

A Letter from the Pope

"Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20)



Dear brothers and sisters,

Last Friday, June 19, the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the day traditionally dedicated to pray for the sanctification of priests, I had the joy of inaugurating the Year for Priests. The year was proclaimed on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the "birth into eternal life" of the Curé d'Ars, St. Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney. Entering into the Vatican basilica for the celebration of vespers, almost as a first symbolic gesture, I paused in the Choir Chapel to venerate the relic of this saintly pastor of souls: his heart. Why a Year for Priests? Why particularly in memory of the holy Curé d'Ars, who apparently did nothing extraordinary?

Divine Providence has ordained that this personage would be placed beside that of St. Paul. As the Pauline Year is concluding, a year which was dedicated to the Apostle of the Gentiles, the epitome of an extraordinary evangelizer who made various mission trips to spread the Gospel, this new jubilee year invites us to gaze upon a poor farmer turned humble pastor, who carried out his pastoral service in a small town.

If the two saints are quite different insofar as the life experiences that marked them -- one traveled from region to region to announce the Gospel; the other remained in his little parish, welcoming thousands and thousands of faithful -- there is nevertheless something fundamental that unites them: It is their total identification with their ministry, their communion with Christ. This brought St. Paul to say: "Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20). St. John Vianney liked to repeat: "If we had faith, we would see God hidden in the priest like a light behind glass, like wine mixed with water."

The objective of this Year for Priests, as I wrote in the letter sent to priests for this occasion, is to support that struggle of every priest "toward spiritual perfection, on which the effectiveness of his ministry primarily depends." It is to help priests first of all -- and with them all of God's people -- to rediscover and reinvigorate their awareness of the extraordinary and indispensable gift of grace that the ordained ministry is for he who receives it, for the whole Church, and for the world, which would be lost without the real presence of Christ.

The decree "Presbyterorum Ordinis" from the Second Vatican Council affirms: "Through the apostolic proclamation of the Gospel, the People of God are called together and assembled. All belonging to this people ... can offer themselves as 'a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God' (Rom 12:1). Through the ministry of the priests, the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is made perfect in union with the sacrifice of Christ. He is the only mediator who in the name of the whole Church is offered sacramentally in the Eucharist and in an unbloody manner until the Lord himself comes".

We then ask ourselves, "What exactly does it mean, for priests, to evangelize? What is the so-called primacy of proclamation?" Jesus speaks of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God as the true objective for his coming to the world, and his proclamation is not just a "discourse." It includes, at the same time, his actions: His signs and miracles indicate that the Kingdom is now present in the world, which in the end coincides with himself. In this sense, one must recall that even in this idea of the "primacy" of proclamation, word and sign are inseparable.

Christian proclamation does not proclaim "words," but the Word, and the proclamation coincides with the very person of Christ, ontologically open to the relationship with the Father and obedient to his will. Therefore, authentic service to the Word requires from the priest that he strains toward a deep abnegation of himself, until being able to say with the Apostle, "It is not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me."

The priest cannot consider himself "lord" of the word, but rather its servant. He is not the word, but rather, as John the Baptist proclaimed, (precisely today we celebrate the birth of John the Baptist), he is the "voice" of the Word: "A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths'" (Mark 1:3).

Now then, to be the "voice" of the Word doesn't constitute for the priest a merely functional element. On the contrary, it presupposes a substantial "losing oneself" in Christ, participating in his mystery of death and resurrection with all of oneself: intelligence, liberty, will, and the offering of one's own body as a living sacrifice (cf. Romans 12:1-2). Only participation in the sacrifice of Christ, in his kenosis, makes the proclamation authentic! And this is the path that should be walked with Christ to the point of saying with him to the Father: Let it be done, "not what I will but what you will" (Mark 14:36). The proclamation, therefore, always implies as well the sacrifice of oneself, the condition so that the proclamation can be authentic and effective.

Alter Christus, the priest is profoundly united to the Word of the Father, who in incarnating himself, has taken the form of a slave, has made himself a slave (cf. Philippians 2:5-11). The priest is a slave of Christ in the sense that his existence, ontologically configured to Christ, takes on an essentially relational character: He is in Christ, through Christ, and with Christ at the service of man. Precisely because he belongs to Christ, the priest is radically at the service of all people: He is the minister of their salvation, of their happiness, of their authentic liberation -- maturing, in this progressive taking up of the will of Christ, in prayer, in this "remaining heart to heart" with him. This is therefore the essential condition of all proclamation, which implies participation in the sacramental offering of the Eucharist and docile obedience to the Church.

The holy Curé d'Ars often repeated with tears in his eyes: "What a frightening thing to be a priest!" And he added: "How we ought to pity a priest who celebrates Mass as if he were engaged in something routine. How wretched is a priest without interior life!"

May this Year of the Priest bring all priests to identify themselves totally with Jesus, crucified and risen, so that in imitation of St. John the Baptist, we are willing to "decrease" so that he increases; so that, following the example of the Curé d'Ars, they constantly and deeply understand the responsibility of their mission, which is sign and presence of the infinite mercy of God. Let us entrust to the Virgin, Mother of the Church, this Year for Priests just begun and all the priests of the world.

BENEDICTUS PP. XVI

From the Vatican, June 2009

© Copyright 2009 -- Libreria Editrice Vaticana

[Translation by ZENIT]

Year for Priests - What We Can Do

- 1) Attend Mass faithfully.
- 2) Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession).
- 3) Pray for all priests.
- 4) Do not talk disparagingly about your priests, (especially behind their backs).
Bring your problems to him and work it out in charity and peace.
- 5) Pray for the Intentions of the Holy Father.
- 6) Build parishes, DO NOT tear them down.
- 7) Be patient.
- 8) Make visits to church.
- 9) Respect your pastor and understand that they have a life outside of the parish.



MESSAGES FROM SAINT JOHN VIANNEY ... THE CURE OF ARS

✍ Mary Pepping

The Cure of Ars was a Priest in love with the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. We know this because he spoke of it in most of his sermons. “He is there”, he used to say, “He is listening to you.”

Whenever he faced the tabernacle it could be clearly seen on his face, the reverence and love he felt for the presence of the LORD there. He was quoted saying, “Don’t make yourself heard in the newspapers, but at the door of the Tabernacle.”

He expressed the knowledge that the sinner does not come back to God to ask for forgiveness, but God himself runs after the sinner so that he turns back to God.

His devotion was to the Blessed Trinity. He used a picture of the Trinity as a marker in his breviary. As he prayed the office, he would look towards the Tabernacle in great happiness.

The faithful prepared for confession in the Chapel of the “Ecce Homo”. It was fitted out by the Cure in 1834 with this intention. All the decorations on the walls and the ceiling recalled the Passion of Jesus. (Instruments of the passion and death laying in the Sepulchre).

On the 1st May, 1836 the Cure consecrated his Parish to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Conception. He kept this memory alive with a picture hung at the entrance to the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, which he had built and which he decorated.

After the apparition at Rue du Bac (the Chapelle de Medaille Miraculese) in 1830, he bought a gilt wood statue of the Virgin Mary. Soon after, he had a silver gilt heart made, in which he placed the names of all his Parishioners. This heart hung on the statue of the Miraculous Virgin Mary.

He had other favorite saints ... Saint Philomena, St. Francis of Assisi and the Angels.

He made Chapels to honor these, and he became a member of the Franciscan Third Order in 1848. He was very fond of the poverty and humility of St. Francis of Assisi. And, St. Philomena, he called, his “chargee d’affaires”.

The Chapel of “Providence” was inaugurated in 1848. The Cure of Ars had it built with the hope it would become a retreat for himself ... He thought that once he was freed from Parish ministering, he would institute a ‘Perpetual Adoration according to God’s will’.

Here are some sayings of the Holy Cure of Ars:

ON GOD'S LOVE: "The only happiness we have on earth is: Loving God and knowing God loves us."

ON PRAYER: "A sweet exchange between a child and his Father."

ON THE CHURCH: "Happy is the Christian who has been taught and fits into the Holy Spirit of the Church."

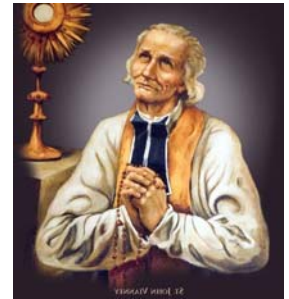
ON PRIESTS: "Priesthood is the love of Jesus' heart."

ON THE EUCHARIST: "He is there, He who loves you so much...Why shouldn't we love him?"

ON FORGIVENESS: "His heart is oozing with tenderness and mercy to drown the sins of the world."

ON LUKEWARM SOUL: "Poor blind creature, who gives one hand to God and the other to the world, so that he can call both to his aid, and promise his heart to each in turn! He loves God, or rather, he would like to love Him, but he would also like to please the world. Then, weary of wanting to give his allegiance to both, he ends by giving it to the world alone. ... A lukewarm Christian thinks very little upon the state of his poor soul and almost never lets his mind run over the past. If the thought of making any effort to be better crosses his mind at all, he believes that once he has confessed his sins, he ought to be perfectly happy and at peace."

ON HAVING TO DO SOMETHING WE DISLIKE: "Let us say to God, 'My God I offer You this in honor of the moment when You died for me'."



PRIESTHOOD: GENEROSITY IN LOVE

✍ Niran Iskandar

When we give a gift to someone, people would say how generous we are depending on the gift they receive regardless whether its value affected our budget or not. We can be wealthy and provide an expensive gift (though its value has no affect on us), and on the other hand we can be poor and provide a cheap gift but means a lot for the receiver because he knows that the cost of this gift can affect the food on the table for our children. In the same way, we give gifts to God but the difference between God and human being is that He always know what these gifts mean to us.

In the Bible, if we want to see a generous person then we need to look at the poor woman who gave the two small coins, all what she had to live on, into the treasury (Luke 21:1-4) or the woman who bought expensive perfume and washed Jesus' Face (Luke 7:44-47); they did this because both of them loved God so much. Such generosity in love to God is shown in the heart of the mother who would consecrate her first born child to God (not knowing if she is going to have another one or not), fill his heart from childhood to work for God and become a priest. She does not want grandchildren or to see him as a bridegroom, the dream of every mother, but she rejoices in seeing him marrying Jesus on his 'Ordination Day' and having an unlimited number of children through the people he serves and would be their shepherd to do Jesus Christ Will, i.e. to make God known to them and heal their souls to praise God, give Him thanks and bless His Holy Name. Of course, Jesus Christ Will is to heal the sick as He healed the person from leprosy, a sickness that detaches sick people (sinners) from clean people (God's Kingdom) (Luke 5:12-14). His Will is to bring back the sinner into repentance and obedience with love to God and to make all people live together in harmony, love and humbleness, and that is His Father's Will.

Priests, believing that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, Eternal King, Undying Lord and God, and had set their hearts on God's Kingdom (Luke 12:31), as John the Baptist, would deny themselves so that they will grow less and He will grow greater (John 3:27-36). They are part of the church Jesus Christ wanted to build on His Word and Work (flowing from His Heart); a church started with the work of the Twelve Disciples and will not end until all sinners are called to Him to be saved. Priests know and believe that God is so Merciful; that He forgive sins with His touch when He is invited into our hearts through the Holy Eucharist. The Holy Eucharist that represent Jesus' thanks to His Father, His Prayers and Blessings, His Father's Living Bread, His Running Living Water, His Mercy and Forgiveness, and His everlasting Life. Priests are perfumed with Jesus Christ's Blood and are robed with God's Love and Mercy, the gown of anyone who accepts the invitation of God to His Kingdom. Priests are called to change the Literature in the Bible into comprehension to the listener: a believer and a counter. Priests are like a doctor helping a pregnant woman (i.e., a troubled soul) to deliver and give birth to a new born child. Priests are people who would like to fulfil Jesus Christ wish and bring a blazing fire of love to God in the hearts of the people on earth (Luke 12:49).

Priests are the ones who were touched/cured by God, so they followed Him (Mark 10:49-52, Matthew 20:29-33) forever, and:

1. Started praising and glorifying Him not only by words (Luke 13:10-13) but with their life.
2. Threw themselves at His Feet and thanked Him (Luke 17:15-16) not once but throughout their life.
3. Stayed at His Feet for a while then at His request went and spread the Good News to others (Luke 8:26-39).

Priests are the ones who knew, loved and adored the sign of Christian's Faith: The Crucifix. The priest, a person who holds The Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ (Who was nailed on the Cross once and only once) every day when he holds The Holy Eucharist; who looks at the pain endured by Son of God for our own salvation, and feels the love of God towards His children that endures for ever, a love that is beyond imagination; and knows God's faithfulness to all generations. No wonder that people pray for priests who are ordinary (weak and frail) human beings everyday as

Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus recited: *“O Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep all Thy priests within the shelter of Thy Sacred Heart, where none may harm them. Keep unstained their anointed hands which daily touch Thy Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips purpled with Thy Precious Blood. Keep pure and unearthly their hearts, sealed with the sublime marks of Thy glorious priesthood. Let Thy holy love surround them and shield them from the world's contagion. Bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they have ministered be here below their joy and consolation and in Heaven their beautiful and everlasting crown. Amen.”*

We see pictures of Saints kneeling in front of Jesus Christ on the cross, but it is not easy for us to imagine a priest holding Jesus Christ every day in the Holy Mass. In the Book of Malachi, God ask the priests to honor and glorify His Name in their hearts, to offer to Him the sacrifice that he is pleased with, that is acceptable to Him, the sacrifice that later on He gave us freely with love and pain: Jesus Christ, His Beloved Son.



My Lord & My God

The call to priesthood is like the invitation Jesus Christ made to Andrew and the other disciple when they wanted to follow Him and asked Jesus to be their Teacher. As a result of the invitation, they stayed with Him till the end of the day (till death; forever). During their journey, they kept on drinking from the everlasting spring of living water, and they came to the understanding that He is the Messiah. They learned how to be real followers so that they in turn, through their homilies/speech/act, can introduce God to others (as Andrew introduced his brother Simon, and Philip introduced Nathan'a-el to Jesus) and make others understand what God want from us in order to please God and be His Children. Parents need to be like Saint John The Baptist and introduce Jesus Christ into their children's lives by saying: “Behold, the Lamb of God”, or like the Apostles Andrew and Philip, and encourage them to offer themselves to God and become priests and live in holiness. Afterwards, God will do the rest.

Answering the call, is like the steps the Apostle Simon Peter took: (1) His brother Andrew told him that they have seen the Messiah and asked him to follow Him, and at that time Jesus Christ renamed Simon to Cephas (Rock) (John 1:41), then (2) when he saw Jesus Christ walking on water he said with the other disciples that Jesus is Son of God (he saw something extraordinary) (Matthew 14:33), and (3) with God's Grace, he believed with faith in his heart and declared with joy that Jesus is Son of God, The Messiah, and this time Jesus Christ told him that on him (i.e. on this faith which is as a solid platform Rock) He will build His Church (Matthew 16:16). In comparison to a priest's call, the first step takes place when his parents took him to church for Baptism where the Godparents would say “Yes, I believe” instead of him, then on First Holy Communion day he will say with his mouth “Yes, I believe” (though he did not fully understand in his heart what he is receiving or saying), but on his ordination day, his heart filled with the Holy Spirit admit with faith and say “Yes, I believe. Amen”.

A priest is like a bride on her wedding day, everyone looks at her with sharp eyes either to admire her or to try and find something wrong to nail her. It must be very hard for a priest for someone to come to him questioning his faith, after leaving everything to serve God. On the other hand, it is also hard for the colleague or the faithful parishioner to see an unacceptable act from a priest. Exactly as in a family, a priest is a father for so many children each with his/her own understanding. The openness between the father and the children is the best way to fix any misunderstanding and clearing the intentions in the heart. Priests need to be a model for others as parents need to be a model for their children.

Nowadays very few parents encourage their children to become priests or to consecrate their life to serving God and His children. Their concern is that life is becoming more expensive and the salary of the “Job” entitled “Priest” does not cover the expenses of living. The harvest is plenty, but laborers are few, so let us pray to the Lord of the harvest, as Jesus Christ asked us, to send more laborers (Luke 10:1-3): *“Heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, Lord of the harvest Who desire that all may be saved, the harvest is plentiful but laborers are few. Oh Sacred Heart of Jesus who is full of love for the children, we humbly ask You to increase in the whole world the number of faithful and zealous laborers from young boys and men. Please kindle their generous and pure hearts by the Power of Your Holy Spirit with Your Divine Love so that they may yield unconditionally to Your Divine service. Provide them with Your Divine help so that no earthly desires will stop them from Your service till their death. Amen.”*

ST. ADDAI YOUTH GROWING-UP IN FAITH

✍ Waseem Hermiz & Diana Nissan

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:1, 14)

This is how we begun our new religious program for the Youth Group mid-year in 2009, delving into the Scriptures. After attending the Youth Ministry 101 course, provided by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland which was attended by all ten Youth Group leaders, we had an advocacy night for the youth and later for their parents. The results from the advocacy survey provided a foundation for the leadership committee to work with and grow the Youth Group.

One growth area which was identified through this survey was to discuss the Scriptures more fully but in a manner that was to be understood on three different levels according to the age groups we had. The decision was to divide the group into three distinct areas/levels based on their ages and deliver the religious program accordingly. We had the help of Fr Gerges Albutros of St Elias Melkite Church who was our guide in matters of Scripture. The program was based on Gospel readings of the following Sunday so that the youth get a good understanding of the reading before they come to church on Sunday and if they didn't come they still would have got the Sunday message on the youth night. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the help of Fr Gerges, the Youth Group servants (leaders) were hopefully successful in planting the good seed in the hearts and minds of the youth group and made them aware more of the Scriptures. “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us”.

Throughout our last six months we have had a busy combination of religious programs and entertainment for the youth on Wednesdays and weekends. Some events were organised by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland for the Southern Auckland region and also events that our own Youth Group organized for our own group. One of the Diocese events which was well attended by our Youth Group members was the “Battle of the South” organized by Otara's St John the Evangelist Youth Group. This event was a trivia type game show attended by many South Auckland youth groups and to which our group took 3rd place.

Our Youth Group also organised events such as “Fun with a Cause” party that took place in our Church hall on July 8th. That was to collect money and food donations for the poor and distribute this through the St Vincent de Paul's Young Vinnies society. The party was filled with music and dancing and plenty of food. Another event was the “WYD 08 Reunion – One Year On” dinner that was for the WYD group to celebrate the one year anniversary since going to Sydney for WYD 08. On July 30th the then current Youth Group Leaders had their Last Gathering as one group. This also involved a dinner and game of Laser Strike. This celebrated the Leadership committee and especially the end of Waseem's reign as Youth Group Coordinator and the beginning of Diana's. Following on from that the Youth Group Leadership committee was in the process of choosing the next generation of young leaders that were going to help in the coming year. Five youth members were chosen to take this responsibility and are now in the process of being trained to start in the new year. Other activities that took place were some outings like ten pin bowling, laser strike, indoor soccer, ice skating, watching movies and going to Burger King. One recent movie was about the life of the late Pope John Paul II before he became Pope.

Some things to note are that some of our St Addai Youth Group members were chosen in their high schools to some high positions of responsibility. They are Sam Zaia as Head Boy (Papatoetoe High School), Rita Mousses as Kowhai House Leader (Papatoetoe High School), Raneen Attalla as Liturgy Leader (McCauly High School) and Andrew Israel as Prefect & Hokianga House Leader (Sancta Maria College). I would like you to join me in congratulating these youth group members for achieving high positions at their respective schools for the coming year and I hope that we get more of our members to reach these fine positions to represent our parish and Iraqi community in their schools. I hope that all our youth members have had a very good time studying for their final exams either for their high school or university studies and that they achieve the results they are to be proud of.

Our future events in the next few months will include hopefully the Annual Church Gala held in end of November, the Christmas Party, more outings and picnics over the summer holidays and then later in January 2010 a Youth Group Camp to start the year afresh ready for more youth sessions starting in February 2010. I hope that all those youth who are reading this article see how fun and rewarding it is to join the Youth Group and how much you get to learn and make new friends and belong to a community of faith and love in Christ. Diana and myself ask all the parents out there in our community to encourage their youth to join the group in the coming year and we also ask the youth to join us in our journey for the Word that is God so that together we build this Church as the new generation comes to replace the old one.

Finally, I want to thank God for this opportunity he has given me to have led this Youth Group from the time prior to WYD 08 and during that momentous time in Sydney for WYD 08 and the events after that when the group grew from 25 to well above 80 members. I could not have done this on my own, so I thank all my peers in the leadership committee for this Youth Group and may God bless you and keep guiding you in leading this group to the next level in the coming years. Thanks also to Fr Fawzi Koro for his kind words and support for our Youth Group over this last year and also to Fr Gerges Albutros for his support in time and effort. On behalf of the Youth Group leadership committee, myself and Diana we wish everyone, the youth their families and friends and the whole Parish of St Addai and everyone else a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year filled with happiness and joyous occasions. God bless.

Heart Of Worship - Elevate

✍ Ranny Kettoola

I was on stage, looking out at everyone, my hands starting to become a little moist and my heart pumping faster than ever. I think to myself I better not screw this up or else this will be so embarrassing; everyone at the camp is watching us and the whole crew has prepared so much. Sam starts playing his guitar, quickly to be followed up Isen on cue and finally Danny joins in with the bongo drums. It's my turn to start pumping my vocal beats. And I remembered one thing. I'm up there to glorify God and not myself.

Well I'm not much of a singer and I definitely said NO to singing the song that Sam had written. And as much as I would have loved to help I felt it would be such a bad idea for me to sing. However Danny, Isen and Sam were very keen on performing and I love supporting people's commitment to expand in life and taking risks. So I finally said YES. Yes to singing, yes to praising God and yes to not making it about myself but about the God.

I went to this camp not really sure what to expect. I was mostly there as an opportunity to get closer to God. I find that with work and my other post work activities I get caught up in the day to day routines and lose track of being able to give God the attention I desire to give him. And "Elevate" surely provided all of that.

On Friday evening, Sabrina, Samih, Reyam, Isen, Danny and I set out to go to Carey camp out west. We began the evening by splitting into groups and having a few games. Then the first session began. This was the first of three sessions which were on the following topics: The Heart of Worship (Friday), The Heart of the Mass (Saturday), and The Heart of a Musician (Sunday).

On Saturday and Sunday we also had an opportunity to take lessons on many musical sessions such as vocal skills, base and rhythm or guitar and keyboard (strings and keys). It was a great opportunity to get taught by some of the best Christian and Catholic musicians in Auckland.

Spiritually, my highlight was just the opportunity for praise and worship, praying the rosary with a small group of people every night and listening to the amazing talks by the speakers.

On the social side, it was the performance and talent evening on Saturday night, where groups volunteered to go up and express their talents in whatever way they saw fit: Through singing, dancing, or through musical instruments. This is where Danny, Isen, Sam and I had the opportunity to go up and sing for God. It was definitely a great experience, and the other groups displayed an absolutely amazing and fun range of talents that engaged the whole camp.

TEACHING THE FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CLASS

✍ Raneen Attalla (17) and Tara Zaia (19)

The year 2009, marked the beginning of a year long, teaching experience, of 26 students, thirsty for Jesus' presence within their hearts. The 2009 First Holy Communion Class of St. Addai Chaldean Catholic Church, began with a blast, this is meant in the most literal sense, as the yelling from both the teaching staff, and the students, exploded all at once.

Having said that, a quote from Joseph Addison would start this most remarkable tale off nicely:

"I do not believe that sheer suffering teaches. If suffering alone taught, the whole world would be wise, since everyone suffers. To suffering must be added mourning, understanding, patience, love, openness and the willingness to remain vulnerable."

The word "suffering", would then imply severe pain, I however, ask you to consider a different kind of suffering, the kind of suffering that the children faced. Endless hours of sitting and listening, the need to be active but being told not to even take a single breath, paying attention for three consecutive hours and getting hungry, but not able to reach into their bags and eat the food they have. I also ask you to consider "suffering" as understood by the teachers of this Class, who were comprised of Suhad and ourselves (Raneen and Tara), the long hours of trying to control 26 or so students, the time spent to try and help them understand something that even most adults find it difficult to understand, the extra hours put in, to explain the topics to those who have difficulty understanding English, and the effort put in to control the noise level and the fidgeting and the distractions.

You might be thinking "Why on earth would I want to be involved in such a painful experience?" Well that's just it, it wasn't as painful as it sounds, which leads us into the next part of the quote from Addison: "...understanding, patience, love, openness and the willingness to remain vulnerable." This small number of words, I believe, sums up the important qualities needed, to make teaching a class as big as ours, more enjoyable and successful. Understanding the needs of those wonderful children, understanding when it's time to call it quits and give them a break, or to keep going because we've finally found the right method of delivering the message. Having the patience when they wouldn't sit still, and kept asking irrelevant questions, such as "When is it break time", when we are telling them that the Bread and Wine become Body and Blood when Father blesses them. Loving them all, the same amount of love, even when all we want to do is yell and tell them to stop talking when we're talking. Being open to any type of question being asked, even if it's "Who says there is a God", and having the right knowledge and resources to answer such difficult questions. Lastly, the most important ingredient, is willing to allow ourselves, to be vulnerable, and let our guard down, as to allow those little angels, to know who we are, not as their teachers, but rather as their friends and family, so they feel safe enough to open up to us in their time of need.

On the fourth of October, the big day finally arrived, and nobody could have been more nervous than the teachers and the students themselves. "This is it" we told them, before they began their remarkable journey inside the church, "you have to remember why you're here: Not to look good, but because you're receiving Jesus today". In the end of the Holy Mass, everything was run so smoothly that the amount of effort and time that was put into the preparation was worth spending. How is it that we know it was a success? Well a hug is good evidence. Nearly everyone came and hugged the teachers, because of their happiness.

What's even more encouraging is seeing those same students, come to mass every Sunday, and sing and praise God with their voices. Prior to this experience, none of those same students were ever seen at church, which makes it safe to say that their lives were transformed greatly through their new found acquaintance with Jesus our savior.

So, for all you young people out there, who are reading this and saying "No way I am ever going to be able to teach children", think again. Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not worry about what to say, for God's Spirit will be speaking through you". You have the ability to make a difference to the lives of the next generation. For those of you who are already teaching, take a step back, and see what

difference you are making.

The future of our church rests on our shoulders, whether our church and our heritage and our language, is still here in ten years time, is a question we can answer ourselves. So the question is, will you shape the future of your church by passing on the knowledge to the young ones? Will you be the rock that our church is built on? Or will you be another one of the on-lookers, who look on and criticize, but not act to change the mistake? Make the choice.

\$20 FOR GOD

✍ Doreen Nissan

It was another late night for the nursing students on campus, as we had two major essays due, followed by an exam. I was in the middle of writing my essay, when a friend of mine turned around and started to tell me about something that had happened to him that morning. He started by explaining how he did not get any spending money from his adopted family that week (his real family is back in Tonga, and he stays with a Tongan family that sponsor his study). He was shy to ask for money, so he prayed instead. That morning when he was making his way to university, a man passing by stopped my friend, reached into his pocket and handed him 20 dollar note and walked off. I was so happy that his prayers were answered, but I was a bit jealous because I felt that God loves him more. I remember saying “How come God doesn’t do something like that to me?”

Few days later my EFTPOS card wasn’t working and I barely had enough money for lunch and transport to get home. I was walking to the library and I saw twenty dollar note on the floor, three people went passed it but they didn’t notice it. I picked it up and put it in my pocket and continued walking. Then I looked at the money and remembered the conversation that I had with my friend earlier. I felt that God left the same amount of money as my friend got, just to show me that he loves me the same. It was just a reminder for me that God is always there listening to me, even when I don’t think He is nearby. Thanks to God’s help and guidance I passed my essays and exam.

MIXED FEELINGS

✍ Renin Yousif

Starting of as that shy girl who didn’t know anything like this would ever happen to her. On the 10th of November 2008 I was attending Papatoetoe High School’s annual prize giving. At the time I had no idea who will be getting what, although I did nominate myself and asked people to vote for me but I really didn’t think I would ever get it.

As I was sitting there with a whole group of friends listening to my principal talking about certain things, he then asked the previous leaders to announce the new leaders for 2009. My heart started to race. Why? I actually had no clue why. It came down to the Sports Leaders. I got even more anxious. Then finally I heard “Sports Captain for 2009 is.... Renin Yousif”. I was in shock but at same time ecstasy. I started to shake I didn’t know what to do. I got up after a few seconds not knowing whether to walk up to the stage or just stand around. I was smiling like there was no tomorrow. I could hear everyone clapping and screaming my name out. I couldn’t believe it, me? Renin Yousif! A leader! No way! But believe it or not it was I.

It was such a great feeling though to know that I had accomplished my goal, gave me a heads up for next year. This experience for me was one I will never forget. Knowing that everyone that voted for me knew I would be up for this role and that made me more confident in myself. It has given me such great opportunities and realizing all the wonderful things in life. One amazing memory that I will cherish would be that I got to pose for the NZ Herald. Yeaah NZ Herald. I had never been asked to do such a thing, but there I was front page looking like a million dollars. (Not exactly but you know what I mean). Whoever is willing to do what I did or has a passion to lead, I recommend you go out there and try new things. Because believe me it has made me become a better person inside and outside, and hey coming from someone like me I know I’m not the smartest nor the most intelligent but, there I was up on that stage knowing that I had reached my goal and got what I wanted. So go out there and earn what you want. ☺

BOYS CAMP AT HUIA RANGES

✍ Ranny Kettoola

Around March this year, a friend of mine Martin Walsh, who I met while undertaking a course at Landmark Education was organizing a camp through a program at Landmark Education called The Self Expression and Leadership program where members are encouraged to take on a program that would inspire them. Martin Walsh was inspired to make a difference with young people and asked if our youth group would be interested in joining them at a camp that would be completely sponsored by the community. So accommodation was provided by Auckland Regional Council, transport was provided by Go West buses, tents and food were also provided by different vendors. However preparation and organisation was done by Martin Walsh and team that is built up of people who were equally interested in making a difference and giving back to society.

The camp was at the Huia Ranges where we were able to camp in a tent at Karamatura Farm Camp. We {Thamer, Danny, Ranny, Andrew, Sam, Isen, Yousif, Hanna, Danny, Larsen and Loeha} arrived

on Saturday morning where we set out on an 8km hike through the ranges from Huia to Whatipu. It was a tough hike where some parts that we went through had a vertical slope that we had to climb. Definitely not for the faint hearted. There were about 10 boys from our youth group and a few other boys and parents that had joined us. Half way through, some were keen to challenge themselves more and decided that they will run the rest of the



the journey while the rest continued on walking. As we arrived at Huia by the beach we attempted to fish and get some mussels. Although we didn't catch any fish, we managed to get some mussels which we took back to camp at Huia. That night we had a delicious BBQ and it surely felt great to enjoy the mussels that we caught. They were absolutely tasty!!! After dinner we were playing a few games like ball rush but once it got dark we decided to play our own version of cops and robbers. We divided into two teams where one team had to hide and the other team had to search for them all in total darkness of the farm. Once we got tired we went to sleep in our big tent which managed to house all of us.

The following day we got up, had breakfast and caught the bus to Whatipu where we met West Auckland Mayor Bob Harvey. It was an extra-ordinary session where he shared with us his experiences in ocean swimming to travelling around Africa, where he was uncomfortably greeted by a pack of lions on one of his camps in the African jungle while his young son was with him. He also shared with us the interesting history of the western region. We really had a memorable and great time with everyone.

MY FIRST YEAR AT UNIVERSITY

✍ Marina Amanoel

Before the year kicked off to a start, getting the acceptance letter was the beginning of my journey to the future. I was a little nervous thinking about what was ahead; luckily I had friends who were there to support me. I was also excited because this is my chance to make my dreams come true.

I learnt a lot during my first year at University, things like how different the atmosphere is at University, as opposed to being in high school, meeting people with different cultural backgrounds and taking more opportunities to learn more about life in general. Overall, my first year was filled with a lot of decision making and sacrifices. But I wouldn't trade this experience for anything because it made me a better person.

Homeopathy Medicine

✍ Jamila Ibrahim - Specialist Registered Nurse and GP Homeopathy & Naturopathy Medicine

Homeopathy is a unique system of medicine that aims to promote good health by stimulating the body's own natural healing abilities. It is an effective branch of medicine and one of few medical specialities which carries no penalties only benefits. In fact, it is non-toxic, non-addictive, safe in pregnancy and child-hood, and of course economical.

It is a true science of healing goes back as long as over 200 years, and it is still valid till today. In the eighteenth century, the scientific spirit made a tremendous leap in the discovery of healing methods that were more than primitive. During that time, a German doctor Samuel Hahnemann formulated for the first time in the history of medicine certain fixed laws and principles governing health and disease, and approved them in actual clinical experience on the three level of human being:

Mental: Confusion, delirium, paranoid ... etc, **Emotional:** Depression, Apathy, Sadness ... etc.

Physical: Brain, Heart, Endocrine, Liver, Lungs, Kidney, Testes, Ovary, Bones, Muscles and Skin.

Homeopathy is a scientific, logical, safe, quick and extremely effective method of healing. It offers long lasting to permanent cure, treating the disease from its roots, and for most of the ailments. Homeopathy is one of the most rational sciences with respect to its concepts of health, disease and cure. Homeopathy does not treat superficially by just driving away the symptoms but heals the patient from within. Undoubtedly, homeopathy is the medicine of the future.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated in its 2005 report: Homeopathy medicine was the second leading system of medicine for primary health care in the world, and the fastest growing. In a more recent news from England stated that 49% of UK doctors had prescribed homeopathy medicine to their patients.

Congratulation

On behalf of the community of St. Addai Chaldean Catholic Church, the Parish Council, St. Addai Youth Group and its Leaders, we send our Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Hermiz (i.e. Waseem Hermiz and Rana Hermiz), for their wedding, and wish them all the happiness and for God to bless them and keep their love alive, and help them be true witnesses to God through their acts.



Congratulation

On behalf of the community of St. Addai Chaldean Catholic Church and the Leaders of the Youth of St. Addai, we would like to congratulate the following community members for their great achievements in their Academic lives:



Samih (Sam) Zaia, for becoming Head Boy for 2010 at Papatoetoe High School.

Raneen Attalla, for becoming Liturgy Leader for 2010, at McCauley High School for Girls.

Reta Mousses, for becoming a House Captain for 2010 for Kowhai House, at Papatoetoe High School.

Andrew Israel, for becoming Prefect and House Leader for 2010 for Hokianga House, at Sancta Maria College.

We wish them all the best in everything they do in their lives, and ask God to bless them and guide them, so they may be the light for others, and always be active members, and the pride, of our community in New Zealand and the rest of the world.

✍ Waseem, Danny, Ranny, and Tara