

January 2011 The KEY

From the Editor's Desk

3 New Year Resolutions

My Dear Brothers and Sisters, I wish you a happy and prosperous New Year 2011.

The New Year 2011 is born very quietly without much noise but of course with great hope.

While we Catholics-Christians began the New Year with Night Service celebrating the solemnity of the feast of the Mother of God, placing the coming year into the hands of our Blessed Virgin Mother, the others welcomed the Year with new hope for peace and prosperity.

The month of January celebrates a few important days namely: Jan 1: Feast of Mother of God; Jan 14 & 15: Festivals of Tamils and Kannadas, Telugus i.e Pongal, Samkranthi; Jan 18-25: Christian Unity Week; Jan 26: Republic Day

You will find few write ups about these auspicious days in this edition. I am sure you will enjoy reading them.

As a special message for this New Year, I would like to give you three points or 3 guiding lights for your reflection:

- 1. Make you the world a bit more beautiful and better because you have been in it.** Instead of getting angry and blowing up the world, get involved with organizations that are trying to make the world a better place. Instead of cursing the dark, lit a light to brighten your surroundings, instead of accusing your Parish priests, Nuns, your Managers, Directors, Supervisors, Subordinates you work with them to brighten your life situation; instead of back biting, you suggest something better to improve your life and that of others; instead of being passive, be active participants of where you are; instead of you looking for smile from others, you first smile and make others happy; instead of getting away from the dirt and filth, you try to remove them joining with others; instead of despising others, you try to attract them to your side and win them over to your side. Sing this song **"This little guiding light of mine, I am going to let shine(3) Let it shine all the time let it shine; Hide it under a bushel O no, I am going to let it shine (3) Let it shine all the time let it shine..."**
- 2. Pick up on what others have started and make a difference**
Build on the good works of people you know, but also of people you don't know. Make a difference (you be an outstanding person little different from others in your character, thinking, behaviour and doing.... you don't have to imitate others... you be what you are but make a difference in everything.... but towards progress and communitarian peace and progress... Continue the love and spirit of good and decent people, which will turn the world around).

3. **Show somebody this year what God is like, without letting them know that's what you are doing** People learn about God not because they figure out the Trinity, not because they tune into what the Vatican is doing, not because they are great theologians, not because they understand Greek or Latin. People learn about God from Godlike people. Even people who have done some evil, even people who have some messy corners in their lives; you can still share a full plate with someone who has nothing, so to speak. You can be God to someone who will remember what God is like because they remember what you are like...

If we all half keep these three resolutions, this will be a very happy new year indeed

**Fr. J. A. Nathan
Editor**

Mary is not a goddess. She derives all of her radiance from God, like the Moon receives its light from the Sun without detracting from it.



On Every January 1, the Catholic Church solemnly celebrates the feast of the Mother of God

Is Mary, Really the Mother of God?

Of course! This is quite simply explained. The main puzzle is why any Christian should object to the title of Mother of God. All Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and also IS God, being the 2nd Person of the Trinity, along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is also the son of Mary. Now many Protestants are quite prepared to say "Mary, Mother of Jesus," but balk at saying "Mary, Mother of God." Why?

There is probably an element of cultural conditioning here. Giving Mary such a title like Mother of God seems too grand to many protestants. For centuries most protestants have tried to ignore Mary, and have avoided all talk and discussion of her - except perhaps to condemn Catholic "excesses". But this is a serious matter. To call Mary the "Mother of Jesus" and yet refuse to call her "Mother of God" is to diminish Jesus as well as Mary, for **it is a denial that Jesus is truly or fully God.**



It was this sort of thinking that led to the formal definition of the title Mother of God at the Council of Ephesus in 431AD. Patriarch Nestorius had preached that Mary was not Mother of God, being only the mother of Jesus' physical body, which was then indwelt by God the Word. This was condemned as Heresy, since the Gospels tell us that the

Word did not **unite** with man, but was **made** man. **The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.**" (John 1.14). This is a crucial difference. Jesus was not two persons: the Son of God, and the Son of Mary, but one person, the Son of God **and** Mary. If this were not so, his death could not have saved us.

THE NATURE OF JESUS

1. To be our Saviour, Jesus needed to be both fully God, and fully man, descended from Adam. He could not be a counterfeit, or someone who just looked human..
2. God the Word has existed as spirit from the beginning of time.
3. At the Incarnation, through the action of the Holy Spirit, God the Word took flesh and **full humanity** from the Virgin Mary. Both His Human Nature and His human body came from Mary, These united with His Divine Nature in Jesus.
4. This produced **one person** with one consciousness, both fully God and fully man, who is **truly both Son of God and Son of Mary**.
5. The Virgin Mary is therefore the Mother of ALL of the PERSON of Jesus Christ, and is therefore truly Mother of God the Son.

Nestorius did not recant, and founded his own church - which is no longer with us. In effect, in saying that Mary was the Mother of Jesus, but not the Mother of God, he was denying the reality of the incarnation. **Attempts to downgrade Mary seem always lead to a downgrading of the full divinity of Jesus.**

BUT DOESN'T 'CONCENTRATING' ON THE VIRGIN MARY DISTRACT US FROM GOD AND FROM JESUS?

This is a common complaint of Protestants, but one I really fail to understand. **Does admiring any part of God's creation distract you from God?** When you walk through a forest of tall, ancient trees and you admire their beauty, does it distract you from God? When you look at a sunset or a towering mountain, does that turn you away from God? Of course not. For most people such things draw them **closer** to God.

Similarly when you admire people like St Francis, Mother Theresa, or other Christians who have given up their lives to serve God. Does that make you turn away from God - or is it more likely to make you think of the greatness of the God who inspired such people? So it is also with Mary who is the Mother of God. ~



[**►Read more on "Mary Defended"**](#)



*O blessed Virgin,
pray to God for us always,
that He may pardon us and give us grace,
pray to God for us always,
that He may grant us peace in this life
pray to God for us always,
that He may reward us with paradise at our death.
Amen.*

NEW CHURCH CONSTRUCTION AT ST.PETER'S CHURCH, RUSTUMBAGH

After a long effort I obtained the sanction plan (Plan approval) from the Bangalore Corporation (BBMP) for the construction of an additional structure on the present building that is used as Church building at Rustumbagh, Old Airport Road, Bangalore since 2002.

Once the newly envisioned Church construction gets over, we will have a spacious Church with balcony that would help capacitate 1000 persons and more.

Thanks be to the personal effort and interest of our Bangalore Archbishop Most Rev. Bernard Moras for taking up this project along with many more projects in the archdiocese.

The project cost is quite large that demands a generous contribution from every good heart both of the parish as well as people in Bangalore.

We gladly and humbly accept any mite that comes from any one towards the project.

*If any cheque, please make it in favour of "**ST.PETER'S CHURCH BUILDING FUND**"
Account Number 0485 20100 53656.*

We look forward to your prayerful support with financial contribution.

***Please Note: A provisional change in the Mass
Timing on Sunday at St.Peter's Church, Rustumbagh***

7.30 am Kannada & Tamil; 9.30 am English



Blessing of the New St.Peter's Church construction site by the Bangalore Archbishop
Bernard Moras on 12.12.2010 at 12 noon



The additional church building comes up on the terrace of the present structure,
St.Peter's Church, Rustumbagh, The Archbishop is blessing the site



Archbishop Bernard Moras with Parish Priest Fr.J.A.Nathan and others during the blessing of the site for the new Church building, St.Peter's Church, Rustumbagh



A part of the faithful gathered at the time of blessing of the site, St.Peter's Church, Rustambagh



The former parish council member (present construction committee member) reads a passage for the blessing ceremony (St. Peter's Church, Rustambagh)



INFANT JESUS SHRINE

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PEACE RULES THE DAY WHEN
INFANT JESUS RULES THE HEART.

The Annual Feast of Infant Jesus Shrine at Viveknagar in Bangalore will be celebrated with great solemnity on 14th January 2011 like every year on the same date. The devotion to the Infant Jesus has become widespread and the Shrine is now known as the place of pilgrimage, miracles and divine solace not only in this State, but across the Country and world.

I wish the feast of Infant Jesus bring a divine peace of our Lord Jesus who is the “Prince of Peace”.

The feast of Infant Jesus has universal appeal especially among the people of other faith. I was given to an understanding that the beneficiaries of Infant Jesus grace goes to a large numbers to non-Christians. It is evident on every Thursday, specially on Feast days very large number of non-Christians make a beeline to get a ‘Darshan’ of Infant Jesus. The feast of Infant Jesus is celebrated with pomp and piety by the folks of Bangalore.

This year the Flag Hoisting celebration coincided with the feast of Epiphany, i.e., manifestation of God to the gentiles. The Magi from far off lands and the poor shepherds make a visit to see the baby Jesus and worship Him as there are people from far and near who visit this Shrine to find solace in the disturbed world.

All Thursdays are dedicated to Infant Jesus. If a devotee prays and visits the Church fervently, he will not be refused or despised by baby Jesus. We are asked to inculcate the very qualities of Child like simplicity, humility and dependency. Come to Him with a simple child like faith. Expect a Miracle it will be granted to you. The clergy of the Shrine is flooded with reports of miracles happening dramatically to very many devotees of other faith. We are unable to record and register these miracles. Therefore, we are intended to open a website exclusively to register all your miracles.

Since the devotees of the Shrine are increasing day by day the Shrine could not accommodate them with lodging facilities. The Archdiocesan office is seriously exploring the ways and means to provide lodging and other facilities for the devotees. This year, a gem has been added to the Shrine sanctuary. The EUCHARISTIC CHAPEL, a serene place for silent and contemplative prayer, a place to do serious business with Jesus, a quite place amidst the din of the modern world, an oxygen room for the soul.

The Shrine has two book stalls both of which are renovated and expanded. We have a variety of religious article Books, C.D. that caters to the spiritual needs of the devotees.

Perhaps this Shrine is the only place in Karnataka and only next to Vailankanni to have Holy Masses in six languages a real National integration indeed!

During the novena days, the Shrine organizes Mass Marriages for the Catholics of Archdiocese of Bangalore. This has been planned as a noble task to redeem the people from their economic crises. This year on 9th January about 16 Couples tie their wedding knot in the Shrine.

The final day celebration will culminate on 14th January 2011. The Chariot procession will be inaugurated at 6.00 p.m. by our His Excellency Shri H.R.Bharadwaj the Governor of Karnataka. Makara Shankaranthi and Pongal wishes to everyone .

We wish each and every one a Happy Feast.

Rev. Fr. G. ROYS

Rector

INFANT JESUS SHRINE

40th ANNUAL FEAST OF INFANT JESUS SHRINE

Viveknagar, Bangalore

Perhaps there would be no one who is unknown to this Shrine Church in the very heart of the IT City of Bangalore. Well built and elegant looking Infant Jesus Shrine at Viveknagar, Bangalore is pulling into it very large number of Christians-Catholics and non-Christians every Thursday and other days, for one absolute reason, God loves everyone who ever comes to this Shrine, by His very loved human form namely a Child. While God is like child, every child is god-like. This concept is visible in His incarnation as an infant. Jesus Christ being born in Bethlehem, today welcomes every good and bad with His same child-like nature to this Shrine at Viveknagar.

I would rather say, it is non-Christians more than Christians who frequent this Shrine on Thursdays.

The Shrine is situated close to many shops that draw people to the Shrine.



A front view of the Shrine Chapel

Every year, on Jan 14, the annual feast of Infant Jesus is celebrated very grandly preceded by 9 days of preparation celebrating Holy Masses in languages such as Tamil, Kannada, English, Malayalam, Telugu, Hindi and so on. This reveals the fact that this is a Holy Shrine for people of all kinds. Infant Jesus of Bethlehem appears to every heart that kneels before Him in the Shrine



Fr. G. Roys, Rector

The Shrine of Infant Jesus at Viveknagar is getting known all over more at the present times, thanks to Fr. Roys the Rector whose efforts are praiseworthy for all his high-tech means of making the shrine known. Being himself a musician, Fr. Roys who hails from St. Paul's Church, Kolar Gold Fields is leaving no stone unturned in popularising the shrine with his music talents. Thus every faithful who attends the liturgy witnesses to his liturgical music. His able guidance and administration of the shrine draws hundreds of poor for charity and love.



Fr. Balraj, Parish priest

This year marks the 40th annual feast at Infant Jesus Shrine, Viveknagar. Exactly at 5.40 pm on 4th January 2011 Tuesday, the flag hoisting ceremony began with welcome

ceremony organized by the Shrine's clergy Fr. Roys the Rector, Fr. Balraj the parish priest, Fr. Michael and Fr. Vincent Santosh both assistants. Earlier, the archbishop of Bangalore Most Rev. Bernard said a prayer of blessing at the shrine chapel accompanied by Shri Ravi Shankar (Art of Living), Local MLA of Viveknagar constituency Mr. Harish, local ward corporator and many more dignitaries.



Dignitaries on the dais during the flag hoisting ceremony at Infant Jesus Shrine, Viveknagar

While Fr. Balraj welcomed the archbishop, Fr. Roys welcomed the chief guest of the evening Shri Ravi Shankar. In his brief address in English the archbishop pointed out the need of religious freedom in India without any threat to the reality of freedom referring particularly to the minorities of course the Christians. Human dignity & religion go hand in hand and one without the other would be incomplete he said.

Shri Ravi Shankar respected greatly in Bangalore and other parts in India, very solemnly and in soft voice stressed the need of peace within and peace without internal silence cannot exist.

There was great applause when he spoke in a simple and clear Tamil to the audience in the Shrine's campus.

This was followed by blessing of the flag by the archbishop and hoisting by Shri Ravi Shankar. As the flag was rising up to the sky, the sea of human heads in the Shrine campus applauded with great joy and devotion to Infant Jesus.

One of the highlights of the flag hoisting ceremony was the release by the archbishop of DVD in Tamil with DVD film on the devotion to Infant Jesus. This audio-visual CD was done collaboratively by Fr. Roys and Fr. Puneethan.

The feast of Infant Jesus is expected to go on in a mighty way with devotion and gaiety. Starting from 4th Jan up to 14th, there will be Holy Mass celebrated every one hour.

A day will come when the Shrine would be declared a Shrine with national importance by the Union Govt. Let us hope for it. We must remember that recently the Chennai

Santhome Cathedral is declared by the tourism department as national Shrine. Great indeed!

Courtesy: The Key



My India, My Pride



India is one of the oldest civilizations in the world, spanning a period of more than 4000 years, and witnessing the fusion of several customs and traditions, which are reflective of the rich culture and heritage of the Country.

The history of the nation gives a glimpse into the magnanimity of its evolution - from a Country reeling under colonialism, to one of the leading economies in the global scenario within a span of fifty years. More than anything, the nationalistic fervour of the people is the contributing force behind the culmination of such a development. This transformation of the nation instills a sense of national pride in the heart of every Indian within the Country and abroad, and this section is a modest attempt at keeping its flame alive.

The Constitution of India was enacted on 26th of January, 1950. The Constituent Assembly of India drafted the nation's Constitution. Being drafted on 26th of November, 1949, the Indian Constitution laid the foundations for establishment of the Democratic Republic of India.

Drafting of the Constitution

The Constitution of India was drafted over a period of 2 years, 11 months and 17 days. The members of Constituent Assembly of India met for the first time in the year 1946 on December 9. The next meeting of the Assembly took place on August 14th, 1947 for the dominion of India in which the proposal of forming various committees was presented. Such committees include Committee on Fundamental Rights, the Union Powers Committee and Union Constitution Committee. One of the unique factors of this meeting was that the Assembly gathered as the Sovereign Constituent Assembly of India.

On 29th August, 1947 a Drafting Committee, with Dr. Ambedkar as the Chairman, was formed on the basis of the various reports submitted by the previous committees. It was in the year 1948 that a Draft Constitution including a range of proposals was formed by the concerned committee. The Constituent Assembly of India held two meetings in February 1948 and October 1949 to go through the clauses of the Draft. Finally, from 14th to 26th of November, 1949 the Constituent Assembly analyzed each and every provision of the Draft. The then President of the Constituent Assembly of India signed the Draft on November 26th, 1949.

Today, there are 12 Schedules and 395 Articles in the Constitution of India. Amendments have been made to the Constitution time and again as per the need of the hour. Till 2006, there have been 94 Amendments made to the constitution.

Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly of India was formed by the elected members of the provincial assemblies of the country. Presided over by Dr. Sachidanand Sinha for the first time, the Indian Constituent Assembly played the most important role in creating the Constitution of India. After Dr. Sinha, Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the President of the Assembly. Comprising over 30 schedule class members, the Constituent Assembly also included sections of Christians, Anglo-Indians and Minority Community. Harendra Coomar Mookerjee, being the Minority Community Chairman, also successfully worked for the Christians. While H P Modi was the representative of the Parsi community, Frank Anthony headed the Anglo-Indian section of the country in the Constituent Assembly.

Some of the prominent female personalities of the Constituent Assembly were Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Sarojini Naidu. From Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, B N Rau and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad to K M Munshi, Sardar Patel and Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyer, each one had a major contribution towards the present form of the Constituent Assembly.

Preamble

The Preamble is one of the most significant parts of the Constitution of India. Focusing on the core objective of the Indian Constitution, the Preamble includes the following:

- Equality - which connotes equal opportunity for one and all
- Justice - which means fair judgment in the fields of politics, society and economy
- Fraternity - which works towards keeping the integrity and strength of the country intact along with special stress on individual dignity

- Liberty - which assures every citizen of India the freedom of speech and expression, religious independence and choice of going by one's own belief

The Preamble, as it is presented in the Constitution of India, is mentioned below: "WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION."

Parts of the Constitution

The Constitution of India covers a total of 395 Articles in 22 parts. The parts of the Indian Constitution are mentioned below:

- Part I - The Union and its Territory
- Part II - Citizenship
- Part III - Fundamental Rights
- Part IV - Directive Principles of State Policy
- Part IVA - Fundamental Duties
- Part V - The Union
- Part VI - The States
- Part VII - The States in Part B of the First Schedule
- Part VIII - The Union Territories
- Part IX - Panchayats
- Part IXA - Municipalities
- Part X - The Scheduled and Tribal Areas
- Part XI - Relations Between The Union and The States
- Part XII - Finance, Property, Contracts and Suits
- Part XIII - Trade, Commerce and Intercourse within The Territory of India
- Part XIV - Services Under The Union and The States
- Part XIVA - Tribunals
- Part XV- Elections
- Part XVI - Special Provisions Relating to Certain Classes
- Part XVII - Official Language
- Part XVIII - Emergency Provisions
- Part XIX - Miscellaneous
- Part XX - Amendment of the Constitution
- Part XXI - Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions
- Part XXII - Short Title, Commencement, Authoritative Text in Hindi and Repeals

The Parliamentary form of Government of India was first introduced by the Constitution of the nation. Consisting of the President the Parliament of India has

two Houses namely Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The President leads the Executive of the Union as the Constitutional head. The Prime Minister heads the Council of Ministers as per the Article 74(1) of the Indian Constitution. The 7th Schedule of the Constitution of India indicates that the legislative powers are shared by both the State Legislatures and the Parliament of India.

Schedules to Indian Constitution

Schedules to the Constitution of India can be added through the amendments to it. There are twelve schedules to Constitution of India, which are effective at present, are given below:

- First Schedule: This schedule is about the States and Union Territories of India.
- Second Schedule: In this Schedule, provisions made to the President and the Governors of States, Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the House of the People, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Council of States, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council of a State, the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts and the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India
- Third Schedule: Forms of Oaths or Affirmations are mentioned in this Schedule.
- Fourth Schedule: This Schedule specifies the allocation of seats in the Council of States.
- Fifth Schedule: Provisions as to the Administration and Control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes are mentioned in this Schedule. The amendment of the schedule is also included in the Part D of the Schedule.
- Sixth Schedule: This Schedule deals with the provisions as to the Administration of Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- Seventh Schedule: The List I or the Union List, List II or the State List and List III or the Concurrent List are included in this Schedule.
- Eighth Schedule: The 22 languages selected as the official languages of India are mentioned in this Schedule.
- Ninth Schedule: Validation of certain Acts and Regulations is dealt with in this Schedule
- Tenth Schedule: Provisions as to disqualification on ground of defection for the Members of Parliament and Members of the State Legislatures are mentioned in this Schedule.
- Eleventh Schedule: This Schedule talks about the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats
- Twelfth Schedule: Powers, authority and responsibilities of Municipalities are defined in this Schedule


Did You Know That?

Sanskrit is considered as the mother of all higher languages of North India and Tamil is another Classical and oldest language of the world giving birth to other Dravidian languages of the South such as Kannada, Malayalam and Telugu. The world classical languages are Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil.

Awards

- [Bharat Ratna](#), [Param Vir Chakra \(PVC\)](#), [Padma Vibushan Awards](#), [Gallantry Awards](#), Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri and [Bravery Awards](#)

Facets of the Nation

1. The Code of Conduct of the Indian National Flag, which has been dubbed as [Flag Code of India, 2002](#) is an attempt to bring together laws, conventions, practices, and instructions for the guidance and benefit of everyone concerned.
2. The song Jana-gana-mana, composed originally in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore, was adopted in its Hindi version by the Constituent Assembly as the National Anthem of India on 24 January 1950. It was first sung on 27 December 1911 at the Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress.
Source: National Portal Content Management Team Last Reviewed on 12-11-2010 

News From Vatican

Pontiff Affirms Mystery of Childbirth

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 1, 2011 ([Zenit.org](#)).- Benedict XVI is highlighting the mystery of childbirth, in which parents are offered a chance to experience the action of their Creator.

The Pope stated this Dec. 26, 2010 the Feast of the Holy Family, before praying the midday Angelus with the pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square.

He reflected on the "profound mystery" that surrounded the birth of Jesus.

"The birth of any child brings with it something of this mystery," the Pontiff said.

He affirmed that "human beings experience procreation not merely as reproductive act; they perceive its richness; they are intuitively aware that every human creature who enters into the world is a 'sign' par excellence of the Creator and Father in heaven."

The Holy Father underlined the need "for each child coming into the world to be welcomed into the warmth of a family."

He continued: "Exterior comforts are not important. Jesus was born in a stable and his first cradle was a manger, but the love of Mary and Joseph made him feel the tenderness and beauty of being loved."

"This is what children need: the love of a father and mother," Benedict XVI stated.

He added, "This is what gives them a sense of security and, as they grow, enables them to discover the meaning of life."

The Pontiff acknowledged that the Holy Family went through many trials such as "the massacre of the innocents, which forced Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt."

"But, trusting in Divine Providence, they found their stability and ensured Jesus had a serene infancy and a solid education," he added.

The Holy Father entrusted "all families to Mary and Joseph, that they may not be discouraged in the face of trials and difficulties but always cultivate conjugal love and dedicate themselves faithfully to the service of life and education."

Benedict XVI Praying for Christian Unity

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 1, 2011 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI is dedicating this month to pray for Christian unity.

The Apostleship of Prayer announced the intentions chosen by the Pope for January. His general intention is: "That young people may learn to use modern means of social communication for their personal growth and to better prepare themselves to serve society."

The Pontiff's apostolic intention for this month is: "That every believer in Christ may be conscious that unity among all Christians is a condition for more effective proclamation of the Gospel."

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Pontiff Stresses Urgent Need for Religious Freedom

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 1, 2011 (Zenit.org).- Benedict XVI is stressing the need for religious freedom throughout the world as the way of building peace.

The Pope stated this today before praying the midday Angelus with the pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square. He recalled in particular today's celebration of the World Day of Peace as well as the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God.

"I invite all of you to join in heartfelt prayer to Christ the Prince of Peace for an end to violence and conflict wherever they are found," the Pontiff said.

He continued: "Yes, Jesus is our peace.

"He brought to the world the seed of love and peace, stronger than the seed of hatred and violence; stronger because the name of Jesus is superior to any other name, containing all the dominion of God."

This World Day of Peace, the Holy Father noted, is an "opportunity to reflect together on the great challenges facing humankind in our time."

"One of these, dramatically urgent today, is that of religious freedom," he added.

Benedict XVI acknowledged, "Today we see two opposite trends, both negative extremes: on one side secularism, which often in hidden ways marginalizes religion to confine it to the private sphere; on the other side fundamentalism, which in turn would like to impose itself on all by force."

"Religious freedom is the privileged way to build peace," he said.

The Pope affirmed that "peace is the work of consciences that open themselves to truth and love."

He concluded, "May God help us progress in this way in the new year that he has given us to live."

Circular by the Bangalore Archbishop to all Church Leaders

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

During His prayer at the Last Supper Jesus made a fervent plea that all His disciples may be one as the Father and He are one. Sadly the followers of Jesus are divided into very many groups. These divisions in Christianity are a negative witness to our work of evangelization; they also have also made us a weak, voiceless community so much so we are helpless when we are attacked and harassed.

We experienced this when two years ago we suffered attacks on our churches. At that time I called a meeting of the leaders of several Christian groups. We reflected on the situation prevailing in our country and saw in it a sign of God's call to be united. And we formed the Karnataka United Christian Forum for Human Rights on 19th June, 2009.

We have twelve categories of Christians who are members of this Forum: Catholics, CSI, Methodists, Orthodox Syrian, Syrian Orthodox, Mar Thoma, Believers, Baptists, Assemblies of God, Lutherans, Seventh Day Adventists and the FCCO which is a Federation of all New Life and Pentecostal churches and organizations. All these categories are proportionately represented in the General Body of the Forum and in the Governing Board.

All members of the Forum subscribe to a common minimum faith in the triune God, in Jesus Christ the Son of God who loved us even unto death and has made us His own by His Spirit. We believe that all salvation is through Jesus Christ and all people can attain this salvation through Jesus Christ when they turn to God in faith and serve Him in their neighbour. We believe that Christ wants us to be one flock with one Shepherd.

All members of the Forum have the right to preach the Gospel, but they must use only those methods that are appropriate to our times and definitely avoid any aggressive evangelization (which includes repeated visits to your homes even in the pretext of prayer), any offering of allurements or threats or denigration of the deities and religious practices of other people. If Christians are attacked, when they have given no cause for it, they will find support and strength in our unity in the Forum.

The Archbishop of Bangalore is the ex officio President of the Forum and the Bishop of the Believers Church is the Vice President; the Bishops of the Methodist Church and the CSI in Bangalore are Patrons; The Forum has a Secretary and a Treasurer; these office bearers are from different Christian groups.

To be effective the Forum must work not only in Bangalore but everywhere in Karnataka. And so we have formed eight zonal forums, clubbing together two or more districts to make a zone.

Thus we have the North Western Zone in Dharwad, the North Eastern Zone in Gulbarga, the Eastern Zone in Bellary, the South Central Zone in Hassan, the North Central Zone in Davangere, the Southern Zone in Mysore district, the Coastal Zone in Mangalore and the Bangalore Zone here in Bangalore. Each zone has a president and a secretary besides other officials. The Bangalore Zone president is Rev Dr Manohar Chandra Prasad (CSI) and Secretary is Fr J Arokianathan, parish priest of Rustambag Church.

Dear brothers and sisters, I appeal to all of you –laity, religious and priests, to willingly collaborate with the zonal forum office bearers in its activities so that everywhere we can have one strong united voice and all people can see in us the unity and peace Jesus came to give. Do encourage all Christian programs organized by the Zonal Forum of Christians for Human Rights.

At the same time please note that while we gladly collaborate with our Christian brethren we will not forget that there are many areas of faith and practice where we differ, and we are not to compromise our faith. Let us keep in mind the words of St Paul who warns the Galatians ‘against accepting a gospel different from the one we preached to you, even if it came from an angel in heaven’. (See Gal 1.8) We will also remember the words of John: ‘Be sure then to keep in your hearts the message you heard from the beginning (1 Jn 2.24) My brothers and sisters, I appeal to you to grow firm in your faith, and nourish it by prayer and sacraments and by the word of the Holy Scripture particularly the New Testament only in the light of which you should read the Old Testament.

Let us collaborate with our Christian brothers and sisters and along with our Holy Father Benedict XVI pray that all of us who believe in Jesus will be lead into all truth, in one faith and one Church.

+ Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore
29.12.2010

In view of
CHRISTIAN UNITY OCTAVE Jan 18-25

We welcome all our Bishops, Priests, Pastors, Nuns, Evangelists, Lay Ministers, Lay faithful of all Denominational Churches, Convents, Religious Institutions in Bangalore
Zone to

A Christian Unity PRAYER MEET
(An Inter-denominational Effort)
On 23.1.2011 Sunday

**AT ST.JOSEPH'S GIRLS' SCHOOL AUDITORIUM (OPP. ST.JOHN'S CHURCH),
PROMENADE ROAD, FRASER TOWN,
BANGALORE – 560005**

AT 4.30 PM TO 6.30 PM

Highlights of the Prayer Meet: *Praise & Worship, Vibrant singing, Spirit filling messages by Bishops, Priests-Pastors, Solemn candle light pledge and Fellowship Tea*

Organized By
Bangalore Zonal United Christian Forum for Human Rights
Rev. M. C. Prasad (CSI) – Chair-Person

Rev. Fr. J. A. Nathan – Secretary
Rev. Daniel Jesudass (Bap) – Vice Chair-Person
Rev. Samuel Rajkumar (Lutheran) – Treasurer
Evan.Mrs. Mira Bhupathi – Joint Secretary

Thai Pongal



Observed by [Tamils](#)

Type Festival, [Tamilnadu](#), [India](#),
[Northern Province, Sri Lanka](#),

Significance Harvest festival. Thanking
Nature for prosperity

Date First day of Thai in the [Tamil
calendar](#)

2011 date [15 January](#)

Celebrations Feasting, gift-giving, visiting homes

Thai Pongal ([Tamil](#): ijg; nghq;fy;) is a [harvest festival](#) celebrated by [Tamils](#) in the Indian state of [Tamil Nadu](#) and in [Sri Lanka](#). Pongal coincides with the festival [Makara Sankranti](#) celebrated throughout India. *Pongal* in Tamil means "boiling over or spill over." The boiling over of milk in the clay pot symbolizes material abundance for the household. Thai Pongal, celebrated at [harvest time](#), is traditionally intended to thank the Sun God and farmstead livestock that helped create the material abundance.

The saying "Thai Pirandhal Vazhi Pirakkum" (ij gpwe;jhy; top gpwf;Fk;) meaning "the commencement of Thai paves the way for new opportunities" is often quoted regarding the Pongal festival^[1] The festival usually occurs from January 13 — 15 in the [Gregorian calendar](#) i.e. the last day of the Tamil month [Maargazhi](#) to the third day of [Thai](#).

Pongal is traditionally dedicated to the Sun God [Surya](#). Tamils thank the solar deity for the good harvest and consecrate the first grain to him on this 'Surya Mangalya'.

- The holiday denotes the start of the Tamil month of Thai (ij). It marks the day when the Sun purportedly shifts northwards. It signifies the commencement of [Uttarayana](#), which represents the northward journey of Sun. The days get longer in the Tamil lands. Thai Pongal falls on [Makara Sankranti](#) celebrated throughout India as the winter harvest. This also represents the Indic solstice when the sun purportedly enters the 10th house of the Indian zodiac i.e. Makara or Capricorn.

History

The holiday may well be 1000 years old although some are of the view that the festival is older. [Epigraphic](#) evidence suggests the celebration of the *Puthiyeedu* during the [Medieval Chola empire](#) days. It is thought that *Puthiyeedu* meant the first harvest of the year.^[2] The Sangam era literary work, the Paripaadal, refers to a fast by unmarried girls in honor of the God Vishnu in the month of Thai, known as the Thai Nonpu. The link between that fast and today's harvest festival needs to be further researched. [Tamils](#) refer to Pongal as "Tamizhar Thirunal" (meaning "the festival of Tamils")^[3] Makara Sankranti in turn is referred to in the Surya Siddhanta.

Bhogi

Bhogi Pandigai / Bhogi Pallu / Lohri / Indra Vizha Nghfpg;gz;bif/ Nghfpg;gs;S/Nyhup

The day preceding Pongal in Tamil Nadu is called **Bhogi** when people discard old things and focus on new belongings (gioad fopjYk; Gjpad GFjYk;). The disposal of derelict things is similar to Holika in North India. The people assemble at dawn in Tamil Nadu

and light a bonfire to discard old used possessions. The house is cleaned, painted and decorated to give a festive look.

This tradition is observed on the same day in Andhra Pradesh as **Bhogi Pallu**, in Punjab as **Lohri** and in Assam as **Magh Bihu** / **Bhogali Bihu**. It was known as the **Indra Vizha** or the festival of Indra in the Sangam era. The God Indra heads the Devas in the Indic pantheon.

Thai Pongal

Pongal Pandigai nghq;fy; gz;bif

Pongal itself falls on the first day of the Tamil month of *Thai* ([January 14](#) or [15](#)). It is celebrated by boiling rice with fresh [milk](#) and [jaggery](#) in new pots. The rice is later topped with brown sugar, [cashew](#) nuts and raisins. This tradition gives Pongal its name.^[1]



[Kolam](#) decorations in front of house during Thai Pongal

The rice is traditionally cooked at sun rise.

The moment the milk boils over and bubbles out of the vessel, the tradition is to shout of "Ponggallo Ponggal!", introduce freshly harvested rice grains in the pot and blow the [sangu](#) (a [conch](#)). Tamils consider it a good sign to watch the milk boil over as it connotes good luck and prosperity. The newly cooked rice is traditionally offered to the Sun God at sunrise to demonstrate gratitude for the harvest. It is later served to the people present in the house for the ceremony. People prepare savories and sweets such as [vadai](#), [murukku](#), [payasam](#), visit each other and exchange greetings.



City Pongal

Tamil Nadu, Sri Lanka - celebrated as **Pongal**

Andhra Pradesh, Bengal, Bihar, Goa, Karnataka, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh - celebrated as [Makara Sankranti](#) or **Sankranti**

Gujarat and Rajasthan celebrated as **Uttarayana**

Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab - celebrated as **Lohri**

Assam - celebrated as [Magh Bihu or Bhogali Bihu](#)

Nepal - celebrated as **Maghe Sankranti**

Tamils draw kolams/rangolis on the door step, consume sugar cane, prepare sweetened rice, milk and jaggery in new earthen pots and dedicate it to Sun God. The family elders present gifts to the young. Elsewhere in India, there is kite flying in Gujarat, the Jahangir Dance in Punjab and the Ganga Sagar Mela in Bengal. Millions of people immerse themselves in rivers in North India and offer prayers to the Sun God - Surya. People offer thousands of their colorful oblations to the Sun in the form of beautiful kites.

The Sun stands for “Pratyaksha Brahman” - the manifest God, who symbolizes the one, non-dual, self-effulgent, glorious divinity blessing one and all tirelessly. The Sun is the one who transcends time and also the one who rotates the proverbial wheel of time.

Maattu Pongal

Mattu Pongal / Kanu Pongal khl;Lg;nghq;fy;> fDg;nghq;fy;

Cattle play an important role in the traditional Indian farmstead be it with regards to the provision of dairy products, its use for ploughing and transport and its provision of fertilizer. This explains the Vedic reference to cattle as wealth. On the day after Pongal, cattle are felicitated. In rural Tamil Nadu, adventurous games such as the Jallikattu or taming the wild bull are features of the day. Mattu Pongal is intended to demonstrate our recognition and affection to cattle and decorate them with garlands, apply kungumam ([kumkum](#)) on their foreheads and feed them good food.

Mattu pongal & the famous Alanganallur [Jallikattu](#)

Mattu pongal is intended to honor the cattle that worked hard throughout the year. The farm bulls are given a bath, their horns painted and adorned with new sarees in some places. In Alanganallur, bulls are set free in a ground where youth who hold on its hump until the victory line are considered victorious. The bulls (and public) suffered injury during this game which led to animal activists taking the matter to the Supreme Court of India which imposed a ban on the tradition[59]. After an undertaking was given from the Government of Tamil Nadu to ensure that animals were not harmed, the apex court lifted its ban with certain conditions. In Alanganallur which is located 17 km Northwest of Madurai Jallikattu is conducted with enthusiasm.

Kanu pidi.....Kanu Pidi () is a tradition that the ladies and young girls of the house follow. Women feed birds and pray for the well being of their brothers. Women of the family place different kinds of coloured rice, cooked vegetables, banana and sweet pongal on a ginger or turmeric leaf and invite the crows, which descend in hordes to share and enjoy the "Kaka pidi, Kanu pidi" feast. Women offer prayers in the hope that the brother-sister ties may remain forever strong like the family of crows.

Kaanum Pongal **fhZk; nghq;fy;** This is a time for family reunions in Tamil Nadu. Brothers pay special tribute to their married sisters by giving gifts as affirmation of their filial love. Landlords present gifts of food, clothes and money to their workforce. During *Kaanum Pongal* (the word *kaanum* means "to view"), people visit relatives and friends to enjoy the festive season. In the cities this day is synonymous with people flocking to beaches and theme parks to have a day out with their families. They also chew [sugar cane](#) and decorate their houses with [kolam](#). This day is a day to thank relatives and friends for their support in the harvest. Although it started as a farmers festival, today it has become a national festival for all Tamils irrespective of their origins, caste or even religion. It is as popular in [urban](#) areas as is in [rural](#) areas.

In [Andhra Pradesh](#), Mukkanuma, the final day of Sankranti festival, is celebrated to worship cattle. Mukkanuma is famous among the non-vegetarians of the society. People do not eat any non-vegetarian during the first three days of the festival and eat it only on the day of Mukkanuma.

Pongal at Temple

Apart from Pongal Day celebrations, cooking pongal rice [community pongal] at Hindu temples is a traditional practice during any Temple Festival in [Tamil Nadu](#). The community will convene to cook pongal rice, partake of it and distribute it to those present. It would often include the sacrifice of a goat or rooster followed by the partaking of non-vegetarian food outside temple premises in certain areas. Only vegetarian food allowed inside temple premises.

jkpo;g; gf;fk;

mtd; mts;.... (njhlu;fij)

Kd;fij RUf;fk;

nry;tpapd; gs;spapy; ahNuh xU jk;gpapdu; mtisj; jj;J vLj;Jf;nfhs;s epidj;jpUg;ghfTk; ,JFwpj;J mts;; ngw;Nwhu;fs; gs;spj;jjiyk Mrpupaiu re;jpf;fNtz;LnkdTk;> nry;tpapd; tFg;ghrpupia xU Nrip ml;il nry;tpaplk; nfhlj;jDg;gpapUe;jhu;. ,ij fz;l nry;tpapd; jha; fdpnkhop kpFe;j NtjidAk; tUj;jKk; mile;jhs;. ,J Fwpj;J mtSf;Fk; mts; fztd; ypNkhTf;Fk; ,ilNa xU ngupa tha;r;rz;ilNa %z;lJ. vy;yhk; Xa;e;jgpd;G midtUk; cwq;fr;nrd;whu;fs;. FLk;gj;jpy; mikjpiaf; fz;l rhj;jhd; Rk;kh ,Ug;ghdh? jdJ Nrl;iliaf; fhz;gpj;jhd;. (fij njhlu;fpwJ)..

cwq;fr; nrd;w fdpnkhof;Fj; Jhf;fk; tutpy;iy. jiyaizapy; Kfk; Gijj;Jf;nfhz;L mOjhs;. vq;Nf nry;tp jd;idtpl;Lg;Ngha;tpLthNsh vd muz;lhs;. ,jw;nfy;yhk; jd; fztd; ypNkhjhd; fhuzk; vd;w KbTf;F te;jhs;. ,UtUf;Fk; ,ilNa fpsk;gpa Gaypy; rpf;fpapUe;j ypNkh gaq;fu fisg;gpdhy; mg;ngnOjhd; Mo;e;J cwq;fpapUe;jhd;. jhd; kl;Lk; kd cisr;rypy; ,Uf;Fk;NghJ ,tu; kl;Lk; kuf;fl;ilg;Nghy Ruizapd;wp Jhq;FfpwhNu vd;w nghwhikapdhy; ypNkhtpd; jiyg; gplupiag; gpbj;jpOj;jhs;. “ vd;dq;f> cq;fsj;jhd;> cq;fSf;F kl;Lk; ey;yh Jhf;fk; tUjh? nry;tpapd; gs;spj; jiyik Mrpupia ek;ikf; fhzNtz;Lnkd mioj;jpUf;fpwhu;fNs> ehk; Nghf;jhd; Ntz;Lkh? ePq;fs; Ntz;Lkhdhy; Ngha; thUq;fs;. ehd; xUfhYk; tukhl;Nld;...” vd;W gpbthjj;Jld; ,iue;jhs;.

“Vz;b ,ijf; Nfl;f ,Jjhd; Neukh? kdpjd; ed;whf epk;kjpah ,Uf;f tplkhl;BNah? Vd; fhiyapy; Nfl;ff; \$lhNjh? Vd; ,e;j nfhiyntwp cdf;F?”

“cq;fis ehd; Jhq;ftplkhl;Nld;> vOe;jpUq;fs;. vdf;F gjpy; nrhy;ypNa MfZk;...” Rdhkp mts; thapy; fpsk;gpapUe;jJ. vd;dr; nra;tJ vd;wwpahj ypNkh mikjpAld; kPz;Lk; fz;%bdhd;. ,ijf; fz;l fdpnkhop rpwpjsTk; fdpT ,d;wp xU nrk;Gf; Fspu;e;j ePiu nfhz;L te;J ypNkhtpd; Kf;jpd; kPJ fhl;lkhf Cw;wpdhs;.

,g;gbAk; xU ngz; ,Uf;fKbAkh vd;W vz;zp Kbtjw;Fs; fdpnkhop jd; Nfhgj;ij ntspapLjtjw;F Clfk; (top) Njbdhs;. jhd; Nghu;j;jpapUe;j fk;gpsia ntLf;nfd;W vLj;njwpe;jhs;. nghWikNa cyfhSk; vd;w KJnkhopia jdjh;fpf;nfhz;bUe;j ypNkh fOj;jpy; jhd; mzpe;jpUe;j rpYitia ,Wf;fpg;; gpbj;Jf;nfhz;lhd;. ‘Mz;ltNu vd;idf; fhg;ghw;W> ,tsplkpUe;J vd;id rPu;gLj;J’ vd;W Ntz;bdhd;.

xU ngz;Zf;F Nfhgk; tuyhk;. Mdhy; gfytd; mts; kPJ m];jkpf;Fk; msTf;F Nfhgk; tUtJ tho;Tf;Ff; NflhdJ. Mdhy; ,tNsh Nfhgj;ijNa tho;thff; nfhz;Ltpl;lNhs vd;W nghWkpdhd; ypNkh. xUNtis ,ts; gpwe;jJ tsu;e;jJ jha; tPl;by; tho;e;jJ ,tisg; ghjpp;jpUf;FNkh? xU tpij vg;gbg;gl;l tpijnad;gijf; fhl;bYk; vj;jifia kz;zpy; tpijf;fg;gLfpwJ vd;gJ jhd; Kf;fpak;. ey;y kz;zpy; tpijf;fg;gLk; tpij EhW gyd; nfhLf;fpwJ vd;fpwhu; ,NaR Mz;ltu;. ek; ,jak;; epyj;ijg;Nghd;wJ. ek; vz;z; k; tpijiag;Nghd;wJ. ey;y vz;zq;fis ehk; tpijj;jhy; md;G vd;w gapu; Kisj;J ew;nray; vd;w fdpiaf; nfhLf;fpwJ. ew;fdpahdJ kfpo;r;rp mikjp epk;kjp vd;w ,dpikiaj; jUfpwJ.

,J xt;nthU fztd; kidtpf;Fk; gps;isfSf;Fk; nghUe;Jk;. ypNkh Nghd;w fztd; ,Ue;jhYk; fdpnkhop Nghd;w fdpNt ,y;yhj kidtp mike;Jtpl;lhy; ey;y epyj;jpw;Fk; ey;y gapUf;Fk; ew;fdpf;Fk; kfpo;r;rp;Fk; gQ;rk;jhd;. vj;jid Kiw kd;dpg;gJ? VO Kiwah? vd;w rPlu; ,uhag;gupd; Nfs;tpf;F> “VOKiwad;W VOKiw vOgJKiw” vd;fpwhu; Mz;ltu;. fztd; kidtpf;fpilNa vy;iyaw;w kd;dpg;G ,Ue;jhy; kl;LNk FLk;gk; FLk;gkhf ,Uf;Fk; ,y;iynadpy; Rl;nlupf;Fk; jzyhf ,Uf;Fk;.

fdpnkhof;F Vd; ,j;jid Nfhgk;? Vd; ,j;jid MNtrk;? ,j;jid ntWg;G? ,j;jid fhl;lk;?..... mg;ngnOj mtSf;F MW taJ ,Uf;Fk;. jha; khkd; guhkupg;gpy; tsu;e;j fhyk;. ngw;Nwhu; ,UtiuAk; mts; ghuj;jpUf;ftpy;iy. mg;gh mk;kh ahnud;W \$l mwpe;jpuhj gUtk;. xU ehs;..... (njhlUk;)

je;ij ehjd;

