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# THE MORNING STAR

Registered as a Newspaper at the General Post Office, Sri Lanka  
under No. Q / J / 104 / News / 89

Established: 1841 A Christian Weekly: Published Every Friday

Vol: 154 Jaffna, Friday 07 May 1993 No: 06

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Speech by Mr M. Jebarajah Director JCIT at Farewell function held by Jaffna College Complex on 13.93

Chairman Rev Dr. S. Jebanesan, your lordship the Rt. Rev D. J. Ambalavanar, Dr. C. Ambalavanar, members of the greater family of the Jaffna College Complex and friends.

I consider it a great privilege to have been invited to express our sentiments on this memorable occasion. When we have all gathered to bid farewell to his lordship the Rt Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar the second Bishop of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India and Dr. (Mrs.) Ambalavanar.

It is only by chance that I happen to perform this task, for I am also like St Paul, one who is born out of due season into this position of heading the affairs of our prestigious institute, a member of the Jaffna College Complex. Our Institute has taken great strides and progressed under the care and guidance of his lordship during the past twenty years since its inception.

Moreover this is an occasion for me personally to take pride of the fact that I too come from the same school where lordship had his early education. St. John's College has given two Bishops to JDCSI.

People tend to praise people with words bordering flattery on such occasions, I shall refrain from doing that because we read in proverbs "when he speaketh fair believe him not", but the book of life also says, "Remember them which have rule over you." I will therefore endeavour to make mention of some attributes in the life of his lordship, that have caught my attention and enriched my life, during the last two years. I had the good fortune of working closely with him. Such references serve well for personal edification and are profitable to posterity.

Bishop Ambalavanar had faith in the goodness of God. It is in this assurance that he braved a record number of dangerous trips across the waters of the now famous Kilaly, in the performance of his pastoral duties. I have still to make one, your lordship, you have been a source of encouragement to many but I have been encouraged enough to brave a trip.

He was precise in thought and word. He once made a note.

correction to my appointment. He, for some reason felt that the appointment must go as so & so acting for the director I was at a loss to understand it and must confess to finding it difficult to accept. But I quickly realised that I would be working with someone who is meticulous about details and exact in his expression. Later I found that the correction a long way in making my official dealing easier both within and without the institute. Sir, it is our hope that your guidance would be available to us in the future as well.

Bishop Ambalavanar was always sure about what he said. Whenever there was a difficult question to resolve, he would after considering all the facts of the case, make a carefully worded statement that settled the matter once and for all. We have never heard him raise his voice, an indication of how strong his conviction was.

Our institute like all other institution in the region, has had a very rough voyage during the recent past and it was my unfortunate lot to have been in charge of its affairs. I remember once I had to make difficult decisions with regard to shifting of our expensive machinery & equipment to safety. The word safety itself did not mean much at that time. There was confusion all around and Bishop Ambalavanar was not in the peninsula. However, when I got the news of his arrival the next day, half my fears were allayed. I had a discussion which lasted not more than ten minutes. I was once again calm composed, and was able to make that decision which has saved our property to date.

Lastly I would like to mention what really touched my heart Bishop Ambalavanar, would say a prayer as the first item on the agenda of all our meetings. He would implore divine guidance in all our deliberations and thank God for all those who have laboured in the institute and uphold them in prayer. Your lordship has introduced a Christian principal that would make us remember your good work and uphold you in prayer.

That much for my association with his lordship in official relationship and let me say a few words on a personal note.

I remember very vividly seeing him for the first time many years ago I guess in the mid fifties, when he one day called on my late father, an active Christian in his day. He was young handsome and was dressed in trouser and an open shirt. When I learnt after he left that he was a priest of God, it was to me entirely new and different. Hitherto I had the impression that God's merciful hands were only on the elderly. It was a pleasant revelation in my salad days to see a young person in the prime of his youth taking to ministry.

Dr. (Mrs) Ambalavanar comes from a Christian family that had been a blessing to many a young convert to the Christian faith. My own father when he accepted Christian faith as a young village boy, was lead into this new and living way by her grandfather Rev. Hitchcock. Thank God for this God fearing servant of God, my father was rooted and grounded in the love of Christ and ended his earthly life with hope beyond the grave. The success of a space flight is measured by how the re-docking is effected for a safe return. So also, ones working life is evaluated with what ease he accepts his return to retired life. His lordship, I understand did not entertain any suggestion of even a day's extension. It is sufficient proof that his orbit in office has been resounding success.

We certainly did not think we would bid farewell to you, your lordship and Dr. (Mrs.) Ambalavanar so soon. But I am happy to see a large crowd, which I think is a mighty show of affection and appreciation.

Retirement in the true sense for a Bishop does not come in full on earth, when certain responsibilities are relinquished, but comes as an eternal reward.

We pray the Lord Almighty will add many more years and perfect that which concerns your lordship and your family.

On behalf of our institute we wish your lordship and Dr. (Mrs.) Ambalavanar a very blessed retirement.

May your lordship be able to sing all the remaining days of your life with the writer,

"He caret He beareth  
I am graven in the palms  
of his hands.  
He watcheth He guideth  
He makes bitter sweet  
to me."

JCIT & JCIA Commemorate 20th Anniversary and bids farewell to the Bishop

The Jaffna College Institute of Technology & Institute of Agriculture felicitated Bishop and his wife and commemorated the 20th anniversary of its founding at the Abel's Auditorium on Thursday, 22nd April, 1993. The function started with a tea party to the dignitaries in the Administration Block where Mr. M. Jebarajah, Acting Director, JCIT said that the staff and students of JCIT & JCIA wanted to host Bishop and Amma at a special function, although they had joined the farewell function of Jaffna College complex earlier because of Bishop's close association with the Institutes and for his guidance during the past 20 years.

The farewell function then was held in Abel's Auditorium when Mr. L. R. Muthiah, the Chairman of the Council of the Institute chaired. After the opening address by the Chairman who outlined the contributions of the Bishop in the progress of the institution, Mr. L. Kandasamy, a lecturer at the Institute of Agriculture spoke. He recalled the founding of the Institute of Agriculture and elaborated on the progress of the Institute. He thanked and praised Bishop for his support in founding the IA at Maruthanamadam.

Mr. Balasubramaniam, lecturer and Head of Civil Engineering Department of the JCIT extolled the building knowledge of the Bishop. Bishop carefully architected and planned many buildings of various institutions, the construction of which he (Mr. Balasubramaniam) supervised. He also mentioned that all the buildings in JCIT were dedicated by the Bishop and his suggestions at Board meetings enabled the Institute to progress very rapidly.

He also said that Dr. Mrs. Ambalavanar was also equally efficient in her own field i.e., gynaecology. She always took keen interest in her patients, be said.

Student representatives of JCIT and JCIA also spoke. The Bishop in his reply stated how the visions of people like Mr. S. Rajanayagam, the late Prof. Luther Jayasingham, and the late Prof. George Somasundaram helped founding of the Institutes. He also said that (Continued on page four)





## EDITORIAL \*

## VISION OF THE CHURCH

'In the year King Uzziah died I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted' (Isa 6:1). Uzziah was a King of Judah, the Southern Kingdom. He had some military success over his local enemies. He seemed to have devoted to agriculture. Uzziah also paid close attention to equipping an army. The Lord seemed to have been with him, but later in his life he was stricken with leprosy because of his pride. Isaiah's well known vision occurred in the year of King Uzziah's death.

The vision of Isaiah shows how small a man is in front of God, however great he might be. When Uzziah grew powerful his pride became great and led to his undoing (2 Cor 6:16). Uzziah built a strong army; equipped it with modern weaponry; had great victories over his enemies. But his strong army with all sophisticated weapons of the day could not stop God's punishment. He was smitten by God because of his pride and died one day.

The year this proud King died, Isaiah saw the Lord seated on His throne high and exalted - how small and helpless a man is in front of God; his mighty deeds and victories are brought to nought by God. Man's achievements are nothing but like ashes of burnt wood. The rulers should humble themselves in front of God and do justice only then will they be remembered with fondness. Isaiah, on that day was commissioned by God to warn the nation of the impending destruction because of their failure to heed their Lord.

The Church in Sri Lanka has a vision for the nation today. In spite of all political hubbub we see the Lord seated on a throne high and exalted. The sin of the nation including our own is exposed at this sight. Isaiah realized that he was a man of unclean lips living amidst people of nuclear tips. How many of us have realized our sins? Justice is denied and many innocent languish in prisons; basic essentials are denied to a section of the people and their very existence is threatened because they agitate for their right to live in their own homeland. They are branded as terrorists. They are hunted down to be gunned down like rabid dogs. 'The dogs are esteemed higher than humans.' Only a very few Church Leaders like Bishop Kenneth Fernando try to bring about a negotiated settlement, but many who call themselves Church pillars decry their sincere efforts. Such people should be made to see the vision.

Having seen the vision, the Church should warn the nation that peace cannot be achieved without justice. The Hebrew word 'shalom' inadequately translated peace is a vision of wholeness. It is the relationship between man and man, man and beast and man and nature. When there is a rupture or distortion in this relationship, then peace is denied.

Shalom is a political community based on justice. There is no shalom if there is economic inequality, judicial perversion and oppression of one part of the community on the other. This is the message of prophets in the Old Testament. They have warned against commercial exploitation, hoarding of land, dishonest courts, violence of ruling classes, slavery, unjust taxes and unjust functionaries. How contemporary they all sound. People were warned not to oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and not to shed innocent blood. Jer 7:5-7.

Yahweh the God of Israel appears as the defender of vulnerable groups from whom all rights are forcefully taken away. God is the 'near relative', the protector and avenger of such people. This, he has affirmed by entering into a 'covenant' with his people a covenant which is justice oriented relationship. Therefore to know God is to do justice and to worship God is to seek justice, correct oppression, defend the fatherless and plead for the widow. This exactly is what the church should do today.

When the Church fails in its duty, pride of the rulers will become great and lead to their undoing. Then God will exalt Himself high above in his throne. When he exalts himself, he will avenge the oppressed and that will be the downfall of the oppressors. It is the duty of the Church to call the oppressors to repentance lest they fall.

## WEDDING

Dr. Aruna Devapriya Cana gatrajah led to the altar Dr. Joy Canagarajah (formerly of Miss Pavatharani Pavarajah at Colombo Church of the C.S.I. Pavatharani is a daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Kandiah Pava Wednesday the 2nd of June, 1993. Dr. Devapriya is the second son of the late Mr. A. C. Canagarajah and of Dr. Mrs. S. Jeyanesan, assisted by the Rev. Joseph Saravanan of St. Luke's Church, Borella. The Rev. Saravanan also preached the homily.

## OBITUARY

## The Rev. R. J. Thurairajah

We regret to record the death of the Rev. R. J. Thurairajah (Babo), a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church, Colombo and a son of the late Mr. R. J. Thurairajah staff of Jaffna College and Mrs. Thurairajah. The Rev. Thurairajah who hails from Chavakachcheri had all his education at Jaffna College Vaddukoddai and then offered himself to the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was trained at the D.R.C. Seminary in Colombo. Babo as he was affectionately referred to by his relation and friends is the only son of Mr. & Mrs. R. J. Thurairajah and a grandson of the Rev. V. M. John of the Jaffna Council of the S. I. U. C. He leaves behind besides his mother and wife Kirubamalar of Uduvil, two sisters Mrs. Mahen Thurairajah and Mrs. Yogan Joseph. The Rev. Thurairajah died after prolonged illness at a hospital in Madras on 13-3-1993. The funeral took place a few days later in Colombo. A Thanksgiving Service was also held at his home "The Heaven" at Arc Lane, Uduvil on the 20th of March 1993 where tributes to his life were paid by Mr. A. Kadirkamar, former Principal of Jaffna College and the Rev. D. S. Thiagarajah, Principal of the Christian Theological Seminary, Chunnalam. The Rev. T. S. Premarajah Presbyter of the Uduvil Church conducted the service and the Rev. D. R. Ambalavanar of the Christian Theological Seminary preached the Sermon.

We thank God for the life and labours of Fran who brought so much of joy, cheer and blessings to her family and the large circle of friends. Dr. Robert Holmes' address is: Box 1250, Route 1, Assembly Point, Lake George, NY 12845 U.S.A.

## JCIT .....

(Continued from Page 1)

there were actually many behind the scene who helped in the progress of the Institutes of Technology and Agriculture.

The Principal of JCIA then proposed the vote of thanks. This was followed by a fellowship lunch. After the lunch Mr. A. Kadirkamar, Vice Chairman of the Council and Principal Emeritus of Jaffna College briefly outlined the history of JCIT and JCIA.

A large gathering of staff, JCIT and JCIA, Students, special invitees and well-wishers participated in all the functions of the day.

## First Anniversary

## IN LOVING MEMORY OF



## Mrs. Fran Holmes

We regret to record the passing of Fran Holmes, wife of Dr. W. Robert Holmes, formerly a missionary of the UCBWM and Professor of History at Jaffna College from 1948 to 1961.

Mrs. Holmes had been ill for some time and was in a Nursing Home at the time of her death. While death was a merciful release to her, yet her parting would have been deeply felt by her husband and family. Mrs. Holmes during her period at Jaffna College endeared herself very much to the Church and the Tamil community. She was active in giving leadership to the choir and in Western music programmes. She greatly enlivened the social life of the College community. She was again in

Church the Rev. S. Jeyanesan, assisted by the Rev. Joseph Saravanan of St. Luke's Church, Borella. The Rev. Saravanan also preached the homily.

The late Mrs. Lisse Gnanammah Paul

Born: 15 - 09 - 1915

Died: 22 - 03 - 1992

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me the days of my life And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

Always remembered by Daughters: Freda and Grace brother Robert and family relatives and friends