

Christmas: a tiny entrance into a great salvific mystery.

To enter the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem you have to bend down low. The entrance for various reasons is now very low and narrow. This is the right attitude to contemplate the **mystery of the Incarnation**: bend low, be unassuming and try and see things with the eyes of those who first witnessed the mystery that was unfolding in Bethlehem. This outlook is so dear to Saint Michael! Let us take a look at the crib through the eyes of some of the people involved

The eyes of the authorities: who was Jesus for them? Counting people, to be in a better position to exploit them, to see the strength of Palestine, and Jesus and the Holy family were just that for the authorities. But we could see Christmas through the eyes of the **inn keepers** of Jesus' times'.

There was no room for them at the inn". The inn stands for the upper room, a place where **people** were staying, the lower room being for the **animals**. This allows us to see Jesus' birth through the eyes of, yes the **two animals** we find in the crib: the **ox** and the **donkey**. It is true; animals are not specifically mentioned in the Gospels as being present. Only later on in the Christian tradition we find them. This will enable St Francis of Assisi to introduce these two animals in the first **living tableau** of people and animals he set up in Greccio Italy in 1223. Their presence evoke the passage from Isaiah 'the ox knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib', implying that they did, even if **the people did not**. The manger can be the symbol of our refusal. "Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger" we have the greatest gesture of love performed in the utter poverty.

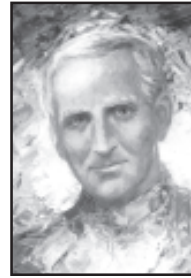
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News Bulletin of
Sacred Heart Vicariate of India

Dear All,

I am happy to meet you all, through this December edition of Smile. We are entering into the month of advent season which will culminate in our Christmas Celebration. What is the meaning of Christmas especially now? I think it is very relevant to celebrate Christmas in this competitive world which maintains itself with broken relationships with God and with one another. GOD created human person who in turn went away from the presence and friendship of the Lord because of his own selfishness. Today Christmas celebration invites us to see our own relationships with God as well as with our fellow brothers and sisters.

When we read the 'prodigal Son' parable; we see how the younger son who was physically away from the presence of the Father but psychologically present with the Father which lead to his conversion. On the other hand, we see the elder son who was physically with the Father but psychologically away from the Father which in turn lead him to be arrogant, unforgiving, and unhappy and so on. In this beautiful season, let us be physically and psychologically present with the Father, Son and the Spirit which will bring about conversion, joy and forgiveness to us.

WISH YOU ALL A BLESSED CHRISTMAS.

Fr. Stervin S.. Fernando SCJ

VICARIATE NEWS

Vicariate Meeting

Vicariate meeting was held on 5th October 2010, in view of Reginal Chapter in England. Various elements were discussed for the betterment of the formation and the directives suggested by the formative council.

Retreat

After having finished their 1st Semester Exam, Theology students made their annual retreat in Vicariate House in Bangalore, animated by Fr. Thomas from Pearist Fathers.

Reginal Chapter in England

Reginal meeting was held in England in October 26-27 in view of General Chapter, Fr. Biju Paul, Fr. Biju Anthony and Fr. Enakius were representing the Indian Vicariate.

Novices Ministry Experience

As per the programme of the Novices, the 8 novices were sent to different communities for their experience. Bros. Bistis & Jacob are in North East, Brs. Antony & Pracha are in Bangalore Brs. Sanan, Prasat, & Sorask are in Mangalore, and Br. Somai is in Mumbai

Farewell to Bro. Gerard

Bro. Gerard served our communities in Bangalore and in Mangalore as the Formator for several years. Since he has got new commitment in England, he left India in November. We the Indian Vicariate with gratitude wish him all the success & pray for God's blessing for his new mission.

Children's day

We celebrated children's day on 13th November inviting children from our neighbouring schools and villages, they were 145 in number. We organized variety of programmes for them in our campus under the leadership of Br. George Antony and with the help of other brothers.

Visit of our Friend

Mrs. Emilia, companion of Betharram from Italy visited us with her grand niece Alice, and helped us in mending our cloths, with her professional skill

Vicariate Calendar Dec 2010- Jan11

December 2010

- 1-3. Retreat of Aspirants
- 7. Formators meeting and Vicariate Council meeting in Bangalore
- 11. Holidays begin for Theology students & Aspirants
- 25. Christmas

January 2011

- 01. New Year Day
- 10. Visit of Vicar to community in Mangalore
- 12. Vicar's retreat and holiday

Birthday greetings to You

- Dec. 03. Fr. Biju Antony & Fr. Stervin, 08 Br. Avinash, 09. Br. Jude,
- 10. Br. Bosco, 11. Dn. Paschal, 15. George M, 27. Fr. Chan
- Jan. 01. Fr. Valan, 10. Br. Yesu Dass, 25. Br. Bistis, 26. Br. Shamon
- 28. Fr. Biju Alappat, 30. Br. Antony Siluvai

Bro. Gerard Speaks

I write this letter to you all as Advent is just beginning. A time of waiting and wanting for the very special event that happened over two thousand years ago; but is very real and alive today. How? Because God sent His Son into the world as a gift, model, magnet to each of us, He became human with all the doubts and failures that we ourselves go through and experience everyday of our lives. He became one of us. That's a wonderful feeling; what does it mean for me... it certainly warms my heart and my mind as I prepare for this big event in my life and in the life of the Church. It gives me the sense of belonging of been able to take my little part in the growth of the Church, by celebrating the life of Jesus, in the stable in Bethlehem. We have a saying in England: "Cold hands, warm heart; and a warm heart reflects God within." As Christmas approaches, be open to the baby Jesus in your lives and be ready to accept his loving invitation to join Him in celebrating this wonderful event.

Bro. Gerard SCJ