



Mass. He received the holy ash from priest; prayed well and took a decision to attend regularly Sunday Mass henceforth, to say the Lenten prayers, fasting and other Lenten activities. He became so devoted along with his family that he did not miss any Way of the Cross on Lenten Fridays. He participated in the Good Friday fasting and service. The feast of Easter came and went. He took part in all the activities the Holy week. He was very happy that he fulfilled the Lenten obligations. He was a happy man.

Now this man Roberto, who was so devoted and committed to Lenten penance, felt a great force within to go back to his old lose life with his usual habits of drinking, lustful activities, defrauding practises and so on. He thought, Lent is only for 40 days and one could go back to the usual sinful habits and lose life after that.

This is what many of our Catholic faithful do. Both religious and laity are in the same boat in this regard. I know many priests, pastors, religious who discriminate people in their dealings with them based on caste, language, colour and sex and status. Some parishes do not allow people of other language who may be in great majority to have services in their languages. Out right, they deny people's right of worship in their language. They ostracise individuals on various occasions just because they don't like other language group. Prejudice works in them more than love of Christ. They behave as if they have come down from heaven. Just because they are empowered with position and money, they rule their subjects with iron hand and ruthlessness. Their choices are made of likes and dislikes and not on convictions of life chosen. Yet they celebrate Holy Mass as representatives of Christ. Many Christian school principals, Head Masters/Mistresses reject people's cause and still they call themselves representatives of Christ. They fail to be salt of the earth and light of the nations (Mt.6:20). Christians (faithful) divided on the basis of denomination, language, caste, rite and so on cannot render living witness to Christ. They go against their Christian conscience. One step above, they fail to recognize their own conscience in their relationship with neighbours, relatives, friends, and strangers.

In other words we are called to be like lotus on the water untouched by the world. We should be in the living water of Christ detached from the evil ways of life. **"My kingdom does not belong to this world"** Jn.18:

In our Church, everyone needs conversion, everyone needs change of heart. Whether one is addressed as Holiness, Guru, Swamy, Eminence, Grace, Excellency, Lordship, Father, Rev, Pastor, Sister, Brother, Mr. Or Mrs, everyone is under the obligation of conversion during this Lent.. Because all of us by human weakness have harmed someone or some group; we have done injustice to someone or some group. We have failed to love someone or some group. Acceptance of one's weakness and sin is the first step for change of life. **"Lord, forgive me for I am a sinner"** Lk.15:18

Right attitude towards God, other and oneself will build the human society. This is what we need. Change of attitude is must if you want to observe Lent and to celebrate Easter. Give equal rights to those who are due for it. By denying their socio-cultural and liturgical rights you deny Christ and you become anti-Christian. The fact you deny justice to someone or some group, then you are another Hosny Mubarack, one day you will be dethroned. God will bring that dethronement (Read Prophet Joel). Thus God calls us for conversion during this Lent.

If don't have love for everyone, what you have achieved is just a zero. To society you may be hero, you may draw respect and honour just because you have power and position, but if you don't have love, you are a noisy gong. I Cor.13:1



# The Season of Lent

**Theme:** *Retreating Into the Wilderness with Jesus*

**Dates:** Lent is a forty-day period before Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday. We skip Sundays when we count the forty days, because Sundays commemorate the Resurrection. Lent begins on 9 March 2011 and ends on 23 April 2011, which is the day before Easter.

In the Roman Catholic Church, Lent officially ends at sundown on 21 April (Holy Thursday), with the beginning of the mass of the Lord's Supper.

**Colors:** In most churches, the decorations are purple, the royal color, to prepare for the King. You can read [more about color in worship](#)

**Scripture Readings:** The Revised Common Lectionary appoints Scripture readings for use in worship during the Season of Lent.

**The East:** In Orthodox churches, this season is called the Great Lent. It begins on Clean Monday.

**Special Days:** Ash Wednesday, 9 March 2011, The Annunciation, 25 March

**L**ent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. All churches that have a continuous history extending before AD 1500 observe Lent. The ancient church that wrote, collected, canonized, and propagated the New Testament also observed Lent, believing it to be a commandment from the apostles. (See *The Apostolic Constitutions*, Book V, Section III.)

## The Western Church

Because Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, we skip over Sundays when we calculate the length of Lent. Therefore, in the Western Church, Lent always begins on [Ash Wednesday](#), the seventh Wednesday before Easter.

In many countries, the last day before Lent (called Mardi Gras, Shrove Tuesday, Carnival, or Fasching) has become a last fling before the solemnity of Lent. For centuries, it was customary to fast by abstaining from meat during Lent, which is why some people call the festival *Carnival*, which is Latin for *farewell to meat*.

## The Eastern Church

The Eastern Church does not skip over Sundays when calculating the length of the Great Lent. Therefore, the Great Lent always begins on Clean Monday, the seventh Monday before Easter, and ends on the Friday before Palm Sunday—using of course the eastern date for Easter. The Lenten fast is relaxed on the weekends in honor of the Sabbath (Saturday) and the Resurrection (Sunday). The Great Lent is followed by Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday, which are feast days, then the Lenten fast resumes on Monday of Holy Week. Technically, in the Eastern Church, Holy Week is a separate season from the Great Lent.

## Special Days

The purpose of the liturgical calendar is to relive the major events in Jesus' life in real time, which is why Lent is forty days long. If Jesus were born on 25 December, then His conception—thus also His incarnation—would have been nine months earlier, on about 25 March. That is when the angel Gabriel would have announced Jesus' birth to Mary. Thus 25 March is known in the historic church as *The Annunciation*.

*Roughly speaking, the western Church consists of Protestants, Catholics, and Anglicans. The Eastern Church consists of the Eastern Orthodox churches, the Oriental Orthodox churches, and the eastern-rite churches affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.*

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## Pope John Paul II & Me

By Fr.J.Arokianathan

The year 2011 commemorates the silver Jubilee year of Pope John Paul II's first visit to India. Here you read a glimpse of my experience with this holy pope.

On Feb 5, 1986, Pope John Paul II arrived in Chennai. He celebrated Holy Mass in the Marina Beach witnessed by 5 lakh Christians and non-Christians alike. I was then studying in St.Peter's Pontifical Seminary, Bangalore in the II Year Theology. The Seminary gave us a break for some reason. Along with my mother, and my sister's family I travelled from Bangalore to Chennai. When I saw the pope from afar in the crowd, I did not imagine that I would be meeting him one day in person. Yes, like the Bay of Bengal the Marina Beach looked like a ocean of people,

It was after 8 years of his papacy Pope John Paul II paid his first pastoral visit to India. We knew not that this pope would be one day a saint. Yes, indeed Pope John Paul II is certainly a saint though there is long way ahead for canonization. Already he was declared 'Venerable' by our present Pope Benedict XVI and he is to be beatified by May 1, 2011 at Vatican.

Well, all through the roads and streets of Chennai hung his cut outs, posters, pictures and banners. I felt as if India was witnessing the coming of Jesus Christ himself. Before he visited Chennai, the pope landed in New Delhi on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 1986. As he was descending down

the steps of the aircraft, he kissed the Indian soil as a mark of his respect and love for India. He never failed to kiss any nation's soil during his visits. A shrewd love for people indeed!

And the year 2011 marks the 25 years completion of his first visit to India. Later he came back to New Delhi in 1999 Nov in view of presenting the final document '**Ecclesia in Asia**' (his apostolic exhortation) of the Asian Bishops synod held in Vatican Ap-May1998. During both the pastoral journeys of the pope John Paul II, there had been oppositions and criticisms from many anti-Christian groups mainly from Hindu Sang Parivar-BJP-RSS-Shiva Sena-Bhajrangdal alliance. But nothing could stop the world's most renowned leader entering into India. After all his visit was not merely as a spiritual leader of the Catholic Religion, world's largest religion, but also as the leader of the world's smallest city state **Vatican**. Thus the pope was honoured by the Indian govt both as spiritual leader as well as a State leader.

I never imagined in my life that I would meet this great pope on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> 1996 in Castel Gondolfo his summer residence, situated on a hill, about 40 kms from Rome. During summer between July and August every pope would stay at Castel Gondolfo, for a rest.

It was a pleasant evening. The pope after delivering a brief message to the pilgrims who had gathered down the balcony, met those who were invited. I too was one among those few waiting very eagerly to have a personal glimpse of this most loved pope. It was 7.15 pm. Saturday. I went up to a lengthy room where there were 10 official invitees both religious and laity. I had dressed in Roman clerical suit with all neat priestly paraphernalia. ***When you are in Rome, be a Roman!***

I was trembling with great respect for this most holy leader of the world. After his message and blessing, the pope who was 5.6' and stout in stature came walking towards us. Although he was hospitalized so many times and had many surgeries, his health remained static. he was suffering from Parkinson disease. However he never looked tired or discouraged Because Christ was with him. My heart beat was quite fast when he was nearing me. It was a heavenly bliss to be with him so close. Rev. Fr.Pasquale Borgomeo, SJ, the then Radio Vatican Director accompanied me to the Holy Father and introduced me to him. That was the second best moment of my life the first being my ordination time!



In fact, I had carried a sandal wood garland from Bangalore. I put the garland around the pope's neck, hugged him and shook hands with him.

However, when I hugged him, I felt a swift current of spiritual power running through me that moment. The Polish Pope was just looking at me with a smile and asked me in Italian “Da Kerala?” (Are you from Kerala?). I knew little Italian to speak. I had done a course in Italian here in Bangalore before I left for Rome (on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July 1996). The Holy Father’s question startled me. I saw grace and holiness in him. Looking straight at his face, I replied in English, “No Papa, I am from Tamilnadu for Bangalore archdiocese!” Then I became speechless standing before this great personality. Probably the Holy Father’s impression could have been that any priest from India would be from Kerala, a wrong impression that was created, for a large number of religious going to Rome for studies then were from Kerala. Then the pope offered me a rosary in a leather case as a gift. I don’t think you would have had this very special experience indeed! Yeah!

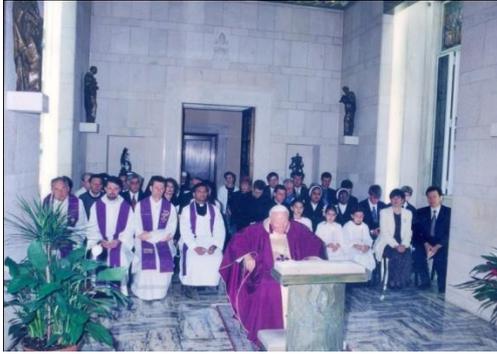
I cannot forget Fr.Federico Lombardi, the then Programme Director in the Radio Vatican. Today he is the Official spokesperson for the Holy See. So good a man, he was a serious but able man in his broadcasting administration. I owe him a lot. In all my five years, he appreciated my enthusiasm and my smart way of presenting my programme in the air.

Fr.Pasquale Borgomeo an Italian Jesuit priest approved my selection to work in the Radio Vatican as a journalist and broadcaster in the Tamil section. He was from Milan. He was kind and gentle in all my dealings with him. He had great respect for Indian religious. He supported me both financially as well as officially in releasing of my music album in Tamil about the Great Jubilee 2000. He played a big role in my ministry in the Radio Vatican. Unfortunately Fr.Borgomeo died some years ago. May his soul rest in peace!

### **My selection to Vatican Radio**

No one thought I would be invited by the Vatican to work for the Holy See for 5 years. Many priests from Bangalore or Karnataka would go to Rome. But for the first time in history a Tamil priest from Bangalore archdiocese selected for Radio Vatican Tamil section a rarest of the rare things indeed! I consider this a matter of pride in whole of my priestly career. My soul magnified the Lord for He had done a marvel in my life. Here I will never forget Most Rev.Dr.Alphonsus Mathias, the best archbishop of Bangalore I ever came across. In midst of objections, he encouraged and allowed me to go to Rome. He was a true guide to priests and people. I thank him a lot for all that he had been to me. May God bless him.

### **My second meeting with Pope John Paul II**



Once again I met Pope John Paul II on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1998 in his papal residence, in Vatican, just 0.5 km from my residence Casa Romana del Clero, a 5 story apartment at Via della Conciliazione. The apartment is meant for those bishops, priests of different nationality working in various Congregations and Pontifical Councils. In fact I had applied for a ticket to attend one of the pope's daily Mass in his private Chapel. To fetch a ticket for pope's private Mass is not easy. But in my case, just in few hours after my request, I obtained a ticket to enter into the Vatican palace, built so elegantly with long corridors and beatified with paintings and sculptural touch. It was easy to get access to Vatican if you are a Vatican staff. Thus I fetched another two tickets for two Indian sisters Sr.Sheela Selvaraj and Sr.Jacintha both from John the Baptist congregation. They were extremely joyful to attend the mass.

I was very fortunate to read gospel reading during that Mass. A Polish Bishop Stanislaus Dwiecieszynski (now Cardinal) who was in charge of the pope's private religious ceremonies, offered me that opportunity to do gospel reading in Italian. I gladly accepted the chance, felt very great to be next to this saintly pope John Paul II that few moments.



But what I detested when I met the Pope John Paul II after the mass was that he asked me the same question "are you from Kerala?"(This he had asked me already in 1996 Aug 3, during my first meeting with him). I hope by now the trend is changed. Although it was Pope John Paul II who received religious from all nations into the Holy See more than any other pope, probably his impression at that time must have been created based on the colour of skin of priests or may be by number of religious coming from a particular country. Well the holy Pope offered me during this time too as he would do every time, a rosary that I preserved for long. I revered him and respected him a lot for all his dynamism. My personal encounters with Pope John Paul II during that



12. Joseph Selvan	Rs. 6000 (Six Thousand)
13. Agnel (Andheri)	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
14. Beena	Rs. 1000 (One Thousand)
15. Augustine Lakra	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
16. Valentina	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
17. John P.V	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
18. Leroy Colaco	Rs.10000 (Ten Thousand)
19. Clarence Louis	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
20. Xavier Fernando	Rs.10000 (Ten Thousand)
21. Sunitha William	Rs.10000 (Ten Thousand)
22. Dr.Xavier Joseph	Rs.30000 (Thirty Thousand)
23. Elias Quadros	Rs.10000 (Ten Thousand)
24. Martin Rosario	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
25. Philip Neena Singh	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
26. Antony Monteiro	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
27. Kevin D'Souza	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
28. Biju John	Rs. 25000 (Twenty five Thousand)
29. Prakash Paul	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
30. Siby Joseph	Rs. 2500 (Two thousand five hundred)
31. Francis Antony	Rs. 25000 (Twenty Thousand)
32. Johny Jacob	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
33. Melwyn D'souza	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
34. P.A.George	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
35. Andrew	Rs. 2000 (Two thousand)
36. Asokan	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
37. J.A.Dass	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
38. Biju Joseph	Rs. 3000 (Three Thousand)
39. D.Anthony	Rs. 10000 (Ten Thousand)
40. Venance Crasta	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
41. Vincent de Paul	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
42. John Roselin	Rs. 3000 (Three Thousand)
43. P.P.Pius	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
44. Vinaya Chandra	Rs. 25000 (Twenty Five Thousand)
45. A.George	Rs. 2000 (Two thousand)
46. Kuriakose	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
47. Joviel raj	Rs. 10000 (Ten Thousand)
48. Arul Mary Joachim	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
49. Benjamin Ganesh	Rs. 2000 (Two Thousand)
50. Robert Lewis	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
51. Francis Narohna	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
52. Xavier	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
53. Shanthamary	Rs. 500 (Five hundred)
54. Allen D'Souza	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
55. A.Shanthappa	Rs. 1000 (One Thousand)

56. Stany Fernandes	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
57. Joseph Thomas	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
58. OP George	Rs. 20000 (Twenty Thousand)
59. Astrid Jaipal	Rs. 1000 (One Thousand)
60. John Wilfred	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
61. Irudayam	Rs. 3000 (Three Thousand)
62. Prabhakar	Rs. 10000 (Ten Thousand)
63. Michael Jose	Rs. 3000 (Three Thousand)
64. John K. Joseph	Rs. 10000 (Ten Thousand)
65. Rajesh Rosario	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
66. V.J. Anthony	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
67. Dominick Paul	Rs. 10000 (Ten Thousand)
68. Robin D' Cruz	Rs. 100000 (One Lakh)
69. Louis	Rs. 1000 (One Thousand)
70. Leo Dominick	Rs. 3000 (Three Thousand)
71. Matu Mula Peter (Tanzania)	Rs. 5000 (Five Thousand)
72. Arul Mary Joachim	Rs. 10,000 (Ten Thousand)
73. Maria Eugene Jude	Rs. 30000 (Thirty Thousand)

So far (as on 6.3.2011) received **Rs.6,01,940** (Six Lakh One Thousand Nine Forty only)

**Thank you once again dear friends.** We will pray for your intentions in our daily Mass.

The parish of St. Peter's is situated at Rustumbagh, a residential zone just behind Manipal Hospital, Old Airport Road, Bangalore. It consists of nearly 300 families belonging to Tamil, Malayalam, English, Konkani, Kannada, Hindi and Telugu communities. All are not well to do. The present structure that we use for liturgy now, was not a planned Church building but a mini hall. It accommodates only 300 people. But as day by day new families enter into the parish area, from Goa, Kerala, Mangalore, Mumbai, Tamilnadu and other places, there arose a need for bigger place for worship.

Thus after a long effort, we were able to fetch sanction plan approval from the City Corporation. The new building that is under construction will consist of huge Church hall along with a balcony and thereby it could accommodate 1200 people.

The project's cost is estimated as Rs.1 Crore and 25 lakh. A big portion of this amount will be borne by the parish although the archdiocese is sharing a major part of it,

Hence we look forward to your financial assistance. Even if it is little, your generous heart is all that matters for us.

Thus any contribution from anywhere is all welcome towards this good and useful project.

If cheque, please write it in favour of "**St. Peter's Church building Fund, Rustumbagh**"

A/C No. 0485 20100 53656 Syndicate Bank, Manipal Hospital Branch, Bangalore..

Please forward it to FR.J.AROKIANATHAN, THE PARISH PRIEST, ST.PETER'S CHURCH, BEHIND MANIPAL HOSPITAL, RUSTUMBAGH, OLD AIRPORT ROAD, BANGALORE – 560017.

TEL: 080-25264343.n MOB: 09740203056, EMAIL: [nathanvatican@yahoo.com](mailto:nathanvatican@yahoo.com)

**Report: PARISH PRIEST**

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## **LENTEN SERVICE TIME TABLE AT ST.PETER'S, RUSTAMBAGH**

WAY OF THE CROSS: EVERY FRIDAY: 5.00 PM: KANNADA & TAMIL

6.00 PM: MASS FOLLOWED BY WOC IN  
ENGLISH

### ***HOLY WEEK PROGRAMMES:***

**PASSION SUNDAY:** 7.30 AM: KANNADA & TAMIL

9.30 AM: ENGLISH

**HOLY THURSDAY:** 6.30 PM MASS OF THE LAST  
SUPPER FOLLOWED BY ADORATION AT THE  
ALTAR OF REPOSE

**GOOD FRIDAY:** WOC : 8.00 AM in Konkani

9.00 AM in English

10.00 AM in Kannada

11.00 AM in Tamil

12.00 Noon in Malayalam

6.00 PM :LITURGY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

**HOLY SATURDAY:** 10.00 PM: EASTER VIGIL

(Please bring a candle for the Service)

**EASTER DAY:** 7.30 AM MASS IN KANNADA & TAMIL

9.30 AM MASS IN

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## ECUMENISM

### *3 Anglican married Bishops embrace Catholic clerical life (Holy See Issues Decree Creating New Ordinariate)*

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 16, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)).- The Holy See issued the decree of erection for the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham for Anglicans wishing to enter the Catholic Church.

The Vatican press office issued a statement Saturday announcing the creation of this ordinariate in England and Wales.

It stated: "In accordance with the provisions of the apostolic constitution 'Anglicanorum coetibus' of Pope Benedict XVI (November 4, 2009) and after careful consultation with the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has today erected a personal ordinariate within the territory of England and Wales for those groups of Anglican clergy and faithful who have expressed their desire to enter into full visible communion with the Catholic Church.

"The Decree of Erection specifies that the ordinariate will be known as the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham and will be placed under the patronage of Blessed John Henry Newman."

Cardinal William Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, publicized a message Saturday in which he affirmed that the establishment of this ordinariate "marks a unique and historic moment in the life of the Catholic community in this country."

He added, "It is my fervent hope that, by enabling what the Holy Father calls 'a mutual exchange of gifts from our respective spiritual patrimonies,' the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham will bring great blessings not only on those directly involved in it, but upon the whole Church."

The Vatican communiqué affirmed that this structure "seeks to balance on the one hand the concern to preserve the worthy Anglican liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions and, on the other hand, the concern that these groups and their clergy will be fully integrated into the Catholic Church."

#### Clergy

The first clergy of this ordinariate, who were formerly Anglican bishops, were ordained to the Catholic priesthood on Saturday: Father Andrew Burnham, Father Keith Newton, and Father John Broadhurst.

Benedict XVI nominated Father Newton as the first ordinary to head this new community.

Cardinal Levada explained that these three clergy "will oversee the catechetical preparation of the first groups of Anglicans in England and Wales who will be received into the Catholic Church together with their pastors at Easter."

They will also "accompany the clergy preparing for ordination to the Catholic priesthood around Pentecost."

The Vatican communiqué noted that "the provision of this new structure is consistent with the commitment to ecumenical dialogue, which continues to be a priority for the Catholic Church."

It explained: "The initiative leading to the publication of the apostolic constitution and the erection of this personal ordinariate came from a number of different groups of Anglicans who have declared that they share the common Catholic faith as it is expressed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and accept the Petrine ministry as something Christ willed for the Church.

"For them, the time has now come to express this implicit unity in the visible form of full communion."

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## Pakistan minorities minister assassinated

### Slain Cabinet Minister Is Buried in Pakistan

A Martyr for Christ the Truth and the Life



*Martha Jacob, second from right, is the mother of Shahbaz Bhatti, who was assassinated Wednesday outside his Islamabad home*

Gunmen shot dead a Catholic Pakistani government minister on Wednesday, after he had vowed to defy death threats following the murder of another politician opposed to an Islamic blasphemy law.

In broad daylight, unknown assailants sprayed at least 25 bullets on the car of minorities minister Shahbaz Bhatti after he came out of his mother's home in a residential area of Islamabad, police said.

"Three or four armed men riding in a white Suzuki car intercepted his official vehicle," city police chief Wajid Durrani told reporters.

"The attackers were clad in shawls and fired bursts on him, and he died," Durrani said.

The police chief insisted that Bhatti, 42, had been provided with proper security, but said the minister was not accompanied by his security detail when the attack happened.

"The squad officer told me that the minister had directed him to wait for him at his office. He used to often visit his mother's house without a squad," Durrani said. "We are investigating the matter from different angles."

Local resident Naseem Ahmed said the firing continued for about 30 seconds.

"We came out of our home after hearing the gunfire, we saw the car, it was badly damaged. We saw the minister, he was rushed to hospital in a critical condition," Ahmed told reporters.

Bhatti was dead on arrival at Islamabad's Shifa hospital, doctor Azmatullah Qureshi confirmed. Police said his body was riddled with at least eight bullets.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani visited the hospital and offered condolences to Bhatti's grieving relatives.

"Such acts will not deter the government's resolve to fight [terrorism](#) and extremism," he said, adding that the killers would not go unpunished.

Bhatti, a member of Pakistan's tiny Christian community, had been a vocal opponent of the controversial blasphemy law along with the liberal late governor of Punjab province, Salman Taseer.

Taseer, a senior figure in the main ruling Pakistan People's Party, was shot dead on January 4 by one of his own police bodyguards outside an Islamabad coffee shop.

The murder -- the most high-profile political assassination in Pakistan since former prime minister Benazir Bhutto was killed in December 2007 -- drew condemnation from the United States and Europe.

But Taseer's confessed killer has been feted as a hero by Islamist hardliners, who like the bodyguard rejoiced at the death of an "apostate".

After Taseer's assassination, Bhatti said he was also receiving death threats, telling AFP that he was "the highest target right now".

But he had insisted that he would work as usual.

"I'm not talking about special security arrangements. We need to stand against these forces of terrorism because they're terrorising the country," Bhatti said at the time.

"I cannot trust on security.... I believe that protection can come only from heaven, so these bodyguards can't save you."

Pakistan's law against blaspheming Islam carries the death penalty. While no one has ever been sent to the gallows for the [crime](#), activists say the law is used to exploit others from personal enmity or because of business disputes.

Religious groups held protests in several Pakistani cities after Taseer had vowed to amend the law.

Controversy over the legislation flared both within Pakistan and internationally after a Christian mother of five, Aasia Bibi, was sentenced to hang last year for making derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohammed.

Bibi was arrested in June 2009 after Muslim female labourers refused to drink from a bowl of water she was asked to fetch while out working in the fields.

Days later, the local women complained that she had made derogatory remarks about Mohammed. Bibi was set upon by a mob, arrested by police and sentenced on November 8.

Politicians and conservative clerics have been at loggerheads over whether Bibi should be pardoned. But following Taseer's death, the government has made it clear it does not support reform of the blasphemy law.

Bhatti headed the All Pakistan Minorities Alliance and was also chairman of the Christian Liberation Front. Only around three percent of Pakistan's population of 167 million are estimated to be non-Muslim.

Wednesday, March 2 10:25 am



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**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan** — Shahbaz Bhatti, the Christian cabinet minister who was assassinated this week, was honored Friday at a Roman Catholic service here attended by thousands and then buried in his impoverished village, a bastion for over 100 years for the rights of minorities.



Thousands turned out Friday to honor Mr. Bhatti at a Roman Catholic service in Islamabad.

Prime Minister [Yousaf Raza Gilani](#) was the only senior Pakistani government official to attend. There was a phalanx of foreign diplomats, including the American ambassador, Cameron P. Munter, who sat in a pew near Mr. Bhatti's coffin.

Mr. Bhatti had served as the minister for minorities and dedicated his life to religious tolerance in this increasingly radicalized Muslim country. [His killing on Wednesday](#) underlined the anxieties among Western governments that extremists were using targeted killings as a way to move [Pakistan](#) toward an Islamic state and were doing so with impunity.

Mr. Bhatti's assassination followed [the killing in January of an even more prominent politician, Salman Taseer](#), the governor of Punjab. The men campaigned for the reform of draconian blasphemy laws that are often used to persecute minorities, particularly Christians. Mr. Taseer was killed by his government bodyguard, who was widely hailed in Pakistani society after he confessed.

Diplomats at Mr. Bhatti's funeral at Our Lady of Fatima Church said they feared that the minister was killed on information provided by his government security detail. A branch of the Pakistani Taliban based in Punjab, where militants control many of the schools and mosques, claimed responsibility for the killing.

After multiple death threats in recent months, Mr. Bhatti rarely traveled with his security guards because he did not trust them, a Western diplomat said. The minister tried to take his own security measures — for example, sleeping at his mother's house instead of his own — but the killers knew where to find him, the diplomat said, citing the likelihood of leaks from the security detail.

Another diplomat said that the government, which so far has proved unwilling or unable to take a strong stand against the killings, would try to offer compensation to Mr. Bhatti's family and then close the case.

The ruling [Pakistan Peoples Party](#), which was founded on secular principles but is now under pressure from religious conservatives, announced recently that it opposed efforts to amend the blasphemy law.

But the dismay of Mr. Bhatti's family and the angry atmosphere at the funeral, in Khush Pur in Punjab, indicated that Pakistan's Christians — about five million out of a total population of 180 million — were unlikely to let the matter rest.

“We feel that Pakistan is our country, but it seems there is no government in the country, ever, which gave us shade and protected us and fully respected our rights,” said the Rev.

Andrew Nisari, one of the Catholic clergymen at the burial. “Will we be living in this hostile, harassed and fearful environment forever?”

About 10,000 mostly poor people attended the funeral, many hailing Mr. Bhatti as a local hero and now a martyr. But anxiety mingled with pride.

“The enemy is around us and hovering over us, so please be careful,” a loudspeaker announcement said before the arrival of Mr. Bhatti’s coffin by helicopter from Islamabad. Some mourners hoisted placards reading: “Shahbaz’s blood will lead to revolution.”

In most predominantly Christian villages in Punjab, many residents work as employees of large landlords in a relationship that resembles a caste system, with the Christians at the bottom. But in Khush Pur, founded during British rule in 1903 by a Roman Catholic priest, most residents have small farm holdings. The village has a particular tradition of fighting for religious rights.

[A Roman Catholic bishop, John Joseph, who shot himself in 1998 in protest against the blasphemy laws](#), was born in the village and is buried here. In a rare honor last September, [Pope Benedict XVI](#) met Mr. Bhatti in a private audience at the [Vatican](#).

In recent weeks, Mr. Bhatti, despondent about the murder of Mr. Taseer and fearing for his own life, sought advice on how to persist in his campaign for tolerance in the face of such threats.

“We talked heart to heart a few days before he died,” Farhatullah Babar, the spokesman for President [Asif Ali Zardari](#), said after attending Mr. Bhatti’s funeral. “He asked: ‘What should I do?’ I told him: ‘You are a sane voice. You must continue.’ ”

*Jane Perlez reported from Islamabad, and Waqar Gillani from Khush Pur, Pakistan.*

*This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:*

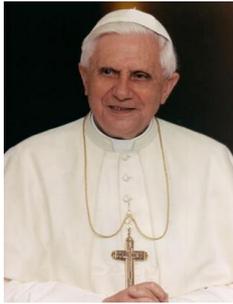
**Correction: March 4, 2011**

*A previous version of this article misstated that President Asif Ali Zardari had attended the funeral of Shahbaz Bhatti; his spokesman, Farhatullah Babar, attended*

Report: . By [JANE PERLEZ](#) and WAQAR GILLANI

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**News from Christian world**



## **Pope is "Happy" about John Paul II**

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 16, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)).- Regarding the upcoming beatification of John Paul II, Benedict XVI is affirming, "We are happy!"

The Pope expressed this today in an address before praying the midday Angelus together with those gathered in St. Peter's Square.

"As you know," he said, "on May 1 I will have the joy of beatifying Venerable Pope John Paul II, my beloved predecessor."

The forthcoming beatification was announced by the Vatican on Friday, when the Pontiff authorized the promulgation of a decree regarding the miracle attributed to the intercession of Venerable Servant of God John Paul II (Karol Wojtyla).

Benedict XVI explained that the date that has been chosen for the beatification "is very significant."

"It will be the Second Sunday of Easter," the Pope stated, which John Paul II entitled "Divine Mercy Sunday" and "on the eve of which his earthly life ended."

The Pontiff concluded, "Those who knew him, those who esteemed and loved him, cannot but rejoice with the Church for this event."

The former prefect of the Congregation for Saints' Causes, Cardinal José Saraiva Martins, told ZENIT that "Karol Wojtyla's beatification will be a greatly joyful event because he was a much loved man, by believers but also by non-believers."

He explained that the recognition of the miracle "is a seal" that "God gives respect to the work of a man or a woman who has demonstrated with heroic virtue fidelity to the Gospel."

For some, the cardinal said, "heroism goes to the point of martyrdom because of the faith; for the majority it is responding to the end to one's humanity, in whatever condition of life."

In other words, he explained, it is "to live the ordinary in an extraordinary way."

"If a miracle occurs thanks to the intercession of someone who is invoked," the cardinal said, "this means that he and God are in communion and this is sanctity."

The prelate had many memories of Pope John Paul II, who he described as "a man with traits of generous humanity to whom the people felt very close."

More than anything, however, it was "his strong faith" that impressed people, the cardinal said.

Cardinal Martins recalled, "It happened that for reasons of work one was invited to dine with the Pope who, before sitting down at table, would go to his private chapel together with his guests."

There, the prelate said, "he was capable of immersing himself in prayer in such a profound way, totally taken up in his relationship with God even if only for the space of a few minutes, which was in itself an evident testimony of his sanctity."

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## **Death for Blasphemy in Pakistan**

Hundreds of Christians in Punjab have demanded the release of Asia

Bibi, a Pakistani Catholic woman sentenced to death for blasphemy. The Christian Front Punjab held a demonstration on Feb. 19 at Attari on the Indo-Pak border urging the neighboring country to repeal its blasphemy laws which they alleged are being used against religious minorities. Church of North India Bishop P.K. Samantaroy of Amritsar said they have contacted various Christian bodies to build pressure on the Pakistan government to scrap the blasphemy law. "It is unfortunate that Christians are being targeted under the controversial law," he added.

A court in Pakistan on Nov. 7, 2010 sentenced 45-year-old Bibi to death, accepting the prosecution version that she had passed derogatory remarks about Prophet Mohammed. The woman was in jail for the last one year in connection with the crime. She was forced to defend her religion when Muslim women on June 19, 2009 termed her as "infidel" and Christianity a "religion of infidels" and pressed her to embrace Islam. Bibi and her children were allegedly beaten up after the incident.

### **Protests Against Somashekar Commission's Report In Bangalore**

Over 10,000 Christians braved heavy rain to take part in a rally in Bangalore to protest against an enquiry commission's report on the 2008 church attacks in Karnataka. The protesters demanded the state government reject the B.K. Somashekara commission report for not identifying people who attacked the churches. The rally was organized by the Karnataka United Christians Forum of Human Rights.

Archbishop Bernard Moras of Bangalore and the forum president called on the Christians to "boldly profess and propagate our faith." He noted that so far there have been 300 attacks on churches in the state since the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian people's party) came to power in 2008. Bishop Vasanth Kumar, moderator of the Protestant Church of South India, said Indians have the right to practise, preach and propagate their religion.

### **In Mangalore**

At a similar protest in Mangalore on February 20, more than 100,000 people held a silent march. Eighteen Protestant and Catholic bishops had on February 18 submitted a memorandum to chief minister B.S. Yeddyurappa and the governor demanding withdrawal of cases lodged against over 150 Christian youths in connection with the attacks. State home minister R. Ashok had in turn announced that the government would take appropriate steps to withdraw as many as 338 cases filed against Christian youth. The ecumenical forum is planning protest

rallies in various parts of the state in the coming days against the probe report.

### **Christian School Burnt in Srinagar, Kashmir**

Miscreants on 19 February burned a Christian school, resulting in property damages of about Rs. 60 Lacs in Srinagar, Kashmir. It was reported that at about 10:30 p.m, some miscreants set on fire St. Paul's International School. Eight rooms including the class rooms, library and computer rooms were completely burned down. Speaking to EFI, the principal of the school, Grace Paljor said, that prior to the incident, she was threatened verbally a number of times by some group of people for being a Christian. Investigations are underway.

Many experts believe the government has more than enough political support. Following a five decade long agitation, almost every opposition party -- barring of course the BJP -- has extended support

### **EU Condemns Anti-Christian Terrorist Acts**

The foreign ministers of the Council of the European Union issued a statement condemning terrorist acts against Christians and other religious groups. This statement, publicized Monday at the conclusion of a foreign affairs council meeting in Brussels, affirmed "the strong commitment of the European Union to the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief without any discrimination." The council expressed "its profound concern about the increasing number of acts of religious intolerance and discrimination, as epitomized by recent violence and acts of terrorism, in various countries, against Christians and their places of worship, Muslim pilgrims and other religious communities, which it firmly condemns." It also offered "condolences and solidarity to the countries and individual victims of such acts and pays tribute to the commitment of countries to prevent them."

"Freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected everywhere and for everyone," the statement affirmed. It asserted that "all persons belonging to religious communities and minorities should be able to practice their religion and worship freely, individually or in community with others, without fear of intolerance and attacks." The council called on the international community "to consolidate its collective response to those who want to use religion as an instrument of division, fuelling extremism and violence." It also urged the high representative, Catherine Ashton, to "report on the measures taken and on concrete proposals to further strengthen the European Union action in this regard."

### **Nun's husband to be ordained**

A Lutheran convert will be ordained as a Catholic priest in Germany and allowed to remain married to his wife who is already a Carmelite nun. The Cologne archdiocese said 61-year-old Harm Klueting is to be ordained as a Catholic priest today, Fox News reports.

Pope Benedict gave him a special permission to remain married to his wife Edeltraut Klueting, who became a Catholic Carmelite nun in 2004. The couple has two grown children. It doesn't happen every day," noted Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi.

**COURTESY: LONA LOBO**

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### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUR PERSONAL REFLECTION and views.**

**The best 3 answers and views will carry New Family Bible each as prize.**

**Please send this sheet with your answers, views and suggestions to: The Editor, The KEY, St.Peter's Church, Rustambagh, Old Airport Road, Bangalore – 560017.**

**Kindly use separate sheet, write the Q no. and write Yes or No along with your views. This is for our awareness and deepening of our faith and not for any other intention. The KEY.**

1. Our Catholic Priesthood has become more professional and bureaucratic? Yes or No.  
Your view:
2. Is there the service mind of Christ in the Church? Yes or No. Your view:
3. Is the Church today the salt of the earth and light of the nations (Mt.5)? Yes or No.  
Your view:
4. Did Christ intend high structures and celibacy for priests? Yes or No. Your view:
5. Should the priests be married? Yes or No. Your view:
6. To avoid sex scandals, loneliness, drinking and vicious habits among priests, is it better that they are married priests?. Yes or No. Your view:
7. Actually the teachings of Christ are not easy to follow for his followers. Yes or No.  
Your view:
8. Church has not grown much in the last 15 years? Yes or No. Your view:
9. Christian values are better than other religious values. Yes or No. Your view:
10. Are the Christians 'Alter Christus' (another Christ) in their living witness? Yes or No.  
Your view:
11. Church is materially rich and not Christians? Yes or No. Your view:
12. Catholics give more importance to external devotions, feasts, superstitious pious activities and are still not fully convinced about the doctrines of the Church. Yes or No. Your view:
13. Why the Church in whole is divided? Causes: Your view:
14. Preaching is given more importance than following His teachings? Yes or No. Your view:



5. Sneeze once or twice. Tickle your nose with a feather or a thin grass twig or grass itself to induce sneeze

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தமிழ்ப் பக்கம்



அவன் அவள்.... (தொடர்கதை)

முன்கதை சுருக்கம்

செல்வியின் பள்ளியில் யாரோ ஒரு தம்பதியினர் அவளைத் தத்து எடுத்துக்கொள்ள நினைத்திருப்பதாகவும் இதுகுறித்து அவள் பெற்றோர்கள் பள்ளித்தலைமை ஆசிரியரை சந்திக்கவேண்டுமெனவும், செல்வியின் வகுப்பாசிரியை ஒரு சேதி அட்டை செல்வியிடம் கொடுத்தனுப்பியிருந்தார். இதை கண்ட செல்வியின் தாய் கனிமொழி மிகுந்த வேதனையும் வருத்தமும் அடைந்தாள். இது குறித்து அவளுக்கும் அவள் கணவன் லிமோவுக்கும் இடையே ஒரு பெரிய வாய்ச்சண்டையே மூண்டது. எல்லாம் ஓய்ந்தபின்பு அனைவரும் உறங்கச்சென்றார்கள். குடும்பத்தில் அமைதியைக் கண்ட சாத்தான் சும்மா இருப்பானா? தனது சேட்டையைக் காண்பித்தான். லிமோவை தூங்க விடாமல் நச்சரித்தான். ஏன் இவள் இப்படி நடந்துகொள்கிறாள்? கனிமொழிக்கு ஏன் இத்தனை கோபம்? ஏன் இத்தனை ஆவேசம்? இத்தனை வெறுப்பு? இத்தனை காட்டம்?..... அப்பொழுது அவளுக்கு ஆறு வயது இருக்கும். தாய் மாமன் பராமரிப்பில் வளர்ந்த காலம். பெற்றோர் இருவரையும் அவள் பார்த்திருக்கவில்லை. அப்பா அம்மா யாரென்று கூட அறிந்திராத பருவம். ஒரு நாள்..... (கதை தொடர்கிறது).

கனிமொழி வீட்டுக்கு வெளியே விளையாடிக்கொண்டிருந்தாள். அந்நேரத்தில் தாய் மாமன் மைக்கல் வந்தான். அவனுக்கு சற்று இளம் வயதிருக்கும். திருமணம் ஆகியிருந்தது. பகலில் வயலில் வேலை செய்வான். மாலையானதும் குடிப்பான். குடிப்பதற்கு அளவேயிராதபடி குடிப்பான். அந்த ஊரிலிருந்த பங்குச் சாமியாரும் எவ்வளவோ அறிவுரை கூறியிருந்தார். ஆனால் ஒரு பயனுமில்லாமல் போனது. குடிப்பதற்குப் பணம் கேட்டு கனிமொழியின் பெற்றோரைத் தொந்தரவு செய்வான். அப்படித்தான் வழக்கம்போல மைக்கல் கனிமொழியின் வீட்டுக்கு வந்திருந்தான். வந்தவன் தன் அக்கா என்று கூட பார்க்காமல் பணம் கேட்டு கூச்சலிட்டான். கனிமொழியின் தாய் ரீட்டாவும் தனக்கிருப்பது ஒரே தம்பியாயிற்றே என்ற பாசத்திற்குக் கட்டுப்பட்டிருந்தாள். எனவே தன்னிடமிருந்த 50 ரூபாயை கொடுத்தாள். இதுபோதாதென்று ஊரை கூட்டுவதுபோல் சத்தமிட்டான் மைக்கல். அந்த நேரத்தில் வெளியே சென்று திரும்பியிருந்த கனிமொழியின் தந்தை அற்புதராஜ் தன் வீட்டில் நடந்த மைக்கலின் அட்டகாசத்தை பொறுக்கமுடியாமல் அவனை அடிக்கப் போனார். இருவருக்கும் வாக்குவாதமும் கைகலப்பும் மூண்டது. கனிமொழி ஒரு சிறுமியாய் இருந்த நேரம். நடந்தயெல்லாம் பார்த்துக்கொண்டிருந்தாள். ஆனால் புரியவில்லை. ஏதோ ஒருவிதமான பயத்திற்கும் அச்சத்திற்கும் ஆளாகியிருந்தாள்.

மைக்கலும் அற்புதராஜியும் சண்டையிட்ட காட்சி கனிமொழி ஆழ்மனதில் நன்றாகப் பதிவாகியிருந்தது. ரீட்டா ஓடிப்போய் அவளை அணைத்துக்கொண்டாள். இருப்பினும் குழந்தை கனிமொழியின் பயம் மறையவில்லை. ஏதோ பயங்கரம் நடக்கிறது என்று மட்டும் தேம்பித் தேம்பி அழுதாள். தன் தம்பியும் கணவரும் சண்டையிடுவதைக் கண்ட ரீட்டா குழந்தையை

கீழே விட்டுவிட்டு கணவரைக் காப்பாற்ற முயன்றாள். ரீட்டா கண்ணிமைக்கும் நேரத்தில் அந்த அசம்பாவிதம் நடந்துவிட்டது..... (கதை தொடரும்)

**தந்தை நாதன்**