

Diocese to launch 2018 Bishop's Annual Appeal this weekend

The 2018 Bishop's Annual Appeal is being launched with its announcement weekend on April 14/15th, in churches countrywide under the theme, "**Vocations; building a Catholic culture**".

The purpose of the Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA) is to engage Catholics in supporting the mission of the local Church at the diocesan level. Diocesan level ministries - carried out mainly through Co-ordinators, Commissions and Councils - go beyond the scope of individual parishes. These ministries assist the Bishop in overseeing the well-being and development of the Diocese and

assist Parish communities with specific programs. Such efforts provide opportunities for collaboration at the national level, enabling a wide cross-section of the Catholic faithful to exercise their faith and be part of the building up of the local Church.

According to Bishop Francis "In the first place my appeal is resonant with the second part of the Vocation Prayer - '*send your spirit to guide and strengthen me that I may serve...*' I put this as a priority in this year's appeal and I state here again what I've said in previous appeals; the more we know and live our faith and the more we get involved in ministry and get engaged with the life and activities of the faith community, not only will we celebrate and

enjoy our faith in a meaningful way but the Church, in a collaboration of vocations, can bring Christ to the world. Collaboration in faith is 'the identification, release, and union of all the gifts in ministry for the sake of mission' (Sofield & Juliano). This is a wonderful image of Church. This is my appeal, let us each and together live our Baptism and Discipleship". The Bishop's full message may be found on [page 8](#). In saying that Christ is brought to the world through a collaboration of vocations, the Bishop is echoing the importance of co-responsibility within the church, a vision stemming from the Second Vatican Council and repeated by the Popes thereafter.

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Mabaruma holds Youth Explosion



From Father Amar Bage SJ

Our Palm Sunday celebration was held in Hosororo and various communities came together to participate. It was wonderful to see the involvement of the youths in all of the activities of the programme. Palm Sunday was also the last day of a major youth event, the "Youth Explosion".

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Hosororo organized the

programme for the youth of Mabaruma sub-region #1 called "Youth Explosion". It was a three-day event which began on March 23rd and ended on the 25th.

Seventy youths from the communities of Hosororo, Koberimo, Kumaka, Mabaruma Township, Mabaruma settlement, Barabina, Port Kaituma, White Water, Sacred Heart, Hotoquai and Wauna participated in the event.

The theme for the Youth Explosion was "**Leadership in the Church**". Fr. Amar Bage - the parish priest of Hosororo, and Regional Chairman Mr. Brentnol Ashley gave reflections on the main theme.

Mr. David Hernandez shared on married life in one of the groups. Other topics discussed included vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and the single life.

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Bishop's Engagements

Monday April 9th

Travel to Rome to attend Ad Limina* and annual meeting of Antilles Episcopal Conference of Bishops.

Saturday April 28th

Return to Guyana

* Ad Limina - Meeting with Pope Francis and various departments in the Vatican.

During my absence from the Diocese, Monsignor Terrence Montrose will attend to matters on my behalf.



✠ Francis Alleyne OSB



Easter issue brought back happy memories

Dear Editor,

I really enjoyed your Easter Issue. So many wonderful things happening in our Church in Guyana – I am glad that I was able to experience some of that vibrancy when I was there, and pray that it continues, especially among the youth.

Donna Tai, Canada

EDITORIAL

Rising to New Life

"Only brotherhood can grant a lasting peace that can defeat poverties, extinguish tensions and wars, eradicate corruption and criminality." Those were the words of Pope Francis as he spoke on Easter Monday from his balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square in the Vatican before the crowds of worshipers.

Brotherhood is a word that is constantly on the lips of this Pope.

To tens of thousands of young people gathered for World Youth Day in Poland a few years ago, he said, "Precisely in this world at war, we need brotherhood, we need closeness, we need dialogue, and we need friendship. And this is the sign of hope: when there is brotherhood."

In one of his more famous encyclicals Pope Paul VI wrote that "In the heart of every man there is a will to live in brotherhood and a thirst for brotherhood and peace.

This assertion is certainly true of every one of us. We all want to live in and be at peace with one another.

Christians, indeed all truly religious people, believe this really is possible in spite of the violence and injustice.

However, for Christians, what gives us hope and keeps us going in the face of obstacles and opposition is the Resurrection which we have just celebrated. The Resurrection means suffering is no longer a deterrent to good action and death is no longer the supreme disaster.

As witnesses to this great hope which the resurrection has engendered, we have the countless numbers of courageous Christian individuals and communities who, down the centuries have shown that hunger and thirst for freedom, justice, and human advancement. They continue to do so today in Guyana and various parts of the world.

As food and drink are absolutely essential to the life of the body, so justice is absolutely necessary for a life of the Christian, and its duties are so compelling that no motive should exempt us from fulfilling them.

We speak of **hunger** and **thirst** for justice, not in the sense of vindicating rights, but in the sense of cultivating in ourselves such a lively desire and compelling need for justice in all our relations with others, that we do not feel satisfied until we have completely fulfilled all the duties stemming from this virtue.

In the face of our still widespread disunity, economic slowdown, and oh so many forms violence and injustices, some seem to have given up their commitment to life. [\(please turn to page 11\)](#)

Caribbean Bishops on Ad Limina visit to Rome

Bishop Francis Alleyne left Guyana on Monday to join his brother bishops from the Caribbean Bishops' Conference (AEC) who are making their collective journey to Rome from April 16 to 21 for their traditional 'Ad Limina Apostolorum' visit with Pope Francis, dicasteries, congregations and other departments of the Roman Curia to report on the state of their respective dioceses.

The Ad Limina visit refers to the obligatory visit every five years by the bishops of dioceses throughout the world to the Holy See. It takes its name from the ancient practice

of pilgrimages apostolorum to the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome.

Father John Persaud, AEC Secretary, told the Catholic News of Trinidad and Tobago that the Bishops will arrive in Rome on April 14 and are required to present a report on their respective dioceses when they meet with Pope Francis on April 16.

This report, which will provide a detailed insight into the state of the church in their country was sent since last year in preparation for the Ad Limina. The Bishops are also required to pray at the tombs of

Saints Peter and Paul and have Mass at the four Basilicas in Rome: Saint Peter and Paul, Saint Paul Outside the Walls, Mary Major and Saint John Lateran.

They will also journey to Assisi, in Italy, for pilgrimage on April 22, in observance of their retreat and gather for their Annual Plenary Meeting (APM) April 23 in Rome. Bishop Clyde Harvey of Saint Georges-in-Grenada will be the main host at the retreat. The APM will end April 26 and the Bishops will depart the following day. ❖

Venezuelan bishops: Jail fire that killed 68 could have been prevented

(CNS) -- A jail riot and fire that killed 68 people in Venezuela's deadliest tragedy in decades could have been prevented, according to the Venezuelan bishops' conference.

In a statement released March 31, the bishops said the incident occurred like an "ominous event that could be seen coming, given the series of improvisations and deficiencies ... that reign in the judicial, police and penitentiary system."

While authorities have not offered an official version of events from the jail in the central city of Valencia, families and at least one prisoner gave similar stories to Catholic News Service March 29. Most stated that a disagreement between guards and

inmates March 28 escalated, leading guards to fire shots and someone using gasoline to fuel a fire. At least two female visitors were among the dead.

Venezuelan jails are notoriously overcrowded and corrupt, with prison gang leaders often boasting more authority than the guards overseeing them.

"We must know the truth, because the truth will be freeing," the bishops wrote. "That truth means an exhaustive and credible investigation."

The bishops also called for more information to be released regarding the disaster.

While the country's attorney general has assigned several investigators to the case, neither President Nicolas Maduro nor the prison minister have mentioned the incident. Under the watchful eye of government censors, most local media ignored the tragedy entirely.

It has created "whole families already in pain, worsened by the silence and suspicion that the truth of the matter won't be found," the bishops wrote.

The bishops offered "all of the services the Catholic Church has in its prison ministry" to the dozens of families affected, many of whom spent Good Friday burying loved ones. ❖

Diocese to launch BAA 2018 this weekend (From Front Page)

The Bishop's Annual Appeal brochure outlines the areas that Bishop Francis calls the Church to focus on. They are:

1.Seminarians support: The diocese recently ordained three deacons to the diocesan priesthood. Fr. Joel Rathna and Fr. Devadass Berchmans were ordained in September 2017 and Fr. Carl Philadelphia in January 2018. All three spent their final period of formation at the regional seminary. At present there are two seminarians, Francis Xavier and Joseph Oguejiofor, studying theology at the Seminary in Trinidad, where the average cost per seminarian per year is \$2,000,000. Vocations support: Accompanying persons who are enquiring about and exploring the possibility of giving their lives in service of the Church in the Priesthood, Diaconate, Consecrated life, or Lay Ministry.

2.Support the ministry of the Vocations Committee and other diocesan organisations in visiting parishes, holding conferences, arranging formation programmes

and generally available to assist faith communities in promoting vocations and building Catholic culture. All Catholics – diocesan commissions, councils, organisations and parishes, will be invited to promote activities of building our Catholic Culture. This will be executed through new and existing activities such as the engagement of parishes, producing educational and informational content for print and web, formation opportunities, exploring best practices and tested programs, holding conferences and similar programmes.

3.Support for parishes who need assistance in their mission to build the faith in their local areas. In 2017 some of those parishes received support which amounted to \$2,412,000.00.

The Appeal runs for 9 months from the 3rd Sunday of Easter, April 15th, to the 3rd Sunday of Advent, December 16th 2018. Parishioners are asked to spend some time during the weeks ahead to prayerfully reflect on the Bishop's message and the potential impact for our diocese. For parishion-

ers desirous of making a pledge or gift, they can do so on the Sundays April 29th & May 6th, designated as Commitment Sundays.

The appeal has three goals: Financial, Participation and Spiritual. The financial goal is \$8,000,000 to be allocated across the areas of focus. The participation goal stresses that it is not mandatory and ask that parishioners put family and parish first. The spiritual goal invites parishioners into a stewardship way of life. As faithful stewards we receive God's gifts gratefully, cherish and tend them in a responsible and accountable manner, share them in justice and love with others and return them with increase to the Lord.

An appeal manual providing guidance will be part of the package that will be sent to parishes to aid in the administration of the appeal. Parishioners are asked to watch out for the parish pulpit/ bulletin announcements over the next four weeks for details. Please call your parish or the Bishop's office for any queries, clarification or if you'd like to get involved. ❖

Guyana needs humanitarian procedures for Venezuelans

The Roman Catholic Church in Guyana is among the signatories to the following statement:

This statement has been prompted by our organizations having had an opportunity to inter-act with a delegation of Venezuelan citizens currently resident in Guyana.

Guyana has remained remarkably untouched by the massive humanitarian crisis playing out across the Venezuelan border over the past two years. That situation has now changed, Venezuelans themselves estimate some 30 of their nationals are arriving in Guyana every day without visas, many of whom are of Guyanese origin whose family migrated during the 1980s. Guyana urgently needs to adopt sensible, humanitarian policies along the lines adopted by Colombia, Brazil and the majority of South American countries.

In making the proposals set out below, the signatories of this statement are conscious of the very limited resources Guyana can bring to bear on a refugee crisis. However, we are also conscious that providing Venezuelans with the assurance that they will not be treated as criminals and hounded out of the country is a humanitarian response well within Guyana's capacity to implement. Venezuelan refugees already here are making clear that they are not looking for free services, ii) many of the Venezuelan-Guyanese among them can make arrangements with former family & friends; iii) the overwhelming need is security of being here long enough to earn some money in order to sort out a more permanent future elsewhere.

The World Bank estimates 655,400 Venezuelans left the country since 2015. (More than five times the 125,000 who left Cuba in the Mariel boat exodus in the 1980s). The International Monetary Fund estimated that inflation reached 13,000% this year. A year ago a dollar was worth about 4,200 bolivars, today it is worth 213,200 bolivars. The average monthly salary is USD3.00. The growing severity of the food shortage has contributed to the average Venezuelan losing 11 kilograms in 2017, compared to almost 8 kg lost on average in 2016.

A group of Venezuelans, some long resident in Guyana, along with returning Guyanese-Venezuelans are appealing to the Government of Guyana. "We know that the government and its people do not owe us anything, we only want a gesture of brotherhood of humility and help" in the form of "a renewable temporary permit of one year that allows us to have the right to work, to health, to education, to free transit, we do not want to be refugees, we just need to work".

Other countries inundated by Venezuelans have devised a variety of schemes. Colombia has issued a Border Mobility Card, a document to allow movement around the border without a passport, but with migratory control. Every day about 25,000 Venezuelans enter Colombia and an equal number leaves, in a circular transit to buy products such as rice, sugar, pasta or personal hygiene.

Indigenous communities on the Guyana borders have seen a substantial increase in numbers due to the

return to their place of origin of people who left years ago.

A local group has documented over a hundred undocumented Venezuelans. Many of them are Guyanese-Venezuelans, the second generation of those who fled in the 1980s when Guyana was experiencing conditions not dissimilar from what Venezuela is now passing through. Venezuela at that time opened its doors to them, they were allowed to work, they enjoyed the right to health to education and basic services. Entire families followed professional careers, made investment and contributed to the cultural life of the country. At the present time they constitute complete communities and residential districts in San Felix, San Cristobel and other bordering States of Venezuela. During the Presidency of President Chavez citizenship was extended to all who had remained undocumented. Venezuelans of Guyanese origin are now a substantial part of Venezuelan life.

This description, contrasts sharply with complaints made by Venezuelans of their current treatment by Guyanese officialdom. Venezuelans complain of having to pay fines of \$30,000 for being illegally in the country. They also are forced to bribe the police with similarly large amounts. Venezuelan families are being split up at entry points. One 14 boy was returned to Venezuela being without a passport while other family members were admitted.

Most of the people deported are women. Many do not have passports, in part, because the effective cost of a passport is [\(please turn to page 4\)](#)

Upcoming Events

Saturday April 14th Marian Academy Family Fun Fair

All are invited to the Marian Academy Family Fun Fair which will be held on Saturday April 14th from 13:00h - 18:30h at the Guyana Softball Cricket Association ground (opposite Marian Academy) on Carifesta Avenue. Admission \$100.

Saturday May 5th Camp Kayuka Fun Day

All are invited to the annual Camp Kayuka Fun Day on May 5th. Tickets cost \$500 (children of primary school age free), obtainable from the Bishop's Office, the Piety Shop or your Parish. Please call 226-4469 for details. ❖



Please let us know of upcoming events by emailing us at: catholicstandardgy@gmail.com under the heading "Upcoming Events" or call 226-2192.

Pope's Intentions

April Monthly Intention:

For those who have responsibility in Economic Matters

That economists may have the courage to reject any economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths. ❖

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Where Experience is Always at Your Service

Guyana needs humanitarian procedures for Venezuelans

(From Page 3)

over USD1000. Moreover, all Mercosur countries allow citizens to cross borders with an ID Card, rendering passports unnecessary. Numbers of undocumented Venezuelans is likely to increase because travelling overland costs roughly USD100 compared to the cost of flying to other more distant Latin countries.

A Guidance Note issued recently by the UN High Commission for Refugees calls on States receiving and/or already hosting Venezuelans to allow them access to their territory, and to continue to adopt appropriate and pragmatic protection-oriented responses, building on existing good practices in the region.

"Such arrangements", the Note states "are guided by the principle that providing international protection is a humanitarian and non-political act" Such arrangements, could, for example, include ...temporary protection or stay arrangements, or alternatively visa or labour migration arrangements that would offer access to legal residence and to a standard of treatment akin to international protection."

States should: " - ensure that persons benefiting from such arrangements are issued with an official document and such an arrangements should not be refused by virtue of the fact of irregular entry or lack of identity documents."

Short-term visas should provide access "on an equal basis with other foreign nationals who are legally resident on the State's territory and, finally under these protection arrangements "holders of complementary forms of protection, temporary protection or stay arrangements, or visa or labour migration arrangements will not be deported, expelled, or in any other way forced to return to Venezuela, consistent with international refugee and human rights law. This guarantee would need to be assured either in the official identity document received or through other effective means, such as clear instructions to law enforcement agencies."

The signatory organizations of this Press Release are calling on the Government of Guyana based on principles of decency, humanitarian imperatives and our commitments under human rights Conventions to undertake several tasks.

Firstly, we are calling on the Judiciary and Director of Public Prosecutions to cease with immediate effect the practice of fining and jailing illegal Venezuelan immigrants.

Secondly, we call on the immigration authorities to respect Guyana's international human rights obligations to children who should not be separated from their families.

Thirdly, we urge the Government of Guyana to give effect to the exhortation of the UNHCR:

i. To adopt more flexible procedures with respect to lack of documentation

ii. To provide Venezuelans seeking temporary residence with security of tenure for a period of one or two years with permission to work.

Fourthly, we propose urgent revision and publication of any procedures applicable to Venezuelan-Guyanese citizens which would facilitate their remaining in Guyana

Fifthly, we propose that the immigration authorities devise a form of temporary ID card which can be provided to Venezuelans desirous of remaining in Guyana but not claiming refugee status.

Sixthly, in liaison with Immigration authorities that Toshias in remote border communities be authorized and empowered to implement to a registration process of Venezuelans crossing the border.

Finally, our organizations are appealing to all Guyanese as individuals or organizations to develop a positive and welcoming approach to displaced Venezuelans. The attitude of ordinary citizens, as demonstrated wherever mass movements of peoples have taken place in recent year, is as critical as official policy in determining a successful outcome.

March 29 2018

Signatories: Amerindian Peoples Association; Guyana Human Rights Association; Transparency Institute Guyana Inc; Roman Catholic Church in Guyana; Policy Forum Guyana. ❖

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Vatican jails former diplomat accused of child pornography

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- After months of investigation, Vatican police arrested Msgr. Carlo Alberto Capella, a former staff member at the Vatican nunciature in Washington, on charges related to the possession and distribution of child pornography.

The Vatican said April 9 that Msgr. Capella was taken into custody that morning by the Vatican gendarmes at the request of Vatican City State's promoter of justice, who serves as chief prosecutor and directs criminal investigations.

"The accused is being detained in a cell in the barracks of the gendarmerie corps," the Vatican said in a statement.

The arrest, the statement said, was made on the charges related to "Article 10, paragraphs 3 and 5, of Law VIII of 2013."

Paragraph 3 deals with a criminal who "distributes, disseminates, transmits, imports, exports, offers or sells child pornography through any means, even electronically, as well as whoever possesses child pornography for those purposes or otherwise distributes or disseminates knowledge of information directed at grooming or exploiting minors for sexual purposes."

The violation carries a prison sentence of one year to five years and a fine from 2,500 euro to 50,000 euro (about \$3,000-61,400).

However, the paragraph 5 referred to in the Vatican statement says that "the penalty is increased if a consider-

able quantity of pornographic material is involved."

The Italian monsignor was recalled to the Vatican from Washington after the U.S. State Department notified the Holy See Aug. 21 of his possible violation of laws relating to child pornography images.

"The Holy See, following the practice of sovereign states, recalled the priest in question, who is currently in Vatican City," and opened the investigation, the Vatican press office had said Sept. 15.

Then, police in Canada issued a nationwide arrest warrant for Msgr. Capella Sept. 28 on charges of accessing, possessing and distributing child pornography.

"Investigators believe that the offenses occurred while the suspect was visiting a place of worship in Windsor," the police statement said. A spokesman for the Diocese of London, Ontario, which includes Windsor, confirmed at the time "that it was asked to, and did, assist in an investigation around suspicions involving Msgr. Capella's possible violations of child pornography laws by using a computer address at a local church."

Msgr. Capella, 50, was born in Carpi, Italy, and ordained to the priesthood in 1993 for the Archdiocese of Milan. After studying at the Vatican diplomatic academy in Rome, he entered the Vatican diplomatic service in 2004. He had worked since the summer of 2016 at the Vatican nunciature in Washington. ❖

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Sunday Scripture

April 15th - Third Sunday of Easter, Year B

FIRST READING

Acts 3:13-15. 17-19

You killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead.

Peter said to the people: "You are Israelites, and it is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, who has glorified his servant Jesus, the same Jesus you handed over and then disowned in the presence of Pilate, after Pilate had decided to release him. It was you who accused the Holy One, the Just One, you who demanded the reprieve of a murderer while you killed the prince of life. God, however, raised him from the dead, and to that fact we are the witnesses.

"Now I know, brothers, that neither you nor your leaders had any idea what you were really doing; this was the way God carried out what he had foretold, when he said through all his prophets that his Christ would suffer. Now you must repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out."

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 4

Response: *Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.*

1. When I call, answer me, O God of justice; from anguish you released me, have mercy and hear me! *Response*
2. It is the Lord who grants favours to those whom he loves; the Lord hears me whenever I call him. *R/*
3. "What can bring us happiness?" many say. Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord. *Resp.*
4. I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety. *Resp.*

SECOND READING

1 John 2:1-5

He is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's.

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning; but if anyone should sin we have our advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away,



and not only ours, but the whole world's. We can be sure that we know God only by keeping his commandments, Anyone who says, "I know him", and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, refusing to admit the truth. But when anyone does obey what he has said, God's love comes to perfection in him.

GOSPEL

Luke 24:35-48

So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.

The disciples told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised Jesus at the breaking of bread.

They were still talking about all this when Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you!" In a state of alarm and fright,

they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, "Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts rising in your hearts? Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this he showed them his hands and feet. Their joy was so great that they could not believe it, and they stood dumbfounded; so he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes.

Then he told them, "This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled." He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "So you see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this." ❖



By: The Diocesan Stewardship Council of Guyana

The final line of the First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles is, "Repent, therefore, that your sins may be wiped away." This is part of a message which Peter evidently often stated as he evangelized and spread the word about the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Penance, repentance, is an important part of our Catholic faith. One of our seven Sacraments, there is much in Church doctrine about the importance of this sacrament. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#1424) it states, "It is called the sacrament of

confession, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element. In a profound sense it is also a "confession" — acknowledgement and praise — of the holiness of God and of His mercy toward sinful men and women."

When St. Peter was speaking and used the term "wiped away," that had more meaning to the people of his time. Imagine if sins were listed on a document in ink. In ancient times the ink had no acid content, and thus it could be "wiped away" with a damp cloth.

That was the image Peter was presenting. For us going to confession literally "wipes away" our sins.

God's forgiveness is central to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Sacrament of Confession (reconciliation) means that from God's perspective it is as though our sins have never even occurred. In the Book of Hebrews the Lord declares, "I will never again remember their sins" — after repentance, that is. ❖

[<http://www.catholicsteward.com/blog/>]

Gospel Reflection



By Fr. Michael Barrow SJ

A week before my ninth birthday I was sent away from home. I had done nothing wrong but I was just sent away to live with people I had never met and I was not even allowed to stay and celebrate my birthday. Does this sound cruel from parents who are meant to be loving? What was happening was that it was the beginning of the war and children living in London, as I was, were being sent away for fear of the bombing. What could be seen to a small child as heartless cruelty was in fact an act of great love, a terrible sacrifice on the part of parents in letting their children go.

These memories came back to me just before Easter when we were commemorating the suffering and death of Christ. The apostles and his dearest friends and family must have felt very much as I did in being sent away from home. Everything they loved and treasured was shattered – for no apparent reason. Life had no meaning any more.

This Sunday's gospel tells us that when Jesus revealed himself alive again, he opened their minds to the real meaning of the Bible and explained how it was necessary the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory. They were filled with joy, but did not really understand the meaning of what had happened. If he was going to come alive again, why did he not simply avoid that terrible death? A similar question must have occurred to them before, when Jesus healed people: if he was going to heal them, why did he not stop them becoming ill in the first place?

Jesus never explained suffering. He shared it and showed that what seems like disaster can be the way to something wonderful. Without fully understanding the meaning of suffering, our hearts can be opened by Christ to realise that when tragedy in our lives seems so pointless we share in his passion to bring healing to the world. ❖

Santa Rosa celebrates 200 years of Catholic Faith



By Joshua Van-Sluytman

The Santa Rosa Roman Catholic Church marked its 200th anniversary on Sunday April 1st, 2018. Over 400 Catholics from near and far gathered at Saint Rose of Lima Roman Catholic Church, Moruca, North West District to mark the event.

The chief celebrant of the Mass was Father Alberto Baratero, the South Americana Provincial Superior of the Institute of the Incarnate Word, (IVE). Con-celebrating were Parish Priests Frs. Pedro Torres and Martin Mairena, IVE.

At the beginning of the Mass parishioner Graham Atkinson gave a brief history of the return of the Arawaks, Caribs and Warraus to the then Maribaba, as Santa Rosa was then called, and which they had previously occupied from the Orinoco Delta in Venezuela, during the Simon Bolivar revolution. During that period he said, Bolivar and his band of revolutionaries were trying to stamp out the Roman Catholic faith in the Orinoco Delta.

At the time, Atkinson said, some 500 people paddled their 'corials' over a six-month period to the area to resettle. He further stated Santa Rosa has always held a special place in the Roman Catholic Faith in Guyana as many priests, nuns, deacons, laymen and laywomen have nurtured the faith there.

Among those present for this celebration were other members of the Church who played vital roles in its development in this locality, such as the Society of Jesus or Jesuits, the Sisters of Mercy and the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara.

Also present were Government officials including the Minister within the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Hon Valerie Garrido-Lowe, MP; Assistant Regional Executive Officer (AREO) of the Moruca sub-region Ms. Rennita Williams, and Executive Director of the Amerindian People's Association (APA) Ms. Jean La Rose, among others.

In his homily, Fr. Baratero IVE said "Today we celebrate two feasts: the 200th anniversary of Santa Rosa which is a great feast; and we are also

celebrating joyfully the glorious resurrection of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest and most solemn feast. Easter is a great mystery. The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is the basis of our Christian faith. And that is how the Gospel arrived here in Santa Rosa".

Speaking with the Catholic Standard after the Mass, Minister Garrido-Lowe said that the event must be celebrated and it is all because of the people of Santa Rosa, the love and the community spirit. The Minister, who is a daughter of that very same soil, further stated that Santa Rosa must be a blessed place because, to maintain something like this for 200 years is simply amazing. She said she was happy to see the young people involved and this will help it to continue.

AREO of Moruca Ms. Rennita Williams said she was happy that she was a part of it administratively. She also stated that she personally enjoyed assisting the church and was really excited that she could have seen the 200th celebration in Santa Rosa.

Executive Director of the APA Ms. Jean La Rose said "It was a good feeling to be present for the celebration" and described the 200th celebration as fantastic.

Toshao of Moruca Mr. Sherwin Abrams said he is "very pleased to be

the Toshao of Santa Rosa, it's a very important milestone for Santa Rosa village over the years, and that the education system that was put in place has developed in Moruca". Mr. Abrams also said that despite facing negative challenges in the past, there are also positive outcomes, and this celebration is one. The community leader further stated that he is proud of the community coming together to celebrate the wonderful occasion since he has noticed that the Catholic Community has been diminishing over the years.

Parishioner of Santa Rosa Mr. Graham Atkinson said he felt very excited to have reached this journey of 200 years – he says that we must give credit to our fore-parents for a strong faith and he hopes that continues. He has been a part of the parish for over 35 years, mostly being involved in the music ministry in the liturgy. He further said that "Santa Rosa is our home, we want to preserve and make it a better place", noting that it is dear to Guyana and holds a special place in the history of the Catholic Church in Guyana.

On Sunday evening parishioners and friends gathered for a night of cultural presentation and treats. They were entertained by beautiful cultural songs, poems, dances and skits.

Monday was a Family Fun Day. His Lordship Bishop Francis Alleyne OSB graced us with his presence on that same day.

On Tuesday April 3rd, Mass was celebrated by Bishop Francis at 7:30am. In his homily, Bishop Francis said that every time we gather together we celebrate Easter. The people who gathered 200 years ago to form the Santa Rosa community did so before the Catholic Church was official in Guyana. He further stated the first people that gathered in the community are considered icons since they went out to other parts of Guyana to spread the Word, and focus is also on these people as this anniversary is celebrated. He congratulated them on this milestone and urged them to be witness to their brothers and sisters.

Next week Santa Rosa remembers its famous sons, daughters and missionaries. ❖

[photo credit: Candecy Burnett]



Dialogue on Faith Leaders' role in ending AIDS continues with consultation in Guyana



Faith leaders in Guyana fast-track talks to collaborate to remove barriers of stigma and discrimination.

(PANCAP Coordinating Unit, CARICOM Secretariat): The Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP), the mechanism that provides a structured and unified approach to the Caribbean's response to the HIV epidemic, hosted the Guyana Chapter of the Faith Leaders Consultation at the CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Georgetown Guyana.

The forum was held less than a month before the Joint Regional Dialogue with Faith Leaders, Parliamentarians, Civil Society Leaders, National AIDS Programme Managers and Youth Leaders which is scheduled for 24 and 25 April 2018 in Port-of-Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The forum was hosted by Ms Lorna Mcpherson, Member Religious Steering Committee, Mr

Dereck Springer, Director of PANCAP and Mr Edward Greene, PANCAP Advisor. Also in attendance were Bishop Francis Alleyne, Roman Catholic Church; Pandit Navindradat Lilah, Guyana Pandits Council; Fr. Carl Peters, Priest, Diocese of Guyana (Anglican); Bishop Glenna Spencer, Methodist Church, Guyana; Mr Telford Payne, Representative Seventh Day Adventist; Pastor Natasha Corrica, Bible Way Church; and Pastor Ronald McGarrell Chairman, Inter-Religious Organisations (IRO).

Faith leaders continued deliberations on the actions and activities that remove barriers of stigma and discrimination and create an environment in which vulnerable groups can access health care. The Director of PANCAP also challenged faith leaders to organize smaller meetings in which key strategic

actions that support vulnerable groups can be determined.

The Consultation was a follow up to the national and regional consultations, which commenced in 2017, with a number of regional activities scheduled for 2018. The first consultation held on February 1 and 2, 2017 in Port-of-Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, focused on the contributions of Faith Leaders toward ending the epidemic by 2030. It specifically addressed the recommendations from the UN High Level 2016 Political Declaration and agreed on strategies to promote healthy living for all age groups, addressed best practices, identified gaps to be filled, resources required and types of regional cooperation to be undertaken to implement recommendations from the consultation. ❖

Guardian Angels SSVP holds fundraiser for the needy

From Devi Diaram

The Guardian Angels Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Conference in Hopetown W.C.B, held their fundraising barbeque on Saturday March 31st on the church lawns. It was a grand success.

Special thanks are extended to all our donors: Olney Ramsammy, Grace Ramsammy, Wendy Phillips and Annette Gumbs.

Thank you to everyone who helped and supported this venture in one way or another, especially our hard working Vincentians!

Thank you all for supporting the worthy cause! God bless you all!

The funds raised will go towards providing assistance for the needy in the area who are given regular support by the SSVP.

The SSVP is the largest charitable organization of the Catholic church in Guyana with groups known as conferences in most parishes. ❖



Journeying with the Word of God



MAKING THE WORD OF GOD YOUR OWN

Step 1: Look at today's Readings prayerfully.

1st Reading: Though the Israelites acted out of ignorance about handing over Jesus to his death, Peter insists that they admit their guilt and ask God for forgiveness.

2nd Reading: We show that we know God by keeping the commandments. When we fail, Christ intercedes for us with the Father.

Gospel: Jesus appears to the apostles. He instructs them on the meaning of the Scriptures and strengthens them to preach repentance and forgiveness to all people.

Step 2: Applying the values of the Readings to your daily life.

1. Jesus did not hide his wounds because they were proof of his love. What wounds have you suffered because of your love?
2. How do you feel called to live the Gospel message this week? What do you think will be some of the obstacles to living the Gospel?
3. The disciples were witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus. What do you think it means for you to be a witness for Christ?
4. The first thing Jesus offers to the disciples are words of peace. Why do you think words of peace are an important offering in today's world?

Step 3: Accepting the message of God's Word in your life of faith.

The resurrection of Christ is the crowning truth of our Christian faith. It means that he lives and so we can encounter him in the "breaking of bread". It means that he will be with us where we are, helping to give meaning and beauty to our lives, especially to those parts that are dark and painful. And like the apostles, we too are sent out to bring the message of repentance and forgiveness of sin to others.

Step 4: Something to think & pray about

1. Recall a time in your life when you were filled with panic, fear or great worry. Who was there for you at that time? What part, if any, did God play at that moment?
2. Thank God for those special friends who continue to stand with you when you are going through difficult times.
3. Pray that God will give you the strength to always be a good friend to someone in need. ❖

[From: *Journeying with the Word of God*, The Religious Education Department, Diocese of Georgetown, Guyana]

Malawi youth at pre-Synodal meeting: 'Pope Francis listened to us'



A youth leader from Malawi, Tamandani Mervis Kamuyanja, has praised Pope Francis and organizers of the Pre-Synodal meeting for taking time to listen to their views.

By Fr. Paul Samasumo

For Tamandani Mervis Kamuyanja of Malawi, meeting Pope Francis in Rome and being listened to by him was extremely important. Throughout the week-long Pre-Synodal meeting, with animators and among colleagues, she felt she could express herself without fear of being judged.

"In his opening remarks, the Pope was like, you know what, I want you [the youth] to express your views freely. I want you to be open; say it out, do not be afraid. So I think this was one of the most important things that made the [Pre-Synodal preparatory meeting for young people] a success," the youth leader from Malawi said.

"If the Pope can hear us, we [young people in Africa] should not be afraid. We should be able to express our views freely," she said.

Tamandani is a young agricultural extension worker employed by the Government of Malawi. She is also a student of Agriculture at Malawi's Mzuzu University.

"I am proud to be an extension worker. I work with farmers. I interpret agricultural policies to them and give [farmers] agricultural advice on livestock, crops and all that," Tamandani explained.

She is the current National Volunteer Coordinator for Young Christian Workers (YCW) in Malawi.

Tamandani was one of the 300 young people from around the world who took part in the just-ended Pre-Synodal meeting. Speaking to Vatican News, Tamandani said her experience in Rome had shown her that by and large, the challenges of young people were the same the world over.

"We are affected by the same kind of challenges," she said. She added, however, that most of the challenges faced by young people of Africa require practical and concrete solutions. She cited the problem of unemployment on the continent.

Tamandani says that the Church can play a significant role by creating tertiary institutions that impart skills training. She thinks the Church could also come up with programmes and initiatives such as the provision of farm inputs to attract young persons into farming for a livelihood.

Asked about specific challenges young women of Africa face in the Church, Tamandani was quick to say Africa's young women want to do more than just sweep, mop, and decorate the parish Church.

"I think that needs to stop...it's not just our role to sweep the Church and mop... no!" While appreciating what the Church is doing, Tamandani believes that more can still be done to put to better use, the skills and talents of young women.

I visualise "a Church where young people will be leaders; where young people can express their views without being judged, and yes, a Church where young people can share the gospel with others regardless of where they come from. We dream of a better Church!," Tamandani said.

The purpose of the Pre-Synodal meeting, held in Rome on 19-24 March, was to provide the opportunity for young people to produce a document that expresses their views. The document's recommendations will be presented to Bishops expected for the Synod meeting in the Vatican, during the month of October 2018.

The document released by the Pre-Synodal Meeting of Young People was presented in the Vatican on Saturday March 24, following the weeklong meeting which was opened in the presence of Pope Francis.

Presenting the document during a briefing at the Vatican Press Office, Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri explained it is one of the sources that will contribute to the preparation of the working document for the Synod itself.

Baldisseri also said other contributions will be provided by the Episcopal Conferences, by the Synods of the Eastern Catholic Churches and by synthesis documents resulting from listening sessions conducted in dioceses across the world.

He added that the results of the online questionnaire proposed to young people in 2017 will be added to all that material, as well as observations spontaneously sent in by individuals and groups from all over the planet.

Baldisseri said the document drawn up during this week is divided into three parts; the first part deals with the challenges and opportunities of young people in today's world; the second on faith and vocation, on discernment and on the accompaniment of young people; the third on the Church's formative and pastoral activities.

He noted that approximately 15,300 young people from the five continents took part in the meeting - physically or virtually - representing their peers all over the world.

The document was handed to Pope Francis on Palm Sunday. ❖

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2018



Bishop's Message

Over the fourteen years of my tenure the church has faithfully prayed for vocations. We have prayed that God would "Raise up generous and dedicated leaders from our families and our friends who will serve as sisters, priests, brothers and lay ministers". We have also said in that prayer "Send your Spirit to guide and strengthen me that I may serve your people following the example of your Son, Jesus Christ, ..."

My appeal to the Church this year is for **Vocations; building a Catholic Culture**. In the first place my appeal is resonant with the second part of the Vocation Prayer "Send your Spirit to guide and strengthen me that I may serve..." I put this as a priority in this year's appeal and I state here again what I have said in previous appeals; the more we know and live our faith and the more we get involved in ministry and get engaged with the life and activities of the faith community, not only will we celebrate and enjoy our faith in a meaningful way but the Church, in a collaboration of vocations, can bring Christ to the world. Collaboration in faith is "the identification, release, and union of all the gifts in ministry for the sake of mission" (Sofield & Juliano). This is a wonderful image of the Church. This is my appeal, let us each and together live our Baptism and Discipleship.

A number of people over the years have made generous monetary contributions to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. These have been of great help in the work and ministry of the Church at the diocesan level through the various commissions and Departments. Funds realized from contributions this year will support three areas:

- 1) *Seminarians and persons discerning their vocation,*
- 2) *The vocations committee's outreach, and*
- 3) *Parishes struggling to build the faith*

(see details on page 2).

I thank you for your generosity. ❖



Children's Page

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

Dear Boys and Girls,

In today's Gospel reading, Jesus appeared to some of his disciples and said, "Peace be with you." The disciples were afraid and weren't sure what they were seeing. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

Seeing that they were afraid, Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? Why do you have doubts? Look at my hands and my feet. Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones like I have."

Jesus could see that they still weren't convinced, so he asked them, "Do you have anything to eat?" They gave him a piece of fish and he ate it as they watched.

Then Jesus opened their minds so that they could understand the Scriptures. He taught said, "It was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer, die, and be raised from the dead on the third day. It was written so that this message would be told to every nation, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.' You are witnesses of all these things."

As Jesus opened the minds of his disciples, let us pray that he will open our hearts and minds to spread the Good News to everyone we know that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again so that we could have forgiveness of sin.

Heavenly Father, open our minds to understand your Word, open our hearts to live your Word, open our lips to share the Word with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Colour me!



Jesus Appears to the Disciples

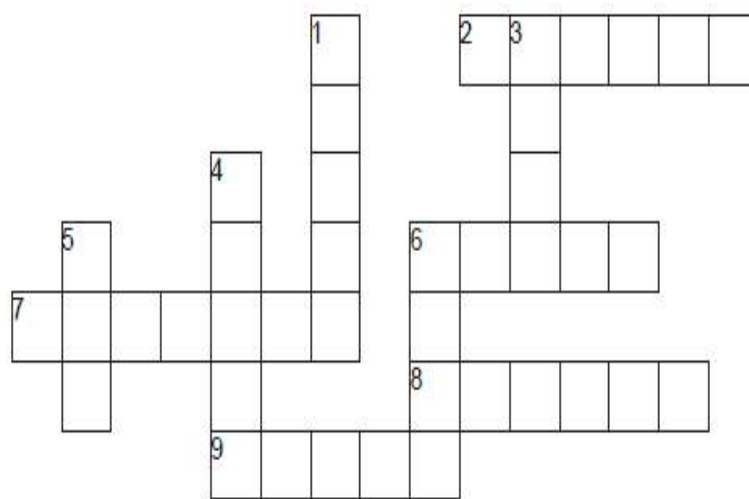
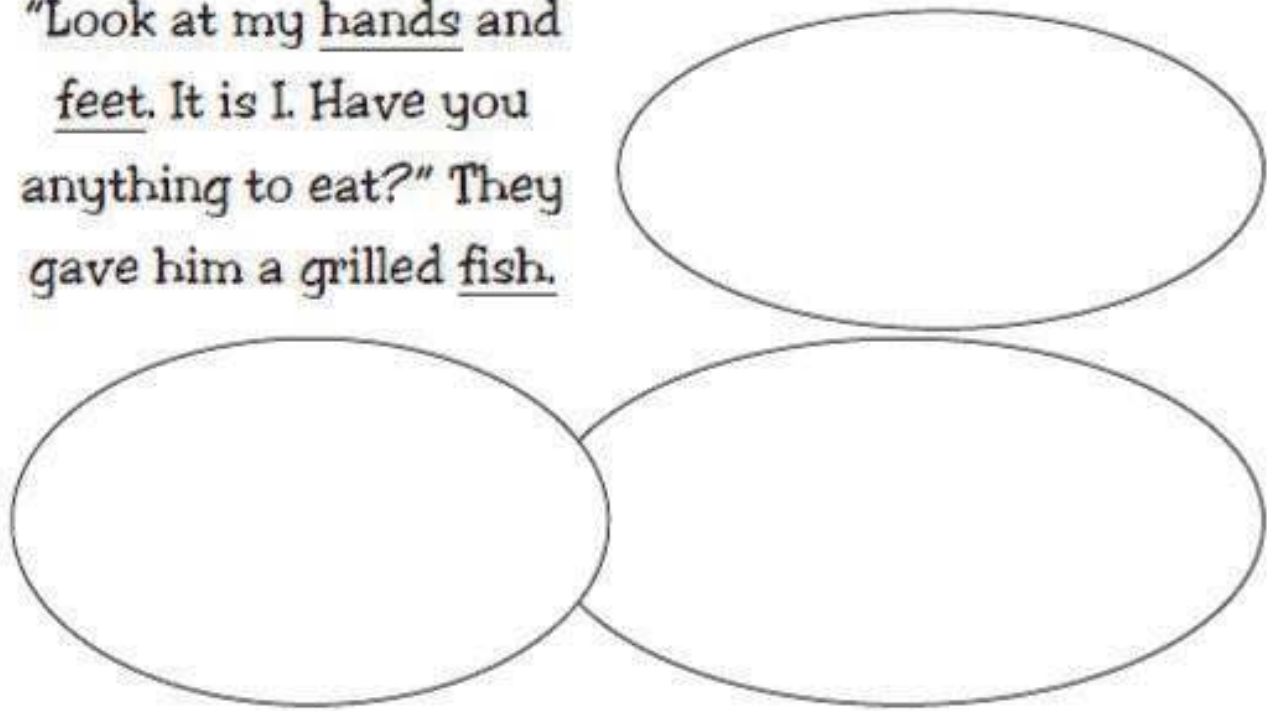
ONCE AGAIN JESUS APPEARS

Colour in the letters with the star (*) to reveal what Jesus said

D	P	E	A	C	E	A	N	I	B	E	F	L	J
	*	*	*	*	*				*	*			
M	B	W	I	T	H	C	H	K	Y	O	U	E	G
		*	*	*	*				*	*	*		

Then he said,
"Look at my hands and
feet. It is I. Have you
anything to eat?" They
gave him a grilled fish.

In the spaces below draw pictures of what Jesus showed the apostles and what they gave him to eat.



ACROSS

- 2. To deliver a sermon
- 6. The soft outer parts of the body; skin
- 7. Countries; territories where groups of people live
- 8. To feel pain
- 9. to handle or feel something with your fingers

DOWN

- 1. What the skeleton is made of
- 3. To return from death
- 4. A dead person appearing in a bodily form
- 5. To take in food through the mouth
- 6. An animal that lives in the water

RISE NATIONS FISH SUFFER BONES
TOUCH EAT FLESH PREACH GHOST

T	S	B	U	O	D	Y	E	S	R
N	E	O	B	T	R	E	H	E	H
E	Y	N	R	O	T	S	C	E	S
S	E	E	T	R	H	O	U	C	I
S	T	S	O	H	G	H	O	A	F
T	T	A	S	N	I	B	T	E	R
B	D	O	I	V	R	R	E	P	I
U	Y	S	R	E	F	T	D	C	G
O	E	H	A	N	D	S	U	O	T
D	O	D	S	M	L	A	S	P	H
STORY			ROAD		BREAD		FRIGHT		
GHOST		DOUBTS			HANDS		FEET		
TOUCH		BONES		FISH		PSALMS			



Schools have re-opened after the Easter holiday period, We would like to share an article that we found on the internet.

At school, kids learn a lot that isn't going to be helpful to them later in life. While getting an education is important, there is much that kids could be learning that schools aren't teaching. Children and young teens need to be taught life lessons, that will enable them to be independent and certain, yet respectful. Below are ten lessons that schools should focus on:

You Live The Life You Create For Yourself: While others will try to persuade you, know that they cannot decide for you. Make sure that the path you decide to take aligns with your own intuition and desires. It's okay to switch paths or create a new one.

Patience Is Not About Waiting: Patience is about the ability to keep a good attitude while working hard for what you want to achieve. Being patient gives you the time you need to reach your goal. Patience is about pace, not waiting. It's about timing yourself to work with more than one process around you.

Some Kind Of failure Always Occurs Before Success: Making mistakes are part of the learning process and most mistakes are unavoidable. Making mistakes is not the problem, not learning from them is. Remember that behind every great success, is a thousand failed attempts to get there.

Thinking And Doing Are Two Very Different Things: Don't expect success to come to you just by sitting around. You are what you do, not what you

Lessons that Schools could also focus on



By Chris & Noelma Lam

say you'll do. Remember that good things come to those who work on meaningful goals. Ask yourself what's important and have the courage to build your life around your answer.

You Don't Have To Wait For An Apology To Forgive: Learn to accept all the apologies you never get, this will make life easier. The key is to be thankful for each experience, be it positive or negative. Instead of getting upset at a situation, take a step back and say 'thank you for the lesson'. Realize that grudges from the past are a waste of happiness. When you forgive, you're allowing yourself to let go of your past.

Walk Away From The People That Keep Bringing You Down: Be brave and walk away from the people who make you feel uncomfortable and insecure. If anybody you stay with makes you feel like you can't be yourself, or if you feel emotionally drained or anxious after spending time with them, listen to your intuition and step

aside. Hang out with the people who inspire you to be the best version of yourself.

What You Own Is Not Who You Are: The things that you own have no bearing on who you are as a person. Understand that we live in a hugely consumer-driven culture that gives more importance to material things than meaningful connections and experiences. Make it a point to create your own connections without being influenced by what you see on TV, read in fashion magazines and so on.

It Only Takes One Second For Everything To Change: Keep in mind that things change, often spontaneously. People and circumstances come and go. Remember that life doesn't just stop for anybody. It has the ability to move from calm to chaos in a matter of seconds. Unpredictable events happen and they may happen at any time. So when life is good, absorb each moment, enjoy it. And when life gets tough, know that these moments do not last forever.

It's Not Other Peoples Job To Love You, It's Yours: When they're young children are taught to be nice to others. But as they get older, they need to be reminded that while it's important to be nice to others, it is important that they be nice to themselves too. Don't see yourself through the eyes of those that don't value you, know your worth.

Life Is Short: While the unknown may seem fearful, the only thing you need to fear is not living because you feel too afraid to take action. Be bold, be courageous, and don't let yourself be afraid of accomplishing your dreams.

TitBits

-- This Week's Reflection:

Paradise is not found on the beaches of a Caribbean Island or in some mythic garden from the book of Genesis. Paradise is where God's will is done, where the kingdom of God is more than breaking in. It is the very reality of our existence with God, without the gloss of our own selfish desires, without our own obsessive need for control. It is the location - not so much in time and space, but in experience - where, like God, who is more and more Deus pro nobis ("God for us"), we live more and more as women and men for others. As the Our Father says so clearly, this paradise about which Jesus speaks - is found when his will is done. (Extract from The Last Words of Jesus: A Meditation on Love and Suffering by Daniel P. Horan, OFM)
Have a Great Week!

-- This Week's Bible Question:

Q. What did a non-Israelite have to do if he wanted to take part in the Passover?

-- This Week's Teaser:

Q: What did the bee say when he returned to the hive?

-- Today's Bible Verse:

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. - Colossians 3:15

-- Today's Marriage Tip:

When you and your spouse have an argument, remember that the goal is not to "win." The two of you are on the same team, fighting for your marriage, not one another.

-- Humour:

A young mother was standing outside a store in the mall holding her six month old baby and her sister's three month old baby.

Little Johnny approached the mother and enquired: "Are they twins?"

"No." She replied. "They're three months apart."

"My! You sure had them close together."

-- A Card Hallmark Would Never Print:

You're just jealous because the voices only talk to me.

-- This Week's Truism:

A computer can beat you at chess, but it's no match at pelting things.

-- Signs Found at Church:

When down in the mouth, remember Jonah. He came out all right.

-- Answer to Bible Question:

Have all his household circumcised. - Exodus 12:48

And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.

-- Answer to Teaser:

Honey, I'm home! ❖



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Mind Puzzler Corner

Our Last Brain Teaser was:

I beam, shine, and sparkle white. I brighten the day with a single light. I charm and enchant one and all. I can counter the darkest pall. What am I?

The answer: A smile.

This Week's Brain Teaser:

What does man love more than life, fear more than death or mortal strife? What the poor have, the rich require, and what contented men desire? What the miser spends and the spendthrift saves, and all men carry to their graves?

Look for the Answer next week

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All are called to holiness, Pope Francis says in new document

(CNS) God calls all Christians to be saints -- not plastic statues of saints, but real people who make time for prayer and who show loving care for others in the simplest gestures, Pope Francis said in his new document on holiness.

"Do not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy," the pope wrote in "Gaudete et Exsultate" ("Rejoice and Be Glad"), his apostolic exhortation on "the call to holiness in today's world."

Pope Francis signed the exhortation March 19, the feast of St. Joseph, and the Vatican released it April 9.

Much of the document was written in the second person, speaking directly to the individual reading it. "With this exhortation I would like to insist primarily on the call to holiness that the Lord addresses to each of us, the call that he also addresses, personally, to you," he wrote near the beginning.

Saying he was not writing a theological treatise on holiness, Pope Francis focused mainly on how the call to holiness is a personal call, something God asks of each Christian and which requires a personal response given one's state in life, talents and circumstances.

"We are frequently tempted to think that holiness is only for those who can withdraw from ordinary affairs to spend much time in prayer," he wrote. But "that is not the case."

"We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves," he said.

He wrote about "the saints next door" and said he likes "to contemplate the holiness present in the patience of God's people: in those parents who raise their children with immense love, in those men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, in elderly religious who never lose their smile."

Pope Francis also noted the challenges to holiness, writing at length and explicitly about the devil.

"We should not think of the devil as a myth, a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea," the pope wrote in his exhortation. "This mistake would lead us to let down our guard, to grow careless and end up more vulnerable" to the devil's temptations.

"The devil does not need to possess us. He poisons us with the venom of hatred, desolation, envy and vice," he wrote. "When we let down our guard, he takes advantage of it to destroy our lives, our families and our communities."

The path to holiness, he wrote, is almost always gradual, made up of small steps in prayer, in sacrifice and in service to others.

Being part of a parish community and receiving the sacraments, especially

the Eucharist and reconciliation, are essential supports for living a holy life, the pope wrote. And so is finding time for silent prayer. "I do not believe in holiness without prayer," he said, "even though that prayer need not be lengthy or involve intense emotion."

"The holiness to which the Lord calls you will grow through small gestures," he said, before citing the example of a woman who refuses to gossip with a neighbor, returns home and listens patiently to her child even though she is tired, prays the rosary and later meets a poor person and offers him a kind word.

The title of the document was taken from Matthew 5:12 when Jesus says "rejoice and be glad" to those who are persecuted or humiliated for his sake.

The line concludes the Beatitudes, in which, Pope Francis said, "Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy": living simply, putting God first, trusting him and not earthly wealth or power, being humble, mourning with and consoling others, being merciful and forgiving, working for justice and seeking peace with all.

The example of the saints officially recognized by the church can be helpful, he said, but no one else's path can be duplicated exactly.

Each person, he said, needs "to embrace that unique plan that God willed for each of us from eternity."

The exhortation ends with a section on "discernment," which is a gift to be requested of the Holy Spirit and developed through prayer, reflection, reading Scripture and seeking counsel from a trusted spiritual guide.

"A sincere daily 'examination of conscience'" will help, he said, because holiness involves striving each day for "all that is great, better and more beautiful, while at the same time being concerned for the little things, for each day's responsibilities and commitments."

Pope Francis also included a list of cautions. For example, he said holiness involves finding balance in prayer time, time spent enjoying others' company and time dedicated to serving others in ways large or small. And, "needless to say, anything done out of anxiety, pride or the need to impress others will not lead to holiness."

Being holy is not easy, he said, but if the attempt makes a person judgmental, always frustrated and surly, something is not right.

"The saints are not odd and aloof, unbearable because of their vanity, negativity and bitterness," he said. "The apostles of Christ were not like that."

In fact, the pope said, "Christian joy is usually accompanied by a sense of humor."

The exhortation included many of Pope Francis' familiar refrains about attitudes that destroy the Christian community, like gossip, or that proclaim themselves to be Christian, but are really forms of pride, like knowing all the rules and being quick to judge others for not following them.

Holiness "is not about swooning in mystic rapture," he wrote, but it is about recognizing and serving the Lord in the hungry, the stranger, the naked, the poor and the sick.

Holiness is holistic, he said, and while each person has a special mission, no one should claim that their particular call or path is the only worthy one.

"Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred," the pope wrote. "Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia...."

And, he said, one cannot claim that defending the life of a migrant is a "secondary issue" when compared to abortion or other bioethical questions.

"That a politician looking for votes might say such a thing is understandable, but not a Christian," he said.

Pope Francis' exhortation also included warnings about a clear lack of holiness demonstrated by some Catholics on Twitter or other social media, especially when commenting anonymously.

"It is striking at times," he said, that "in claiming to uphold the other commandments, they completely ignore the eighth, which forbids bearing false witness or lying."

Saints, on the other hand, "do not waste energy complaining about the failings of others; they can hold their tongue before the faults of their brothers and sisters, and avoid the verbal violence that demeans and mistreats others." ❖

Youth Explosion (From Front Page)

Selected scripture passages were shared by the Hosororo organizing team under the leadership of Mr. Paul Hernandez, the Hosororo youth co-ordinator.

Much time was also spent in prayer and worship, reflection, sharing, singing and dancing. The Hosororo & Mabaruma Township Choir helped the group to open up their hearts and minds through their beautiful prayer and worship songs.

The youths were very happy and were very deeply involved in the

Queen honours Grenada Cluny Sister



Sr. Maureen Alexander SJC

Sister Maureen Alexander, Provincial Superior of the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny (SJC) will receive the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) award from Queen Elizabeth II at an awards ceremony in London, July 3.

Sr. Maureen was nominated the highest honour for Grenada for her 40-plus years of services to education. She was among five Grenadian honourees and other persons from the United Kingdom and 16 Commonwealth nations named in the Queen's 2018 New Year Honours List. The announcement was published in the London Times. ❖

EDITORIAL (From Page 2)

How else can we explain the widespread addiction to alcohol and drugs, to reckless driving, to jay walking, to daring robberies in which life and limb are risked. How else can we explain the apathy of so many when confronted with the problems which beset our country. How else do we account for the confusion and conflicts which our yet to be developed oil and gas industry has already produced.

As we look to the future Guyana needs the assurance of the Easter message, namely that human striving and suffering are never wasted. That our highest aspirations and deepest needs can be met that one day God's Kingdom will be established in all its fullness. ❖

programme. They totally enjoyed the experience. The last day of the event was a fun day. After the Mass, the youths enjoyed participating in different games.

Four women volunteered to cook for the participants. Thanks to them. I am very grateful to all those who directly or indirectly supported the event, especially Mr. Paul Hernandez and his team for their hard work which made this programme so successful.

Congratulations to all the participants. We hope to see you as the rising, capable leaders wherever you are and especially in the Church. May God Bless you all. ❖

US students in Immersion Trip: Laudato Si' in Action

Saint of the Week



April 19th: Saint Gianna Beretta Molla (1922-1962)

In less than 40 years, Gianna Beretta Molla became a pediatric physician, a wife, a mother and a saint!

She was born in Magenta (near Milano) as the 10th of Alberto and Maria Beretta's 13 children. An active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Gianna earned degrees in medicine and surgery from the University of Pavia and eventually opened a clinic in Mesero. Gianna also enjoyed skiing and mountain climbing.

Shortly before her 1955 marriage to Pietro Molla, Gianna wrote to him: "Love is the most beautiful sentiment that the Lord has put into the soul of men and women." She and Pietro had three children, Pierluigi, Maria Zita, and Laura.

Early in the pregnancy for her fourth child, doctors discovered that Gianna had both a child and a tumor in her uterus. She allowed the surgeons to remove the tumor but not to perform the complete hysterectomy that they recommended, which would have killed the child. Seven months later, Gianna Emanuela Molla was born. The following week, her mother Gianna died in Monza of complications from childbirth. She is buried in Mesero.

Gianna Emanuela went on to become a physician herself. Gianna Beretta Molla was beatified in 1994 and canonized 10 years later.

With great faith and courage, Gianna Beretta Molla made the choice that enabled her daughter to be born. We can often wish that we were in different circumstances, but holiness frequently comes from making difficult choices in bad situations. ❖

[From: <http://www.americancatholic.org/>]



With the Sisters in Karasabai (Photo by Samii Hartman)

From March 3rd to 10th the Jesuits in Guyana hosted eleven students from Loyola Marymount University which is a Jesuit University in Los Angeles, California.

They were in Guyana for an Immersion trip called 'Laudato Si' in Action'. This involved spending time with several Amerindian villages in Region 9 to learn about their life, culture and relationship with the environment. One of the students, Elizabeth Bromely gives a report below:

On March 3rd, our group of students and staff leaders from Loyola Marymount University landed in Guyana. We were all part of a faith-based cultural immersion program called Ignacio Companions. The goal of our immersion

experience was to learn about the country, to be present, and to take what we learnt and bring our knowledge back to the United States with us.

We spent our first full day in Georgetown, where we attended a beautiful Mass at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Little Diamond. We then visited the main Jesuit Residence, Arrupe House, where we had a talk on the Jesuits in Guyana and their various works. In the afternoon we visited the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, and Holy Spirit youth group. Being able to see the beauty of Georgetown and be so openly welcomed was extremely special for each of us.

The next day, we flew to Lethem,

where we stayed at the Jesuit residence in St. Ignatius. During our time in St. Ignatius, we visited the Kumu and Baitoon villages, where we were graciously gifted with their thoughtful demonstrations of culture. We learned about their ways of life, the struggles that they face, and their hopes for their communities. We were fortunate enough to be able to connect with the locals and to engage in a dialogue that we had not engaged in before.

After a few days in St. Ignatius, we drove to Karasabai and Tiger Pond. Upon arrival, we started visiting primary schools and sat down with some secondary school students who asked us as many questions as we asked them. We attended Mass at St. Therese Roman Catholic Church and enjoyed meals altogether. We ended our journey back in Georgetown and flew back to the United States on March 10th.

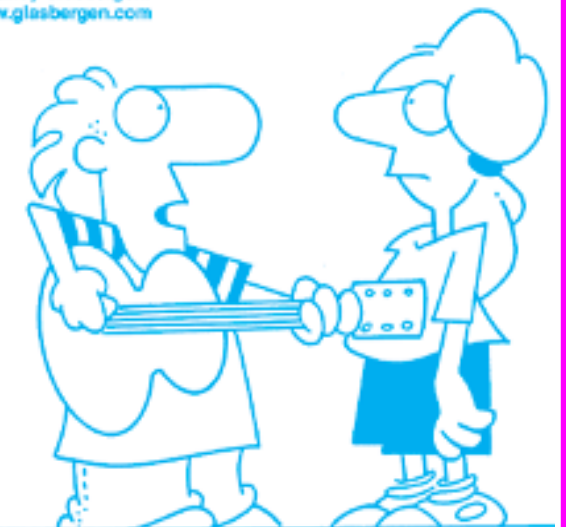
My fellow students and our staff leaders are all immensely grateful for the generous hospitality that we encountered, the countless people who touched our hearts, and the memories that we will cherish forever. Thank you to Fr. Ronnie, Fr. Edwin and Br. Joel for spending the week with us and sharing about their lives and work. Our journey to Guyana was challenging, but we will all be forever thankful to have experienced such an amazing country. Being able to visit Guyana was the greatest blessing and each of us hopes to come back as soon as we can. ❖



Learning about arrows and bows at Baitoon. (Photo by Samii Hartman)

On the Lighter Side

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"Writing hymns is harder than I thought!
I can't think of anything that rhymes with
'Hallelujah' except 'glad I knew ya'
and 'we'll tattoo ya!'"