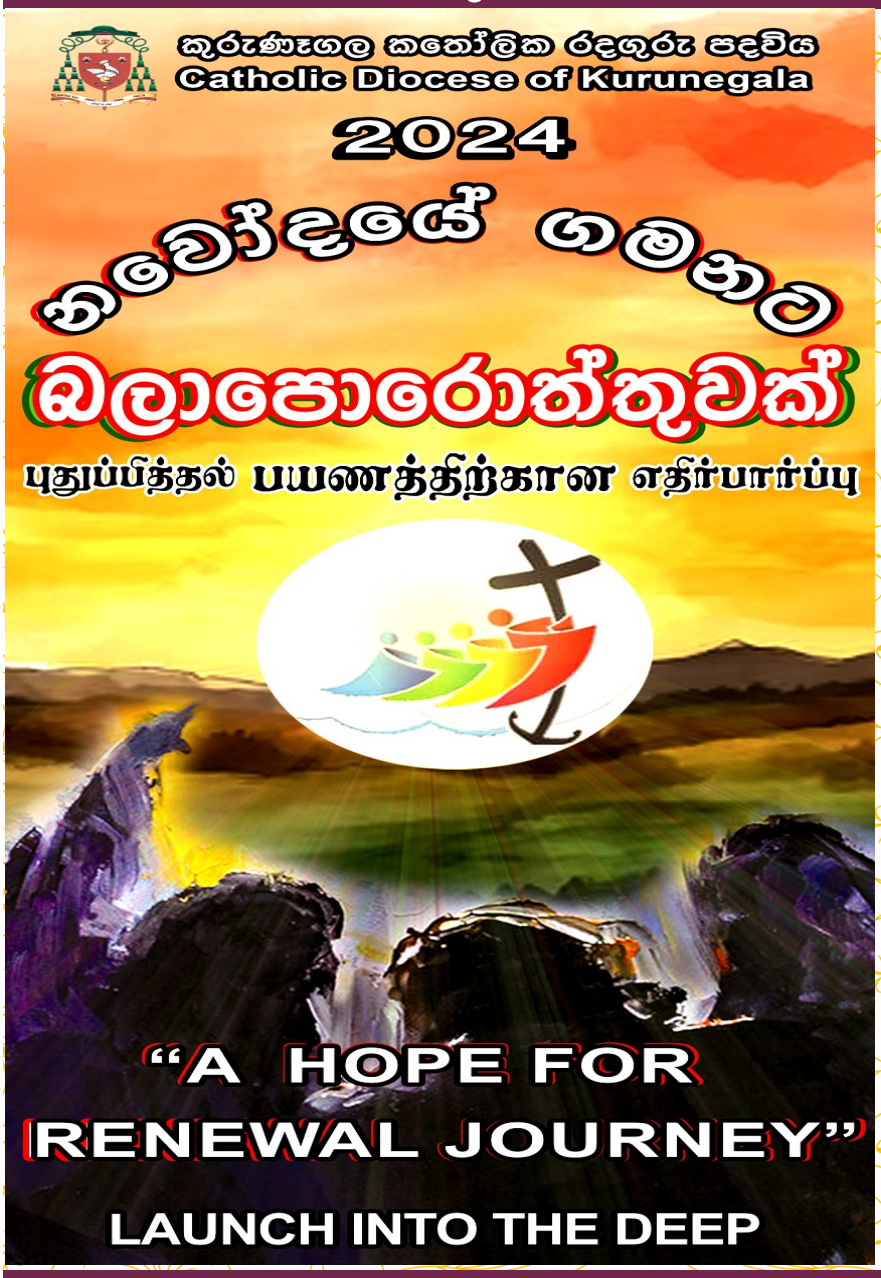
FRATERNITY

Catholic Diocese of Kurunegala

Volume 27 Issue 01 January 2024



Rest In Peace!
Rev. Fr. Quentin Perera

















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Confirmation at Karawwewa



After a successful period of preparation, ninety-three candidates from the Parish of Karawwewa received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Lordship, the Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, the Bishop of Kurenegala, on 03rd of December 2023 at Our Lady of Good Health Church, Karawwewa. Rev. Fr. Lesly Anthony, the Parish Priest of Karawwewa, Rev. Fr. Jude Dassanayaka at Bingiriya, Rev. Sisters of Holy Cross at Bingiriya and the Parish Pastoral Council had made all the arrangements for a meaningful celebration. Rev. Fr. Himishka Roshan, Secretary to the Bishop also joined the Celebration.

Awarding the Certificates for JVI English Course



The Certificate Awarding and the batch closing ceremony of Residential English Batch 18 of Joseph Vaz Institute were held on the 03rd of December 2023 at Pope Francis Integral Formation Centre, Dikkele with the presence of His Lordship, the Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, the Bishop of Kurunegala and the Chancellor of JVI. Thirty-five students were awarded for the successful completion of the two months residential English course. Very Rev. Fr. Piyal Janaka Fernando, the Vicar General, Rev. Fr. Himishka Roshan, and Rev. Fr. Nalinda Lanka Sri also participated in this occasion. Very Rev. Fr. Sagara Perera, the Director, Rev. Frs. Navin Perera and Damitha Madhusanka and the staff of JVI had made the necessary arrangements.

Confirmation at Dummalasooriya



Sixty-five candidates from the Parish of Dummalasooriya received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Lordship the Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, the Bishop of Kurunegala at Infant Jesus' Church, Dummalasooriya on 10th December 2023. Rev. Fr. Alexi Callistus, the Parish Priest, Rev. Sisters of Good Shepherd at Dummalsoriya and the Parish Pastoral Council had organized the event meaningfully. Rev. Fr. Himishka Roshan, Secretary to the Bishop also joined the Holy Mass.

Advent Recollection -2023



Advent Recollection for priests and religious working in the diocese of Kurunegala was held on Monday 11th December 2023 at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Malkaduwawa. Rev. Fr. Maria Arul CMF delivered the keynote address. After the Holy Eucharistic Celebration, Religious working in the diocese were appreciated by His Lordship.

Confirmation at Mandakondana



After a successful period of preparation, eighty candidates from the Parish of Mandakondana received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Lordship, the Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, the Bishop of Kurenegala, on 16th of December 2023 at St. Rita's Church, Kadigamuwa. Rev. Fr. Sampath Fernando, the Parish Priest and the Parish Pastoral Council had made all the arrangements for a meaningful celebration. Rev. Fr. Himishka Roshan, Secretary to the Bishop also joined the Celebration.

Presbyteral Year-End Gathering



Presbyteral year-end gathering was held on 19th December 2023 at Pope Francis Integral Formation Centre, Dikkele. A fraternal encounter to appreciate services of the priests of the diocese was held.

Christmas Midnight Mass



His Lordship, the Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera, the Bishop of Kurunegala, presided over the Christmas Midnight mass at St. Anne's Cathedral, Kurunegala. Rev. Fr. Basil Rohan Fernando, National Director of PMS, Rev. Fr. Placidus De Silva, the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Lakshan Perera, the Asst. Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Himishka Roshan, Secretary to the Bishop concelebrated the Holy Mass.



My dear Fathers, Sisters & Brothers,

Wish you all a Very Happy New Year 2024, a year with God's abundant blessings. May Mary our blessed mother, St. Anne, the patroness of the diocese intercedes for us on our missionary journey! The year is going to be decisive both economically and politically. With the increase of taxes, the prices of basic commodities have gone up and the people find it difficult to absorb their day-to-day living. Let us also keep this in our minds to reduce extravagance expenses, specially during our feasts and other celebrations. Politically, it is going to be a year of elections with many promises. Let us not depend on any human being, but in faith on the providence of God. HE will not abandon us. We need to intensify our prayers and supplications to God our Heavenly Father, as we are privileged to be called the sons and daughters of God.

The feast of St. Joseph Vaz at Maha Galgamuwa will be on Monday, 15th January. Most Rev. Dr. Jude Nishantha Silva, the Bishop of Badulla will be the chief-celebrant at the festive mass. Encourage the faithful to take part in this pilgrimage to the shrine, specially to seek the intercession of the Apostle of Sri Lanka at this moment in our country.

Holy Childhood Sunday will be on 28th January. Kindly promote the Holy Childhood apostolate as they are the future of the Church as well as the nation. Encouragement is necessary for the faithful to contribute generously.

"Launch into the deep" is our vision. Our missionary theme for this year is 'A Hope for a Renewal Journey.' The theme enables us to prepare ourselves for the Jubilee year 2025. As we have planned, let us exercise our pastoral ministry through parishes and different apostolates.

The budgets of the apostolates had to be re-organized by me, due to the present financial constraints. You may have to re-structure some of the planned events according to the availability of the funds. All the expenses need to be supported by bills, as it is essential for the reporting. The commitment takes precedence, for any success.

We were able to give a fitting farewell to Fr. Quentin Perera, a simple and model priest in the diocese, when he left for the Heavenly city to be with the Creator. It was because of the dedication of the office bearers and the cooperation of the presbyteral family. I thank each and every one of you.

We also express our deepest condolences to Fr. Himishka Roshan, the Secretary to the Bishop on the demise of his beloved father. May he rest in peace!

The Brothers of the National Seminary and the students of the Intermediate Seminary of our diocese also owe appreciation. In their short Christmas vacation, they had to come up and down and sacrifice their holidays to participate actively in these unforeseen events.

The first presbyteral meeting of the year 2024 will be on Monday, 08th January. We shall start as usual at 9.00 a.m. in the Bishops' House.

Thank you and God bless you!

+ Harold Perera

CATHOLIC BISHOP OF KURUNEGALA
SRI LANKA

+ Harold Anthon Perera
Catholic Bishop of Kurunegala

HOLY MASS AND CANONIZATION OF BLESSED JOSEPH VAZ

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

"All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God" (Is 52:10)



This is the magnificent prophecy which we heard in today's first reading. Isaiah foretells the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the ends of the earth. This prophecy has a special meaning for us, as we celebrate the canonization of a great missionary of the Gospel, Saint Joseph Vaz. Like countless other missionaries in the history of the Church, he responded to the Risen Lord's command to make disciples of every nation (cf. *Mt* 28:19). By his words, but more importantly, by the example of his life, he led the people of this country to the faith which gives us "an inheritance among all God's holy ones" (cf. *Acts* 20:32). In Saint Joseph we see a powerful sign of God's goodness and love for the people of Sri Lanka. But we also see in him a challenge to persevere in the paths of the Gospel, to grow in holiness ourselves, and to testify to the Gospel message of reconciliation to which he dedicated his life.

A priest of the Oratory in his native Goa, Saint Joseph Vaz came to this country inspired by missionary zeal and a great love of its people. Because of religious persecution, he dressed as a beggar, performing his priestly duties in secret meetings of the faithful, often at night. His efforts provided spiritual and moral strength to the beleaguered Catholic population. He had a particular desire to serve the ill and suffering. His ministry to the sick was so appreciated by the king during a smallpox epidemic in Kandy that he was allowed greater freedom to minister. From Kandy, he could reach out to other parts of the island. He spent himself in missionary work and died, exhausted, at the age of fifty-nine, revered for his holiness.

Saint Joseph Vaz continues to be an example and a teacher for many reasons, but I would like to focus on three. First, he was an exemplary priest. Here today with us are many priests and religious, both men and women, who, like Joseph Vaz, are consecrated to the service of God and neighbour. I encourage each of you to look to Saint Joseph as a sure guide. He teaches us how to go out to the peripheries, to make Jesus Christ everywhere known and loved. He is also an example of patient suffering in the cause of the Gospel, of obedience to our superiors, of loving care for the Church of God (cf. *Acts* 20:28). Like ourselves, Saint Joseph Vaz lived in a period of rapid and profound transformation; Catholics were a minority, and often divided within; there was occasional hostility, even persecution, from without. And yet, because he was constantly united with the crucified Lord in prayer, he could become for all people a living icon of God's mercy and reconciling love.

Second, Saint Joseph shows us the importance of transcending religious divisions in the service of peace. His undivided love for God opened him to love for his neighbour; he ministered to those in need, whoever and wherever they were. His example continues to inspire the Church in Sri Lanka today. She gladly and generously serves all members of society. She makes no distinction of race, creed, tribe, status or religion in the service she provides through her schools, hospitals, clinics, and many other charitable works. All she asks in return is the freedom to carry out this mission. Religious freedom is a fundamental human right. Each individual must be free, alone or in association with others, to seek the truth, and to openly express his or her religious convictions, free from intimidation and external compulsion. As the life of Saint Joseph Vaz teaches us, genuine worship of God bears fruit not in discrimination, hatred and violence, but in respect for the sacredness of life, respect for the dignity and freedom of others, and loving commitment to the welfare of all.

Finally, Saint Joseph gives us an example of missionary zeal. Though he came to Ceylon to minister to the Catholic community, in his evangelical charity he reached out to everyone. Leaving behind his home, his family, the comfort of his familiar surroundings, he responded to the call to go forth, to speak of Christ wherever he was led. Saint Joseph knew how to offer the truth and the beauty of the Gospel in a multi-religious context, with respect, dedication, perseverance and humility. This is also the way for the followers of Jesus today. We are called to go forth with the same zeal, the same courage, of Saint Joseph, but also with his sensitivity, his reverence for others, his desire to share with them that word of grace (cf. *Acts* 20:32) which has the power to build them up. We are called to be missionary disciples.

Dear brothers and sisters, I pray that, following the example of Saint Joseph Vaz, the Christians of this country may be confirmed in faith and make an ever-greater contribution to peace, justice and reconciliation in Sri Lankan society. This is what Christ asks of you. This is what Saint Joseph teaches you. This is what the Church needs of you. I commend all of you to the prayers of our new saint, so that, in union with the Church throughout the world, you may sing a new song to the Lord and declare his glory to all the ends of the earth. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised (cf. *Ps* 96: 1-4)! Amen.

https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_beatificaz-sri-lanka.html

HOLY MASS ON THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD - 57th WORLD DAY OF PEACE

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

St Peter's Basilica - Monday, 1st January 2024



The words of the Apostle Paul illumine the beginning of this new year: "When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (*Gal* 4:4). The expression "the fullness of time" is striking. In ancient times, time was measured using vases of water; the passage of time was marked by how long it took for an empty vase to be filled. Hence the meaning of the phrase "fullness of time": once the vase of history is filled, divine grace spills over. God becomes man and he does so through a woman, Mary. She is the means chosen by God, the culmination of that long line of individuals and generations that "drop by drop" prepared for the Lord's coming into the world. The Mother, then, stands at the very heart of the mystery of time. It pleased God to turn history around through her, the *woman*. With that one word, "woman", the Scripture brings us back to the beginning, to Genesis, and makes us realize that the Mother and Child mark a new creation, a new beginning. Thus, at the beginning of the time of salvation, there is the Holy Mother of God, our Holy Mother.

It is fitting, then, that the year should open by invoking her; it is fitting that God's faithful people should acclaim her with joy, as once those bold Christians did in Ephesus, as the *Holy Mother of God*. For those words, *Mother of God*, express the joyful certainty that the Lord, a tiny Child in his Mamma's arms, has united himself *forever* to our humanity, to the point that it is no longer only ours, but his as well. *Mother of God*: a simple phrase that confesses the Lord's eternal covenant with us. *Mother of God*: a dogma of faith, but also a "dogma of hope"; God in man, and man in God, forever. The Holy Mother of God.

In the fullness of time, the Father sent his Son, born of a woman. But Saint Paul also speaks of a second sending: "God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father!'" (*Gal* 4:6). In the sending of the Spirit, the Mother also plays a central role: the Holy Spirit comes to rest upon her at the Annunciation (cf. *Lk* 1:35); later, at the birth of the Church, he descends upon the apostles gathered in prayer "with Mary, the Mother" (*Acts* 1:14). Mary's receptiveness to the working of the Spirit brought us the greatest of all gifts: she "enabled the Lord of Majesty to become our brother" (THOMAS OF CELANO, *Vita secunda*, CL, 198: FF 786), so that the Spirit can cry out in our hearts: "Abba, Father!" The motherhood of Mary is the path leading us to the paternal tenderness of God, the closest, most direct and easiest of paths. This is God's "style": closeness, compassion and tenderness. Indeed, the Mother leads us to the beginning and heart of faith, which is not a theory or a task, but a boundless gift that makes us beloved sons and daughters, tabernacles of the Father's love. It follows that welcoming the Mother into our lives is not a matter of devotion but a requirement of faith: "If we want to be Christians, we must be 'Marians'" (SAINT PAUL VI, *Homily in Cagliari*, 24 April 1970), that is "children of Mary".

The world, too, needs to look to mothers and to women in order to find peace, to emerge from the spiral of violence and hatred, and once more see things with genuinely human eyes and hearts. Every society needs to accept the gift that is woman, every woman: to respect, defend and esteem women, in the knowledge that whosoever harms a single woman profanes God, who was "born of a woman". Just as Mary, the *woman*, played a decisive role in the fullness of time, she is also decisive in the lives of each of us, for no one knows better than a Mother the stages of growth and the urgent needs of her children. Mary shows us this in yet another "beginning": the first sign that Jesus performs, at the wedding feast of Cana. There, she is the one who realizes that the wine has run out, and who appeals to Jesus (cf. *Jn* 2:3). The needs of her children move her, the Mother, to beg Jesus to intervene. At Cana, Jesus says: "'Fill the jars with water'. And they filled them up to the brim" (*Jn* 2:7). Mary knows our needs; she intercedes to make grace overflow in our lives and to guide them to authentic fulfilment. Brothers and sisters, all of us have our shortcomings, our times of loneliness, our inner emptiness that cries out to be filled. Each of us knows this well. Who can fill our emptiness if not Mary, the *Mother of fullness*? Whenever we are tempted to retreat into ourselves, let us run to her; whenever we are no longer able to untie the knots in our lives, let us seek refuge in her. Our times, bereft of peace, need a Mother who can reunite the human family. For she unites them and consoles them; she listens to their troubles and she dries their tears. And let us look upon that tender icon of the *Virgo lactans* [of Montevergine Abbey]. That is how our mother is with: how tenderly she looks after us and draws close to us. She cares for us and remains close to us.

Let us entrust this coming year to the Mother of God. With tender love, she will open our eyes to their fullness. For she will lead us to Jesus, who is himself "the fullness of time", of every time, of our own time, of each one of us. Indeed, as was once written: "It was not the fullness of time that brought about the sending of the Son of God, but the sending of the Son that brought about the fullness of time". Brothers and sisters, may this year be filled with the consolation of the Lord! May this year be filled with the tender maternal love of Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2024/documents/20240101_omelia-madrededio-pace.html

ANECDOTES & SCRIPTURE NOTES FOR ALL OCCASIONS

HEAVEN ON EARTH - *Creation, Environment*

There was a man who was obsessed with the idea of going to heaven to escape this cruel world. Finally, he died, and an angel walked him around to see the beautiful sights, including the sandy seashore, the majestic mountains, the beautiful flowers, and the lovely sunsets. The man exclaimed, "Isn't heaven wonderful!" The angel replied, "This isn't heaven. It's the world you lived in but you never really saw."

Reflection



For generations busy people have been advised to "stop and smell the roses." The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins has reminded us that the world is "charged with the grandeur of God." Joseph Mary Plunkett says the same in his poem "I see His Blood Upon the Rose." We live in a world that is obsessed with busyness. Ironically, the more inventions and discoveries that come our way promising to help lighten our workload invade our precious time even more. Like those who lose their hearing or eyesight, many of us go from place to place and from task to task with such intensiveness that we often miss the good things that God places in our path along the way. Isn't it sad that we take for granted, or perhaps don't even notice, the little bit of heaven that God has already blessed us with?

Sent by—His Lordship Most Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera

Bulletin Announcements....

January - 06/07
Beginning of Sunday Schools & Dedication of Teachers

January - 08/09
Monthly Recollection & Presbyteral Meeting

January - 15
Joseph Vaz Pura Feast - Mahagalgamuwa

January - 20
Diocesan Pastoral Council - Bishop's House

January - 21
Sunday of the Word of God

January - 28
Holy Childhood Sunday

January - 28
Sunday School Final Examination - 2023

Kuliyapitiya Deanery

Parish	*Church*	*Saint*	*Date*
Katupotha	Kirimetiyawa	St. Sebastian	14.01.2024
Kattimahana	Palugamuwa	God the Father	14.01.2024
Pannala	Hunuwila	St. Sebastian	14.01.2024
Dummalasuriya	Dummalasuriya	Infant Jesus	14.01.2024
Thisogama	Thisogama	St. Sebastian	21.01.2024
Kadawalagedara	Dunakayawatte	St. Joseph Vaz	21.01.2024
Pannala	Pannala	St. Agnes	21.01.2024
Kuliyapitiya	Delana	St. Joseph Vaz	28.01.2024

Kurunegala Deanery

Parish	*Church*	*Saint*	*Date*
Nikaweratiya	Halmillewa	Infant Jesus	07.01.2024
Galgamuwa	St. Joseph Vaz National Shrine	St. Joseph Vaz	15.01.2024
Solepura	Solepura	St. Sebastian	21.01.2024
Polgahawela	Aragoda	St. Joseph Vaz	21.01.2024
Malpitiya	Malpitiya	St. Sebastian	28.01.2024

Christmas Gathering 2023



Communication





Catechists' Christmas gathering

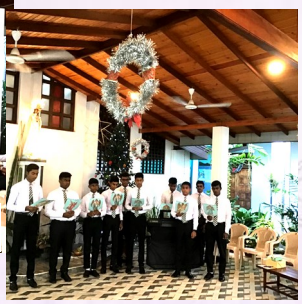












With the Minor Seminarians





With Estate Workers











Legion of Mary





Providence - Children, Mawathagama







Advent Recollection







Meth Nivasa





Birthdays Rev. Fathers

01st of January - Rev.Fr. Kathiravel Jude (SJ)
04th of January - Rev.Fr. Manura S. Premarathne
13th of January - Rev.Fr. Rohan W. Fernando
14th of January - Rev.Fr. Tharanga Dilekshika
20th of January - Rev.Fr. Stanley Peiris
29th of January - Rev.Fr. Ananda Weerakoon

Ordination Anniversaries

25th of January - Rev.Fr. Gayan Hirantha
25th of January - Rev.Fr. Lakshan Malina
25th of January - Rev.Fr. Kapila Manjula
25th of January - Rev.Fr. Himishka Roshan
25th of January - Rev.Fr. Navin Lakshan
26th of January - Rev.Fr. Dimuthu Rohan Fonseka
28th of January - Rev.Fr. Gomi Diwakara
28th of January - Rev.Fr. Jamika Sumedha
28th of January - Rev.Fr. Neyomal Silva
28th of January - Rev.Fr. Jude Madusanka
29th of January - Rev.Fr. Andrew Fonseka
30th of January - Rev.Fr. Manura S.Premarathne
30th of January - Rev.Fr. Jude Lasantha Liyanage
30th of January - Rev.Fr. George Dixon

Birthday of Rev. Sister

18th of January - Rev. Sr. Lucina Ekanayake (Good Shepherd Sisters - Dummalasuriaya)
18th of January - Rev. Sr. Emi Philomina (Sisters of Mary Immaculate - Mawathagama)

Death Anniversary

12th of January - Rev.Fr. Leonard Costa (1999)

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