude, but our attitude towards what we have around us that makes us happy or miserable. Happiness has nothing to do with the net you are pulling in the sea...It is in your wife/husband, your children, your home, your garden, your guitar, your books, the moon, the breeze and the flowers and the chirps of birds. Don’t be so “intelligent” to exchange your present day simple happiness with an ‘educated and rich happiness’ of a bleak future.

Michael Angelo Fernando
Girls, come and help us! Boys, come and help us!

pray for others, and bring them to Christ.

the strength to talk about Jesus, and tell others and
Holy Spirit, as we await for Him, that we will have
sheep to His sheepfold. Let us ask the Grace of the
massive plan of Our Father. That is, to bring more
too, my dear young builders have a part in this
in the Good Shepherd and no one will be lost. We
want anyone to be lost. The Holy Spirit empowers us
to bear witness to Jesus, so that people will believe
in the Love God has for us, and because of which we
are called to be the children of God. Through the
death of Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit Our
are called to be the children of God. Through the

Today is Vocations Sunday
PRAYERS FOR VOCATIONS

For one’s Vocation
Heavenly Father, I believe in your wisdom and love, I believe you created me for heaven, marked out for me the way to reach it and await me there to give me the reward of the faithful servant. Give me light and show me the way. Grant me the strength to follow it generously. I beg this of you, through Jesus Christ, your Son and through Mary, my Queen and Mother, Amen.

To Our Lady of Vocations
Most Holy Virgin, who without hesitation offered yourself to the Almighty for the carrying out of His plan of salvation, pour trust into the hearts of young people, so that there may always be zealous pastors who are able to guide the Christian people on the way of life and consecrated souls who may know how to witness in chastity, poverty and obedience to the freeing presence of your Risen Son. Amen.

Pope Saint John Paul II

My Best Friend
My best friend is Roy. He is very tall. He has short hair. He is nine years old. He lives in Lotus Lane. His favourite colour is red. His favourite food is hoppers. He is very tall.

H. Nirmala Senesh Seneth
Grade 4
St. Anthony's Maha Vidyalaya, Alagallawa

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK
Me: Jesus... you are in the way.
Jesus: No, I am the way.

Good Shepherd Word Find
FOCONERLM
SCATTERSGLA
FJTLYASNOTN
ACEOSWHWOLF
TSLHEDERDWEW
HUEAXIEMAO
ESSYRP1NVR
RULIFEESEK
SNOWDUSESS

Laughter is God's Blessing
MENTAL HOSPITAL
Patient: “Doctor, I think I am a dog.”
Doctor: “How long have you thought that you are a dog?”
Patient: “Ever since I was a pup.”

ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST - FEAST: 25TH APRIL

ST. MARK LIVED AT THE TIME OF JESUS. ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF JESUS, HE WAS A COUSIN OF ST. BARNABAS, AN APOSTLE. MARK IS CALLED AN EVANGELIST BECAUSE HE WROTE ONE OF THE FOUR GOSPELS. MARK’S GOSPEL IS SHORT, BUT IT GIVES MANY LITTLE DETAILS THAT ARE NOT IN THE OTHER GOSPELS.

WHILE STILL YOUNG, MARK WENT WITH THE TWO GREAT SAINTS, PAUL AND BARNABAS, AS MISSIONARIES TO BRING THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS TO CYPRUS AND OTHER NEW LANDS. BEFORE THE JOURNEY WAS OVER, THOUGH MARK HAD AN ARGUMENT WITH ST. PAUL AND IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO JERUSALEM. PAUL AND MARK LATER MADE PEACE WITH EACH OTHER. IN FACT, PAUL WROTE FROM PRISON IN ROME THAT MARK CAME TO CHEER AND HELP HIM. MARK ALSO BECAME A BELIEVED DISCIPLE AND WAS LIKE A SON TO ST. PETER, THE FIRST PAPA. ST. MARK WAS MADE A BISHOP AND SENT TO EGYPT, AEGYPT. THERE MANY PEOPLES WHO HEARD HIM PREACH BECAME CHRISTIANS. HE WORKED HARD TO SPREAD LOVE FOR JESUS AND HIS CHURCH AND FOUND THE FIRST FAMOUS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL IN ALEXANDRIA. THE HE WENT THROUGH LONG AND PAINFUL SUFFERINGS BEFORE HE DIED A MARTYR FOR HIS FAITH. ST. MARK’S RELICS WERE BROUGHT TO VENICE, ITALY. HE IS THE PATRON SAINT OF THAT FAMOUS CITY. PEOPLE GO TO THE BEAUTIFUL BASILICA OF ST. MARK TO HONOUR HIM AND TO PRAY TO HIM.

Reflection: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.” (MARK 16:15)

HOLY SPIRIT INTERACTIVE

COLOUR THE PICTURE

What is your vocation?

“This is because he works for pay and has no concern for the sheep” (John 10:13)
First Reading: Acts.4: 8-12.

Peter tells the rulers and the elders that all miracles and good deeds that are performed by them are done in the name of the Risen Lord. And salvation is found only in Jesus Christ and in no one else.

Second Reading. 1 Jn. 3: 1-2

St. John speaks of God’s infinite love and goodness. Because of this goodness and love we are allowed to be children of God. And when he appears we shall see Him as He is and we shall be like Him.


Jesus is presented to us as the Good Shepherd. He is the Shepherd who really loves His sheep and His love goes beyond His flock. He even will lay down His life for His flock.

Reflection.

We are called upon to imitate, in our lives, the goodness that is found in God. And the closest example is found in the Risen Lord. We are therefore called to follow the example of the Risen Lord in order that we too would out of goodness and love serve the community. God is good. Christ lived in this goodness and we are called upon to imitate this goodness.

In the First Reading St. Peter performs many good deeds. He has cured a cripple but he is all out to witness that these good deeds are a result of the goodness of the Risen Lord. Therefore he wants all his followers to see the goodness of God and he wants them to imitate it in their lives.

In the Second Reading St. John tries to show the goodness of God in the salvation of mankind. He tries to show us how God out of goodness and love allows us to become children of God. In this manner we share in the same Sonship, therefore, in the brotherhood of Christ Jesus. And when He appears we will be allowed to be like Him and we shall be allowed to see Him as He is. All these will be done out of goodness and love. Therefore whoever imitates this goodness and love in his life will be given the opportunity to experience all these in the Gospel too. Jesus is presented to us as love. The best example of the love of Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd is always concerned about His flock. He will not run away when there is a danger either to His life or to His flock. His concern is the total flock and not a chosen group. He is concerned about the good as well as the black sheep.

He is concerned about the obedient as well as the disobedient. He is concerned about the sinner as well as the sinful. He will feed and look after them all alike so that He could lead all of them to the final goal. God is what we refer when we refer to Jesus as the true Good Shepherd is that He is not only concerned about His flock but He is also concerned about the sheep that are not of this fold but are His. Therefore, He will add them to the flock and He out of goodness and love will bring back the ones that are lost in sin.

In the light of the Good Shepherd image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd the Church is also called to be the Good Shepherd. But, this means not only do we need to love the good but also the bad. The Good Shepherd is concerned about the good as well as the black sheep. He is not only concerned about the sheep that are in the flock but He is also concerned about the sheep that are not in the flock. He is the Shepherd who really loves His sheep and He is concerned about all the sheep in His flock.

Liturgy. We too make a special donation to sustain these vocations in seminaries, the seed-beds. We expect, after this continuous and generous spiritual and material patronage, that we shall be blessed to see shepherds, moulded after God’s own heart, working in our verdant pastures. We would like to see these God-sent shepherds gathering His scattered children – the believers dispersed in various Christian categories, the people of good will following the World Religions and the non-believers advocating various philosophical ideologies – so that “there will be one flock, one shepherd”, for, as St. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, professed boldly before the interrogating Sanhedrin, “There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved” (Acts 4,12). Jesus, who spoke in the divine language of “I am” and is endowed with the divine prerogatives, is the “good shepherd” [in Johannine perception] and “saviour,” “cornerstone,” “healer” and “Christ,” whom God raised from the dead [in the bold Petrine proclamation].

Reflection.

As we celebrate the Easter Season let us not fail to imitate the goodness of God that is found in our salvation which was achieved by Jesus Christ with the Resurrection.

Aid Story 1. After a particularly brilliant concert Beethoven (1770-1827) was in the center of congratulating friends and admirers, who praised his piano magic. One unusually enthusiastic woman exclaimed:

“Oh, sir, if God had only given me that gift of genius!”

“It is not genius, madam,” replied Beethoven. “Nor magic.”

“All you have to do is practice on your piano eight hours a day for forty years and you’ll be as good as I am.”

Aid Story 2.

One day the Zookeeper noticed that the monkey was reading two books. The Bible and Darwin’s; “The Origin of the Species.” In surprise, he asked the monkey. “Why are you reading both those books?”

“Well,” said the monkey, “I just want to know if I was my Brother’s keeper or my keeper’s brother.”

Liturgy: Even God wanted Moses to make an image of a BRONZE SERPENT (Num.21:8-9). It is after giving the 10 Commandments.

Rev. Fr. Ciswan De Croos

Liturgical Calendar Year B

22nd April - 29th April 2018

Sun: Fourth Sunday of Easter World day of Prayer for Vocations (Vocations Sunday)

Acts: 4: 8-12; 1 Jn. 3: 1-2; Jn. 10: 11-18

Mon: Memorials of St. George, Martyr & St. Adalbert, Bishop & Martyr

Acts: 11: 1-18; Jn. 1: 10

Tue: Memorial of St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, Priest & Martyr

Acts: 11: 19-26; Jn. 16: 23-30

Wed: Feast of St. Mark, Evangelist [1 Pt. 5: 8b-14; Mk. 15: 15-20


Sat: Memorials of St. Peter Chanel, Priest & Martyr and St. Louis Mary de Grignon de Montfort, Priest


Sun: Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts: 9: 26-31; 1 Jn. 3: 18-24; Jn. 15: 1-8

By Rev. Fr. Don Anton Saman Hettiarachchi

1. On this Fourth Sunday of Easter, the sacred Liturgy of the Word invites us to listen to a portion of the Good Shepherd Discourse in John. The Discourse continues the attack on the Pharisees in the preceding episode, the healing of the man born blind. Hence the language in today’s Gospel Reading is highly allegorical and the Discourse serves as a midrash, a commentary on John 9.

2. In the days of the Old Testament, people experienced God as the Good Shepherd. This experience (Shepherd motif) permeates the entire Hebrew Scripture.

3. Now in times of the New Testament, Jesus is the ‘Good Shepherd’. He is ‘good’ in contrast to the bad shepherd(s) of Israel, the religious leaders of the Judaism of the day like the Pharisees.

Jesus thus cures the man born blind; the Good Shepherd cares for His sheep. Consequently, the Pharisees excommunicate the cured blind man, ‘the hired hands’, ‘thieves’ and ‘robbers’ ill-treat the sheep, “for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone acknowledged him as the Messiah, he would be expelled from the synagogue” (9,12).

The cured man, who saw Jesus initially as ‘man, ‘prophet’ and ‘from God’, finally recognize Him as ‘Lord’, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshipped him (9,38); the sheep know (i.e. experience) their Shepherd. The cured man, who saw Jesus initially as a “man, ‘prophet’ and ‘from God’, finally recognize Him as ‘Lord’, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshipped him (9,38); the sheep know (i.e. experience) their Shepherd.

4. Does Jesus the Good Shepherd care only for the sheep, gathered in the sheepfold, the low stone wall which is open to the sky? He seems to look around and find some more sheepfolds or sheep scattered in the area. Hence He sincerely wishes, “I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

Who could these “other sheep” be? Historically they could be the Gentiles or else, the Apostolic Christians being at odds with the Christian Community of the Beloved Disciple.

Not only they who were or are, Jesus sincerely wishes “one flock, one shepherd.” He envisages unity of His flock, the Church, through reconciliation.

5. It is in this biblical context that we celebrate ecumenically the ‘Vocations Sunday’. We offer special prayers today for priestly and religious vocations during the sacred
Bergoglio the Pastor Bonus

But P is also for pastor or, in Italian, flock, combing, smoothing. Why? Because in the image in which Bergoglio is completely immersed and physically immersed is the biblical image of the Good Shepherd who goes in search of the single lost sheep and leaves the ninety-nine who are in the sheepfold. He once said that parish priests must have the smell of the sheep (exactly sheep-smeul) because when they take the wounded, lost, tired animals on their shoulders, they become impregnated with their odor, and so it must be! He further said, he warned parish priests and parishes that they must not waste time combing the sheep, putting curlers into their hair (that is exactly what he said). This means that parish priests should not only concern themselves with guarding the faithful whose trust seems pleased to stay or to who have the good fortune to remain in the sheepfold. Combining the sheep’s wool takes up time needed for searching for those sheep that are in danger.

When he speaks about parishes, Bergoglio demonstrates all of his pastoral understanding. According to a sociological study which ended up on the Archbishop of Buenos Aires’ desk, the area of influence of a parish in an area of the city generally extends up to 600 meters from the church, a block marking the National Seminary,” his Lordship reminisced.

In his life journey, Fr. Ruben journeyed in obedience to and in accordance with the plan of God. He had this communion with the Lord, which even death cannot destroy.

From Pg. 11 Good Shepherd

The Lord sacrificed His divinity to become a man in order to save all mankind. In the same way we have to go out of our way to have institutions to bring back the lost sheep. It is not the right quality of a Good Shepherd to neglect the lost, simply because we have lost only one and there are ninety nine with us.

Creator Spirited, Good Shepherd.

In: 16. “And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold and I must lead them too. They too will listen to my voice and there will be only one flock, one shepherd.”

It is a misunderstanding that if you work like a fixed deposit in a parish or an institution that everything is perfect. But as people of the creator God we have a responsibility and we are accountable for the other lost sheep. We cannot and should not neglect these sheep that need the care of the church, love, service, concern, protection and even salvation. Then there are the other sheep that will be lost sheep if the shepherds closest to their lives do not look after, take care or be there for them.

From Pg. 11 Good Shepherd

We have to look for children who need their catechism; stay with them. You must live in their midst.

For the students who were future Jesuits priests, one order. Having taught in several schools in different parts of the island, he migrated to Bangalore and served in different parts of the island, she migrated to Bangalore and served in different parts of the island, she became a teacher and as a principal. She also worked at the Archbishop’s House, Colombo and at Good Shepherd Convent, Hapugoda. Now she is at the Good Shepherd Convent, Welisewa.

The youngest in the family is Rev. Sister Winifreda. She served at Good Shepherd Convents in Nagarkot and in Dambadulla in the diocese of Matale. She is at Sacred Heart Convent, Wattala. As a Good Shepherd nun, she is rendering a great service to unmarried mothers, saving the lives of the lost sheep of the families and parishes. Teaching the novices, preparation of adults for Baptism is done by her. Nourishing the sheep of Jesus is indeed a blessing.

The day these five girls joined the nunnery, their father and mother cried, but after seeing their service in God, they proudly of them. We wish them long life, good health and a fruitful ministry in the Lord’s vineyard.

“… just as the Father knows me and I know the Father and I will lay down my life for the sheep” (John 10,15)
Dream of Easter

He was a close relative of my husband. He had been a reputed actor, script writer, director, composer and singer in Sinhala films during the late 1940s. Beyond all, he was a devoted Catholic. But later he fell into a severe temptation and gave up his religion.

It was a pathetic situation to his close relations, especially to my husband. He was actually a grand uncle to us. When we were occupying one of the flats in the Maligawatta Housing Complex from 1987-1994, we used to have friendly discussions and sometimes arguments on various topics including religion, politics, social and geographical issues. Among them what interested us was Darwin’s theory of evolution. We respected him for his broad outlook and artistic talents. The only weak point he had was criticizing the Holy Bible and some religious matters.

We used to argue on many topics including Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection. In his opinion Jesus did not die on the Cross. His disciples had stolen Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection. In his opinion we used to have friendly discussions and sometimes arguments on various topics including religion, politics, social and geographical issues. Among them what interested us was Darwin’s theory of evolution. We respected him for his broad outlook and artistic talents. The only weak point he had was criticizing the Holy Bible and some religious matters.

I pause to ponder: Why hangs He there? Reflect excruciating pain, A spear-thrust causes a trickle once again A mangled body, a broken frame, A crown of thorns, as droplets trickle A mangled body, a broken frame, A crown of thorns, as droplets trickle

April 22, 2018

Reflections on the Cross

I looked upon Christ on the Cross
A mangled body, a broken frame,
This God-man subject to abject shame.
A crown of thorns, as droplets trickle
Of blood, sweat and tears co-mingled
A spear-thrust causes a trickle once again
As straining ribs and hanging arms
Reflect excruciating pain,
I pause to ponder; Why hangs He there?
Not Pilate, not the maddened mob, not even Judas
Propelled him there.
’twas my sins and mine alone that nailed Him to the tree
That tree of salvation that redeemed me.
And yet what a poor return I make to thee
I humbly beseech; Oh Lord I grope, I seek
The spirit indeed is willing Lord
But the flesh is weak.

Jeanette Cabraal

Our Blessed Mother Mary

Our Blessed Mother Mary, has poured on us blessings,
More than, we can remember.
She has watched, over us everyday,
More than, we can remember.
Our Blessed Mother Mary, has poured on us blessings,
More than, we can remember.
Our Blessed Mother Mary, finds in our hearts a place,
She has watched, over us everyday,
More than, we can remember.
Our Blessed Mother Mary, has poured on us blessings,
Even if we sever, from each other,
Though we live, in sin and folly
Our Blessed Mother Mary, will always be with us,
As straining ribs and hanging arms
Reflect excruciating pain,
I pause to ponder; Why hangs He there?
Not Pilate, not the maddened mob, not even Judas
Propelled him there.
’twas my sins and mine alone that nailed Him to the tree
That tree of salvation that redeemed me.
And yet what a poor return I make to thee
I humbly beseech; Oh Lord I grope, I seek
The spirit indeed is willing Lord
But the flesh is weak.

J. A. Dulcie Perera

SOUVENIRS

For me the burnished-golden earth-
The winding stream and sea,
The green meadow and violet turf,
And tree-topped hill and lee.

For me the blue-robed serene sky,
And drifting fleecy cloud,
The golden star and silver moon,
All voice Thy praise aloud!

The radiance of the rising sun-
The opaque rainbow hue-
The sunset in a tropic isle,
The gems of sparkling dew.

The balmy breeze and graceful palm,
The thrill of thunderstorm
Alluring blossoms everywhere,
In these I trace Thy form.

The wonder of the winged bird
Flashing its live splendour
The shy-eyed deer, the elephant
Mired in treach’rous undergound
Such beauty, wonder and delight
Are souvenirs galore,
Speaking Thy presence, Creator,
Though Thou art seen no more!

Emilda S. Douglas

Saint Joseph

Dear Saint Joseph gentle and kind
O make, O make us good and mild.
Make us always happiness find
In loving God and all mankind.

Dear St. Joseph gentle and pure,
Make us all our suffering endure.
And through thy most loving care
All our hearts to thyself allure.

Dear St. Joseph O Father dear,
Please listen to our loving prayer.
To Jesus all our petition bear,
And keep us always free from care.

Dear St. Joseph just and loving
Graces and blessings from Jesus bring
At the hour of our-death help us to sing
Praises of Jesus Christ our King.

Rita Ameresekera

“...and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd” (John 10,16)”

April 22, 2018
Junior Legion of Mary members, Kerawalapitiya

Members of the Junior Legion of Mary of St. Joseph’s Church Kerawalapitiya are seen in a group photograph with Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Mal Warnasanta and Mrs. Enith de Silva, a Senior member of the Legion.

Nihal Pinto

Excellence at GCE O/L Examination

Picture shows students of Holy Family Convent, Kalutara who sat for the G.C.E. O/Level Examination last year and had succeeded with 9 A’s.

Suneth Fernando

Talk on ‘Youth and the use of Social Media’

Mr. Kumara Nayanajith of the Gnanartha Pradeepaya gave a talk on ‘Youth and the use of social media’ as part of series of preparatory talks for students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Kattimahana Parish in the Kurunegala diocese.

The programme was conducted under the guidance of the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Jerome Perera.

Harshini Sanjeewani

Holy Childhood animators retreat

Fifty seven animators of the Holy Childhood Movement in Chilaw participated in a Lenten Retreat last month at the Mangala Eliya Parish.

The Retreat was led by Parish Priest, Rahulkkana, Rev. Fr. Roshan Tissera (TOR) and organised by Rev. Fr. Milan Susanthi Suyahalapitiya, Director Holy Childhood, Chilaw.

K. Vasana Jayaruwan

St. Sebastian's College, Kandana emerge Champions

At the Sports Festival organised by the Ja-ela Educational Zone, St. Sebastian’s College, Kandana emerged winners. The event held at De Mazenod College Grounds, Kandana had 45 schools participating. Picture shows the St. Sebastian’s College athletic team in a group photograph with the Principal, Rev. Fr. Sudath Hemantha Fernando, Sports Coordinators and coaches.

Benjamin Kirihetti

Investiture of Prefects at St. Anne’s College, Kurunegala

The Investiture of the new batch of School Prefects for 2018 was held recently at St. Anne’s College, Kurunegala under the patronage of Maj. Gen. D. A. Ranaraja Ranawaka, Liaison Officer to the Secretary of Defence at the Ministry of Defence and a past pupil of the College. He is seen here being accompanied by the Principal, Rev. Bro. A. E. Tarcisius, and the Guests of Honour to the venue.

Ainslie Joseph

St. Anthony’s College, Kadalana, Sports Meet

The Sports Meet of St. Anthony’s College, Kadalana, Moratuwa was held recently at the College Grounds.

The Chief Guest on the occasion was Parish Priest, Kadalana, Rev. Fr. Sumith Roshan Rodrigo.

Surath de Silva

“This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again” (John 10:17)
Fill in the blanks: 9,2-8

"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and five other disciples, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was there alone with them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them two men in glory, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, \'Look, we have everything here, let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for me, and one for him.\' But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a cloud, and said, \'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for this child conceived is from the Holy Ghost.\' Then Joseph awoke from his sleep and said, \'Look, the 26th day shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him 27………………… which means, \'God is with us\' (1,23)"

Gospel according to Matthew

15. Write by memory Matthew 2,16-17.
17. Write by memory Matthew 18,2-4.

Fill in the blanks: 10,31-32

\"Write by memory Matthew 18,2-4.\"

Gospel according to Mark

18. Write by memory Mark 1,1-12.
20. Write by memory Mark 5,3-9.

Fill in the blanks: 11,31-32

\"Write by memory Mark 5,31-32.\"

Gospel according to Luke


Fill in the blanks: 12,11-12

\"Write by memory Luke 1,50-52.\"

Questions

General Introduction to the Holy Gospels

1. From which Greek word is the modern English word, \'Gospel\', derived?
2. Name the Synoptic Gospels.
3. Which is the oldest of the Gospels according to scholarly consensus?

Gospel according to Matthew

4. Write by memory Mark 10,5-8.

Fill in the blanks: 9,2-8

\"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and 5………………… and 6…………………, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was 7………………… before them, and his clothes became dazzling 8…………………, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them 9………………… with 10………………… who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, 11…………………, it is good for us to be here; let us make three 12………………… \" He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 13…………………\"

Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only 14………………….

Gospel according to Mark

15. Write by memory Matthew 2,16-17.
17. Write by memory Matthew 18,2-4.

Fill in the blanks: 10,31-32

\"Write by memory Matthew 5,31-32.\"

Gospel according to Luke


Fill in the blanks: 4,1-13

\"Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the 30………………… and was led by the Spirit in the 31…………………, where for 32………………… days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The 33………………… said to him, \'If you are the 34………………… command this stone to become a loaf of bread.\' Jesus answered him, \'It is written, \'one does not live by bread alone.\'\' Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world, and the devil said to him, \'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.\' Jesus answered him, \'It is written, \'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.\'\' Then the devil took him to 36…………………, and placed him on the pinnacle of the 37…………………, saying to him, \'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, \'He will command his 38………………… concerning you, to protect you;\' and \'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.\' Jesus answered him, \'It is said, \'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.\'\' When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an 39…………………\"

Gospel according to John

40. Write by memory John 3,16-17.

Fill in the blanks: 2,1-12

\"On the third day there was a wedding in 41………………… of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his 42………………… had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, \'They have no wine.\' And Jesus said to her, 43…………………, what concern is that to you and to me? My 44………………… has not yet come.\' His mother said to the 45…………………, \'Do whatever he tells you.\' Now standing there were 46………………… stone water jars for the Jewish rites of 47…………………, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, \'Fill the jars with water.\' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, \'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.\' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the 48………………… and said to him, \'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.\' Jesus did this, the 49………………… of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. After this he went down to 50………………… with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.\"

Responses

1. Evangeline
2. Matthias, Mark and Luke
3. Mark
4. \"But Jesus said to them, \'Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation, \'God made them male and female.\' For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.\' So they are no longer two, but one flesh.\" 5. John
6. John
7. transfigured
8. white
9. Elijah
10. Moses
11. Rabbi
12. dwellings
13. \"This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him.\"
14. Jesus
15. \"When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah\" 16. \"It was also said, \'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.\'\" But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman committing adultery\" 17. \"He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, \'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.\"
18. Rahab
19. Ruth
20. Uriah
21. Jacob
22. Joseph
23. Abraham
24. Babylon
25. Holy Spirit
26. Virgin
27. Emmanuel
28. \"His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has filled the hungry with good things, and has sent the rich empty away. He has helped his servant David, \'as he promised to his father Jacob\'.\"
29. \"Jesus answered, \'You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.\' While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father\" 30. Jordan
31. wilderness
32. forty
33. devil
34. Son of God
35. kingdoms
36. Jerusalem
37. temple
38. angels
39. opportune time
40. \"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.\"
41. Cana
42. disciples
43. Woman
44. hour
45. servants
46. six
47. purification
48. bridegroom
49. first
50. Capernaum

(Continued next week)
Practise the role play with correct stress and intonation.

Sir: Good Morning! Sumaga. I wish you a happy new year.
Sumaga: Good Morning! Sir. Wish you the same. What are we going to learn today?
Sir: Well. Today, let's look at different aspects of English with fun and excitement.
Sumaga: Anything to do with vocabulary improvement.
Sir: Well. You can improve your vocabulary. You will also learn punctuation.
Sumaga: That's very good, Sir. What about giving us some very simple inspirational verses.
Sir: Anything to do with vocabulary improvement.
Sumaga: That's great.

Punctuation, Quotation and Disambiguation –

Quotation marks are important to tell the reader that someone is speaking but other punctuation is equally important in telling us how. Study the following punctuation marks and see how they are used in the sentences given

[] Bracket [ ] Parenthesis [ ] Square Brackets [ ] Virgin [ ] Exclamation Point [ ] Question Mark [ ] Single Quote Marks

[1]“I don’t believe you,” the detective growled.
[2]“I don’t believe you!” the detective returned his attention back to the stack of files on his desk.
[3]“I don’t believe you!” the detective roared.
[4]“How am I supposed to believe that?” he asked.
[5]Did he really say “I don’t believe you”?
[6]He said “I don’t believe you”; I could see the questioning in his eyes, though

Punctuation is powerful - An English professor wrote the words “A woman without her man is nothing.” and asked his students to punctuate it correctly.

All the males in the class wrote: “A woman without her man is nothing.” and Shifting the comma by just one place has completely changed the meaning of the sentence.

The inspector said, “The teacher is a fool.” “The inspector said the teacher is a fool.” (Here the inspector is called a fool)
Pardon, impossible, to be sent to Siberia Pardon, impossible to be sent to Siberia
Let us eat, daddy. Let us eat daddly.
Hang him, not let him free. Hang him not, let him free.
The criminal, says the judge, should be hanged. The criminal says, the judge should be hanged.

Riddle is a question or statement intentionally phrased so as to require ingenuity in ascertaining its answer of meaning. Find the answers to the following riddles.

(a) have a ring, but no hands. I used to be plugged into the wall but now I follow you everywhere. What am I? (b) I am black when clean and white when dirty. What am I? (c) What runs around a house but does not move? (d) Once you have it, you want to share it. Once you share it, you don’t have it. What is it? (e) A man is in his car. He sees three doors; a golden one, a diamond one and a silver one. Which door does he go through first?

Answers for the riddles- (a) [ A telephone] (b) [ A chalkboard] (c) [ a fence] (d) [ A secret] (e) [ his car door]

A synonym is a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase in the same language.

Look at synonyms for equivalence which is sameness or similarity


An antonym is a word that is opposite meaning of another. Learn antonyms for negation which is contradiction or denial


Study English pronunciation

Dearest creature in creation,
Study English pronunciation

Dear Readers,

This is our lesson 55. In this lesson let’s learn punctuation, quotation and disambiguation. Two funny poems to check our linguistic competence, two inspirational quotes and two words with different shades of synonyms and antonyms.

All free internet sources referred to, and the illustrations copied are duly acknowledged with much appreciation.

Noel Jayamanne

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“A have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again” (John 10:18)

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Ladies and Gentlemen, skinny and stout,
I’ll tell you a tale I know nothing about;
The admission is free so pay at the door;
Now pull up a chair and sit on the floor.
One bright day in the middle of the night,
Two dead boys get up to fight;
Back to back they faced each other,
Drew their swords and shot each other.

If you can correctly pronounce every word in this poem, you will be spiking English better than 90% of the native English speakers in the world

Dearest creature in creation,
Study English pronunciation
I will teach you in my verse

For your suggestions are welcome. Your comments are deeply appreciated. You can contact me on 2291540 or 0718004580 as I am in Sri Lanka now for any clarifications.
E-mail: noeljayamanne@yahoo.com

NJ
"We need a Church that is welcoming and merciful, which appreciates its roots and patrimony and which loves everyone, even those who are not following the perceived standards," the final document of a pre-synod gathering organised by the Vatican has said.

The document reflects the input of 305 young adults attending the meeting in Rome and some 15,000 young people who participated through Facebook groups online.

It was to be presented to Pope Francis at the end of Palm Sunday Mass and was to be used in drafting the working document for the Synod of Bishops on young people, faith and vocational discernment in October, said Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, secretary general of the synod.

With a frantic pace of life, thousands of life choices and proponents of different ideas and ideals battling for their attention, young people said what they want most from the Church is "attractive, coherent and authentic models," who will accompany them in their search for meaning and fulfillment. But, they said, "we need rational and critical explanations to complex issues – simplistic answers do not suffice."

Most of the young people meeting in Rome are very active in the Church and were named delegates to the meeting by their national bishops' conference or by the Catholic movements to which they belong. But the young adults in Rome and those in the Facebook groups recognised that like in society at large, they have different opinions on a variety of issues, including "contraception, abortion, homosexuality, cohabitation, marriage and how the priesthood is perceived in different realities in the Church."

Some, the document said, "may want the Church to change her teaching" or, at least, they would like "access to a better explanation and to more formation on these questions."

However, they said, even "young Catholics whose convictions are in conflict with official teaching still desire to be part of the Church."

The role of women in society and in the Church was another lively topic of discussion at the meeting, said Laphidil Twumasi, an immigrant from Ghana to Italy who helped present the document to the press.

For many young people today, the document said, the Church's treatment of women is an obstacle to their deciding to remain part of the Catholic community.