

# THE PARISH MESSENGER



Church of St. John the Baptist  
Secunderabad



(For Private Circulation only)

## From the Presbyter's Desk



**Dear beloved in Christ,**

It is a great joy for me and my family to be part of the family of St. John's Church. I thank God Almighty for the great honor and privilege, which He has bestowed upon me to be the Minister for this historical church.



I'm also thankful to our beloved Bishop & Moderator of the CSI, The Most Rev Dr B P Sugandhar *Thandrigaru*, for the encouragement and the confidence, which he has reposed in me by appointing me as the Resident Presbyter.

The experience of the Lenten season, Holy Week celebrations, Good Friday, and the Easter Sunday was a great blessing to us. The worship services enriched our spiritual journey and nurtured our faith in the risen Christ. Let us prepare ourselves to bear witness for the blessed life, which is given to us through His Resurrection.

This year the Church of South India is celebrating its 60 years of witnessing journey in our lives. During the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, let us recollect, how God was faithful to His church, which He has bought with this blood. The last 6 decades of the church life was so inspirational, that the services rendered in multifarious ways for the cause of the common people are commendable. These are: strengthening the spiritual life, uplifting the deprived communities, working among the *Tribals & Adivasis*,

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The Most Rev Dr B P Sugandhar  
*Presbyter-in-charge*

Rev G Suresh Kumar  
*Resident Presbyter*

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## Theme

*God's offer of Salvation :  
Our response*

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striving hard to wipe away the evil of the caste system, imparting knowledge through education and vocational training centers for the underprivileged, extending the medical help to the rural people irrespective of their faith and so on. Our CSI is a growing church, serving church, blessing church, united church and uniting church. Let us uphold in our prayers the ministries, which are carried through the synod and our diocese; also let us remember the sacrificial services rendered by the ministers, evangelists and lay leaders who have toiled hard in the mission of God.

The VBS 2007 gave me another opportunity to know more intimately our children and their talents. It was a great spiritual exercise for our children to know more about God's love. I thank our members who have contributed liberally for the ministry of VBS. I also convey my special thanks to the director, teachers, volunteers, musicians and the singing team whose services are appreciated by one and all.

I would like to request all young men and women to enroll their names with our youth convener to revive youth activities at our church and the diocesan level.

By this time, we were able to hear the glad tidings from our children about their success in their examinations. I take this opportunity to congratulate them for the success and more over I wish them all the best as they pursue higher studies. May God bless them, grant them wisdom and good health for the ensuing academic year !

Those of you who would like to have the Holy communion for the senior citizens at your home, please let me know your willingness over phone or by meeting me personally after the worship services.

Let us look towards God and work out our own salvation. Salvation is for those who believe in the Risen Christ. It's a great opportunity for us to experiences such salvation here in this world itself, by adopting the Christ way of life.

May God bless you and all our congregation members !!

**Rev G Suresh Kumar**  
*Resident Presbyter*

## **Secretary's Corner**



**Beloved members of  
St John's :**

Greetings to you all in the mighty name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

We welcome the following **NEW MEMBERS.**

Mrs & Maj NCP Sagar  
Mrs & Col Surender Paavamani  
Mrs & Rev G Suresh Kumar  
Mrs & Dr M Robin Theodore  
Mr Gorentla Alexander  
Mr Bijoy Matthew  
Mr Saranath Seth  
Mrs & Mr Swaranjit Sen  
Mrs & Mr S Philip  
Mr David Prabhakaran

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Jacob K Ritvik S/o Mrs & Mr Praveen Kumar and Adir Mody S/o Mrs & Mr Sarossh Mody were baptized on 6th & 13th May, 2007 respectively.

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We like to thank all the teachers, students, volunteers, musicians, et al who contributed toward the success of the VBS 2007. Special thanks to Mrs Lalitha Christian, Director and the Sunday School Superintendent Mrs Usha Sagar.

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Our church organized *Sacred Choral Music Evening* on 20th May to mark the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the CSI. Mr HWA Hartwig and Commodore TMJ Champion, our organists along with our choir members presented special numbers on the occasion. CSI Malayalam congregation, Wesley Tamil Church (Secunderabad) and Wesley Garrison Choir members brought variety to the praise and worship service.

**- M James Samuel**



Welcome to  
**Rev G Suresh Kumar :**  
Our new Resident Presbyter



As seasons change, so do pastors in established Churches, though not with the same regularity. St. John's welcomes young and ebullient Rev Gunti Suresh Kumar who took over the reins of St. John's as Resident Presbyter on March 22, 2007.

Rev Suresh, a 'son of the soil' is the second child in a family of five children. His father the late Mr Benjamin was a Church worker at St Mark's Church, Mettuguda, Secunderabad and mother Mrs Deva Karuna is a homemaker. He did his schooling and Intermediate course in the Wesley Institutions, Secunderabad. He obtained Bachelor's Degree in Commerce from Nizam College, OU and Bachelor's Degree in Divinity from the United Theological College, Bangalore.

Rev Suresh lost his father when he was in the first year of Intermediate and it was a challenging moment for the teenager who is the elder son in the family. But his faith and trust in God not only enabled him to complete his graduation but also led him to dedicate himself for the ministry of God in the year 1995. In 1996 he was selected by the CSI Medak Diocese Ministerial Board and was sent to the village Malkajam, Adilabad district for rural exposure. The next year he secured admission

in the UTC, Bangalore to pursue his theological studies. After obtaining the degree, he was ordained as Deacon in 2001 and posted at Asifabad in Sirpur Khagaznagar Pastorate. In 2002 he was sent to Medak to serve the Lord at the Medak Cathedral and in 2003 he was transferred to Wesley Church, Clock Tower, Secunderabad. He is the youth Secretary of Medak Diocese and is a member of the Diocesan Executive Committee.



The Presbyter's wife Helena is daughter of Mr A Barnabas and Mrs Vijaya Kumari, originally from the Nandyal Diocese, were from St George's Church, Hyderabad. She is a

Science Graduate with a teaching degree in Education, presently working as Facilitator at DRS International School, Kompally. The couple are blessed with a daughter, 3 year old Emilie who has begun her learning exercise with a missionary zeal at Sacred Heart School, Marredpally.

Rev Suresh is endowed with a pleasant disposition, suave and urbane. In a short period of time, he has endeared himself to the St John's congregation. *The Parish Messenger* wishes Pastor Suresh a fruitful ministry over here which we believe will be a great blessing to everyone involved in the work and life of St John's Church.

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In the divine economy, each call or vocation is of equal importance with the others - each is the work of the church - each is done in submission and obedience to God. - *Richard C Halverson*

## GDCC Retreat : A Report

On April 20 at about 8:30 am the Presbyters, Deacons, and the Evangelists of Godavari District Church Council of our diocese gathered in our Church, for the Holy Communion service which marked the conclusion of the three day retreat.

The retreat was presided over by our Bishop and Moderator *Thandrigaru*, in which about 110 delegates participated.

The theme was "... I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven". Acts 26:19. Our Bishop shared his call and commitment to the ministry of God and exhorted the members to be vigilant in the

ministry, faithful to the call, to exhibit the humility of Christ, accountable to God, above all a prayerful and exemplary life. Our Diocesan Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Ministerial secretary, three District Church council Chairmen, Conveners of various boards gave their greetings. It was a great time of fellowship with one another.

On that very day about 10 two wheelers were provided by our diocesan treasurer Mr B Vimal Sukumar, for the evangelists who are serving God in the interior villages to carry on the ministry of God in an effective way.

The Godavari District Church Council of our Diocese consists of Adilabad and Nizamabad Districts. These Presbyters and Evangelists who have come for the retreat are stationed in different parts of these two districts, some among the coal mine workers,

some among the adivasis (tribals) and some among the poor peasants.

The GDCC chairman Rev T Bhaskar thanked all of us for the invitation and remarked that, St John's Church is a giving church, which took up constructing the village churches in our diocese. Further he said that, the GDCC is anticipating many such projects from our

congregation particularly in the districts of Adilabad and remote villages in N i z a m a b a d districts.

The economic re-sources are very limited to the churches in these districts, there is a need for constructing worship places while in some

places accom-modation for the evangelists is lacking. In spite of all the basic problems the mission of the proclamation of the Gospel should continue.

It's a challenge to the town congregations to extend their support for the evangelistic ministry, the contributions which we send every month to the diocesan office is used for the salaries of these evangelists. Still there is a dearth for funds to meet the expenditure over the maintenance of the old structures, to build new churches with minimal facilities, to meet the health and medical expenditure of the Pastors' children who are serving God in these places of reaching the unreached. Let us uphold in our prayers the evangelistic ministry, which is carried through our Medak Diocese.

**- Rev G Suresh Kumar**  
*Resident Presbyter*



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Stewardship is not leaving a tip on God's tablecloth; it is the confession of an unpayable debt at God's Calvary. - Paul S Rees



## Choice

I P P Prabhakar Rao\*

**See, I have set before thee this day life and good,  
and death and evil. Deut. 30:15**

God's offer of Salvation is unique and unequivocal. He has been making this generous offer for the past 2000 years. "Salvation in no other Name than Jesus" had been the slogan through human voices, through print, and now through electronic media. It is a wonderful cure for the deadly disease known to all of us as *Sin*. Its main symptom causes no pain to anybody- to typical silent killer. More silent than hypertension. People have to be made aware of it by making them read the Bible or listen to the Pastor explain its symptoms and its effects. It affects all ages, both the sexes, all races, all nations, in short everybody. Its most dangerous effect is, it affects the sufferers EVEN after death. Death is not the merciful end like in all the other diseases. What a dreadful disease! Here is God's offer. Having identified our disease He is offering the only effective cure for it. He sent His Son Jesus into the world to take on the entire sin on Himself and crucified all these causes along with him on the Cross. He said that every one who believes without a doubt, that this great sacrifice was meant for him and for his cure, would be rid of its deadly effects. Just this faith and this faith alone. This remedy is so simple that many do not take it seriously to their own doom. This remedy has been worked out by Jesus for all people for all time and never to be repeated. Now God has put His offer before us and is asking us to come and take it free.

We know every choice we make has a consequence: good or bad. What happens with each of the choices? Either way there is eternity. So what is the difference?

A wonderful benefit of taking this cure by faith is an out of the world experience of joy and peace, for eternity in Heaven with our Lord

and His and our Father irrespective of what happens between now and death. The Bible tells us, both the OT and the NT, of a place called Heaven. In the OT Isaiah tells a little about this but mostly heaven is referred to, figuratively, as His House or Presence etc. This is a real place with three dimensions, the City of God where God lives with His people and be their God. Jesus said "I go to prepare places for you". John 14:1-3. The book of Revelation talks of this place and what else can be found in that place lit up by God with unmade sparkling light. There are trees and a river etc. Ps 16:11 says "In thy presence there is *fullness* of joy and at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more."

In the unlikely event of your not choosing heaven to be your eternal resting place, the other choice is very tragic. The other place of choice is called hell. We do not hear much teaching on hell from our pulpits because Christianity is not so much about hell but it is about God's love and forgiveness. The fact is hell does not bother us believers. Hell too is real and is a place of two dimensions plus the third dimension being bottomless. Almost all the teaching on hell in the Bible is taught by Jesus Christ himself so there is no scope for doubt. In the days of Jesus the valley which was earlier notorious for the pagan rite of making children walk on fire to god Molech known as Ben Hennom valley, outside the city of Jerusalem, had become a garbage dump. After the return of the exiles from Babylon, there was a revival in Judah set in motion by the Priest Ezra and the Governor Nehemiah. To discourage the pagan rites they condemned the valley to be a garbage dump and of human waste, dead animals etc. Every now and then

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\*Mr Prabhakar Rao is a Retd Superintending Engineer (Irrigation), Govt of AP

this refuse was set fire to and the fire used to go on for days. Because of regular burning the fire was never put out. The valley was deep and hardly any sunlight ever got in. The stink, the sulphur fumes caused was unbearable. Jesus used the term Ge henna (Hinnom Valley) to picture hell as comparable one. He also used the term the 'outer darkness'. People could readily understand how repulsive and horrifying hell was. The worst thing about this was, traditionally Romans did not bury the crucified criminals. Their bodies were dumped in to this valley. Shockingly, that would have happened to Jesus' body had not Joseph Arimathea asked for Jesus' body and Pilate agreed and thus fulfilled the scripture that He would be buried with the rich. Is 53:9.

Jesus' constant references to outer darkness, burning fire are about hell. There is even a stronger evidence for the existence of hell. In our creed we confess Jesus descended into hell. That was the ultimate penalty Jesus paid for the whole of our sin. *Wages of sin is Death* not mere physical death. We limit Jesus's suffering and physical death as the penalty. He suffered hell after His death as the *full* and necessary payment of ransom. Hell is real.

People often question how a God who is Love personified, can put men to such horrendous torture. There are two reasons why God does this.

He does not send those who made the other choice to hell. They have chosen on their own to go there. When He made this offer of Salvation he also warned what would happen if they made a wrong choice. That was not hidden. Yet people ignore, reject His offer and choose to go to hell. In Matt. 25:41 the King says to the people of His left, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angel..." We learn that hell is ***prepared for the devil and his angels*** meaning not for humans but these people have chosen to go there. Perhaps then they would realize

that they had made a bad choice but too late is this realization. God in His love does not want anyone to perish but people make their choice willingly. 2. God is a God of Justice. He does not declare the guilty, righteous or the righteous, guilty. He will not club both the righteous and the guilty together. There needs to be a separation sometime and this is it. Matt 13:24-30 the parable of wheat and tares.

There are some people who think that God would not allow them to suffer eternally but destroys them in a second. This is a very comfortable feeling, not true but a fantasy. It is said that *it is appointed for man to die once and then the judgement Heb. 9:27*. The words used by our Lord are everlasting fire, and everlasting punishment.

There are some who believe there is a purgatory where purification of the spirit takes place. There is no second chance after one's death and no purgatory. There is no mention of this in the Bible and so this is also not true.

Now it is time for those who had not made any choice to respond to this offer. Choose eternal life. The odds are loaded deadly against hell ! Reader, over to you now !! ■

### ***Peace of the graveyard***

A man asked the parish priest for a job, but he said,

"I do not want too much work, because of my health."

The parish priest put him in charge of the cemetery - only to watch the graves.

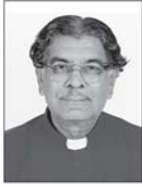
A week later he resigned.

"Why ?" asked the parish priest.

"Because I am the only one working in the cemetery; all the others are resting in peace."

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One's philosophy is not best expressed in words. It is expressed in the choices one makes.  
And the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility. - *Eleanor Roosevelt*



## I am not saved - not yet !

*My response on the topic of the month 'Salvation'*

Sam Prasadam\*

Are you surprised that an elderly and pastorally experienced and a theologically qualified person like myself saying: "I am not saved, not yet!" Believe it or not that is the truth.

I have met some of those who add the initials 'B.A' to their names to indicate that they were Born-Again Christians who are well and truly saved! When I hear those globe trotting conservative evangelical preachers cornering their Christian hearers with questions like: Are you saved, or do you want to be saved, I simply crumble like a potato crisp under my chair! Should I put up my hand to say that I am saved? No, that is not true. Or, should I say that I want to be saved? That is not right either!

To be perfectly honest, none of us are saved! Not yet. We are all simply awaiting to be saved. Let me explain what I mean.

Think of a shipwreck in the middle of an ocean. Does this remind you of the film 'Titanic'? In the shipwreck some people do perish. There are the Life Boats into which some people jump. They are saved from perishing in the sea. Like the Life Boat, the

Cross of Christ is the power of God for those who are perishing. Being in the Life Boat in itself does not guarantee full safety. Some may fall out of the Life Boat and be perished. Even by holding on to the Cross of Christ, it is still possible that some may become prey to the world, the devil and the temptations, and be perished. It is only when the Life Boat reaches the shore, those in the Life Boat can fully and properly say that they were saved. Not until then. We are all in the process of '*being saved*' by the power of the cross of Christ. St. Paul puts it quite aptly in First Corinthians 1:18: "*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*". Plainly, we are all in the process of '*being saved*', like those who are in the Life Boats.

It is only when my Life Boat (the cross of Christ) leads me on to the shores of the promised land, and my family and friends standing around me start singing the hymn, 'Safe in the arms of Jesus' - then only I can loudly scream and shout saying, 'Halleluiah, I am saved'. Until then for the present, I can only say: I am not saved - not yet ! ■

### ***What it's like to be a Christian !***

There are some Christians who can't be called 'pilgrims' because they never make any 'progress'.

★

What most Christians need is fewer platitudes and better attitudes.

★

The Christian life is like an airplane - when you stop, you drop.

★

The weekend religion of some Christians is weak at both ends, and unreliable between the two ends.

\*Revd Sam Prasadam is a retired CSI Presbyterian and a fellow worshipper at St John's Church



## Choose Peace

M Anthony David Swaroop Kumar\*

He knelt by his bed and prayed. It was time to go to sleep. Turning the light off, he sank into his bed, contented. Within a few minutes he was fully asleep.

Another man. Another bedroom. This man lay down on his bed. His mind continued to work overtime as it were. What will happen to my stock : When will I be able to make my first million ? Such thoughts continued to swarm his mind like impatient bees. Tossing and turning through the night, he became sleep-starved.

What a contrast ? What is the secret ? Do you want to know ? Read on.

Life is difficult. Perhaps about half the people in this world are right now wondering where their next meal would come from. There a large number of others desperately searching for a job or a livelihood. Millions of homeless people are searching for shelter. All these needy persons have no chance to have peace. Or so it seems !

There are others, the more fortunate perhaps, in the here and now. Every need and every greed of theirs as it were is met fully. They have all what their hearts desire: a good job, housing, family and fame. Their bank balances are full. Living in palatial mansions, they seem to enjoy and indulge in every craving they have.

Do they have peace? May be they do? What do you think ?

Strangely I found that peace, real inner peace is not dependent upon external circumstances. People who have this peace can be found in both the groups of people I have described. The peace that these people have is an inner peace. This inner peace comes from a choice they make, a relationship, and a right relationship with God.

Man was originally created to relate with God, His Creator. Unfortunately, sin cast a dark shadow between man and God. It became an impossible barrier for man. Man thus became estranged from God, an orphan in the cosmos. But wait a minute ! There is good news. God loved people too well to let them go. He sent His Son, His Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to die on the cross for us. (John 3:16). He was the only sinless man ever to walk on earth. And He loved us enough to die a shameful death for us on the cross. A death, he didn't deserve at all ! A death he died to pay for all our sins. His blood shed for us on the cross frees us from the penalty of sin. That is salvation indeed. But how do we get it ? You ask.

It can be very simply yours. Just by your choice. You can choose to be saved. In fact it is so simple that many turn away in astonishment. It is free ! All you have to do is to

- ◆ Confess that you are a sinner. (All of us on planet earth are sinners, Romans 3:23).
- ◆ Repent of all your sins.
- ◆ Ask the Lord to come into your heart and cleanse you from all sin.

And He will !

And then, only then can you have real peace, inner peace. A peace that is above your circumstances ! I chose Him and so enjoy this peace. It comes directly from the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27).

Peace, real peace inner peace, unchanging peace, peace that matters is yours, just for the asking. Why don't you, dear reader, choose peace ?

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\*Dr David is Professor in Psysiology, Deccan College of Medical Sciences, Hyderabad



## Get Right or Get Left

Yashodhra Desappa\*

A keen sense of salvation should result in an adequate expression of affection. Godly living involves the right attitudes of heart that give birth to godly actions.

### **Get right by seeing only Jesus :**

It is said that once Cyrus the founder of the Persian Empire had captured a prince and his family. When they were brought before, Cyrus, the monarch asked the prisoner, "What will you give me if I release you ?" "These half of my wealth" said the prisoner. "If I release your children ?" "All my wealth" replied the prisoner. "If I release your wife", "I will give you myself," said the prince. Cyrus was so moved that he released the prisoner. While going home the prince said to his wife, "Wasn't Cyrus, the king handsome?" With a deep look of love for her husband she said, "I did not notice, I had eyes only for you, the one who was willing to give himself for me." How many of us can say that about Jesus. He gave Himself for us. **Get right with seeking only Jesus or get left.**

### **Get right by right conduct :**

All of us have prayed and have had the disappointment of unanswered prayers. We can either go away or draw close to Him. When David prayed for his son's life to be spared, God said a firm no, because of the sin of adultery with Bathsheba. In 2 Samuel 12:20 David arose, came to the house of the Lord and worshipped God. Instead of rebelling, he had the assurance that someday, he would be united with his son. Yield in faith and it will give you joy. It's the way to honour God, as His answers are wiser than our prayers. **Get right or get left from fellowship with God.**

### **Get right by obeying Him - Mark 16-15 :**

God commanded his followers to preach the gospel. We need not impress others

by our eloquence. Billy Graham's messages were always preaching JESUS, with simple illustrations from daily life. A young minister was concerned about the criticism he might encounter if he preached the gospel. "If I mention about geography, or literature, or history there will always be somebody who will be better than me in the congregation", he said. His father replied "Preach the gospel, your critics will probably know very little about it". Don't leave the proclamation of the gospel only to the clergy. Our assignment is to tell lost sinners about Jesus. **Get right or get left from the blessing.**

### **Get right by praising him at all time :**

With an attitude of gratitude. A patient whose life was saved by a blood transfusion, asked if it would be possible to get the name of the donor of the blood, so that he could thank him personally. He was told that the names of blood donors are never divulged. After his discharge from hospital, he started being a blood donor regularly. When asked the reason for it, he said, "Someone did it for me while I was dying. I'm just saying thanks." When was the last time you said thanks, for what Christ has done for you ? Praise is the language of a heart set free. Colossians 1-12 says "Giving thanks unto the father who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son". Psalm 40-2 He has rescued us from the horrible pit and miry clay." The most fitting response is to praise God. As the psalmist says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." **Get right or get left from being raised.**

### **Get right by giving :**

Give your time to pray for God's servants. Give your money for missions. Give your talents for the extension of his kingdom. Opportunities will come up, so that you can

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\*Mrs Desappa is a Business Woman and Secretary, St John's Women's Fellowship

lead a person to the Lord, by a warm and natural witness. The idea is to be spiritually alert and attuned and have a word to say for Christ, when these opportunities come. Some Christian's pray high and give low. How about you ?

Right conduct follows the born again experience, not vice versa. Is your name written in heaven's *who's who*, the Lamb's Book of Life ? **Get right or get left, from your reward.** ■

## God's offer of salvation : Our response

Jayamani Abhishekam\*



Salvation is nothing but to get free from penalty of sin. Sin is anything that we do against God. In the interesting story. "The Lost Son" in St. Luke 15th Chapter, the son says to his father, "I have sinned against God and against you". When he heard his son's words, the father's joy knew no bounds. In abundant joy the father embraced the son, kissed him, celebrated with rich dinner, dressed his son with grand robes and welcomed him to his home. Jesus narrated this parable to explain the joy of our heavenly father, when a sinful son is sanctified from sin.

Before the Christ's death on the cross, what happened to the people in Old Testament? The divine method of dealing with sin before the Lord shed His blood on the cross, is said to have been 'atonement'. This word 'atonement' means simply 'to cover'. The Israelites sacrificed bulls and goats and shed their blood but, that blood could not wash off sins. The atoning blood of the sacrifices was only to cover the sin.

In New Testament passages, we clearly understand that the blood of bulls and goats cannot wash sins of sinners but only 'covered' until the day when Christ would deal in finality with the sin of the world. So in Romans 3:25 and 26 verses, we understand that through God's saving presence and through His free gift of grace only, all are put right with Him, God offered Jesus, so that by His sacrificial death, He would become the means by which people's sins are forgiven. In the

book of Romans, the entire 3rd chapter explains to us that Christ's complete sacrifice is our salvation. In St. John 1:29, Col 2:14 and in 1 John 3:5, we read with the confirmed and comforting satisfaction about our salvation.

### Our Response :

Salvation is an absolute gift from God. God teaches those who are saved and helps them how to live. It is not about the strength of flesh but it is manifestation of power of the indwelling spirit. Apostle John writes, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for God's seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9). This explains that every Christian born against is born of God and shall not fulfil the desire of flesh. Such people will own the fruit of the spirit that are, love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, and faith. With affection they serve God and neighbours. They follow Christ, whose earthly flesh was crucified but through the exceeding greatness of His power, He was raised.

As the saved Christian loves the triune God and always follows Him, his life is sinless and he always loves Lord God.

Naturally such a person will have God in his heart and also prays morning and evening. He leads his family in prayer at home everyday. He also sends an arrow prayer to the Lord at every need or at every joy. Learning Bible carefully gives us satisfaction. The Bible centres to God and with the help of Holy Spirit and the Bible only we can do anything properly, especially to communicate with others. ■

\*Mrs Abhishekam is a former Dean of Women, Hindustan Bible Institute, Chennai



## You owe it to him

E Siddanth Mark\*

Two young men were friends for a long time. One was a believer and the other was not. The unbeliever was ready to set out on a long journey by sea. His believer friend wanted to tell him about Christ. "I will tell him on the way to the dock," he told himself, but didn't. Both went on board the ship. "I will tell him when we bring luggage to the room," he thought. But the porter took the luggage, so they didn't visit the stateroom." I will surely witness in some quiet corner, before the ship departs," he vowed to himself. But soon the announcement came blaring that all visitors should disembark. He did not share about Jesus. Three months later, the word came that

the man had died overseas.

In Luke 8th chapter, we read of a man possessed by many demons wonderfully restored by Jesus. But he said, "Return to your own house, and tell the great things God has done for you." (V 38, 39).

Will you apply Jesus' words to your life and tell someone now about Jesus. It will not cost you. It is free.

Let us not think that because we can't repay God for saving us, we owe Him nothing. We are indebted to Him for everything. The least we can do is show our appreciation by telling others about Him. ■

### *To our Members ...*

Please note the following while contributing articles, etc to *The Parish Messenger*.

- An article may not exceed 700 words; a floppy thereof is welcome.
- Contributions should be original.
- Type only on one side of the page.
- Mention your name, designation and the contact number.
- Please attach a passport size photo.
- Articles are subject to editing and in rare cases rejection as well.
- Contributions may be handed over to the Editor.
- The Editorial Board has decided on the following **THEMES** for the ensuing editions of our Newsletter:

Aug - Sept 07 : Possibilities and pitfalls for youth

Oct - Nov 07 : Children - Gift of God, handle with care

Dec 07 - Jan 08 : Christmas special

You are requested, as far as possible, to stick to the themes.

### **Do you have ... ?**

Do you have someone whose memory is precious ? Or do you wish to celebrate and remember God's blessing in a special way for any occasion like birthday, wedding, wedding anniversary, new job, promotion, an addition in the family, or any other event ?

Now you have the opportunity !

**Sponsor** an issue of *The Parish Messenger* (Bimonthly)

Approximate cost of each edition :

Ordinary . . . Rs. 5,000/-

Special . . . Rs. 7,000/-  
(X-mas & Easter)

*For more details please contact the  
Presbyter or the Editor.*

\*Mr Mark is an active member of St John's Church



## Offer vs Response

K Karunakara Rao\*

One day when I came home from my office, my mobile rang and disinterestingly, I started hearing the message about an offer in a network business. My friend was compelling me to take it. I was too tired to answer that because I didn't like that business. My better half was telling about an offer at a textile showroom. In today's market offers are commonplace. But this offer is a business technique in order to attract customers to earn profit. If you purchase one item, the same thing may be given free (1+1), sometimes when we purchase one item some other small item will be free for e.g., cricket ball free with Boost.

There is another offer by God Himself; it is not 1+1 or 2+2 offer, but it is 0+1, which means that the offer is free. It is not a consumable temporary thing but long lasting. It is not a nonliving thing to keep aside but an ever living one.

For every offer there is a method of its own. God's offer is a simple conditional gift. So get this gift, the only thing he expects from us is realization of our sinful life, repentance and believing in God's forgiveness. By faith if you accept Him as your personal Saviour, then you will become the child of God (St John 1:12; Rom 10:9).

Generally offers are limited - for eg 'first come first serve' basis in lucky bumper draws, only few people may get the benefit and that too on selected items. But God's offer is totally free for unlimited numbers and open for all. In the general offers of the market they may not give you necessarily useful things, but God's offer is most useful which brings you out of curse (hell). It takes us to everlasting kingdom, i.e., heaven. If any travelling agent says that, he can offer a package trip for us

with 50% off for the US, then there will be a big queue for that specially during these summer days, but God's offer is greater than that. Jesus went to Heaven to prepare place for us (John 14:3), not a small place or a room but big mansions. God never lies. Offers in the market are optional but not compulsory; but if you don't accept and receive the offer of God, you cannot go to heaven, but to hell.

Sometimes, if you don't come to know some useful offer in the market, afterwards you may exclaim, "Oh, I have missed it!" Then what about the great and wonderful offer i.e. free salvation of God which we can't afford to miss. If you get a handbill on which is written that 10 gms of gold is free for the first 100 people who reach Patny Centre, Secunderabad, then you can see most of the ladies and a few gents creating traffic jam. Salvation is so much greater than gold; hence we should rush towards God, repent of our sins, accept and receive Jesus into our hearts. Then we are safe. Then our response is accurate. We are blessed. ■

### *Things from above*

A minister was stopped on the Interstate for speeding. As most people do, he wanted to argue with the patrolman about how fast he was going. "I sure wasn't going 70 miles an hour," he said. "How did you time my speed? I don't see a radar any place."

"We didn't catch you with radar," the patrolman said. "You were spotted by our helicopter patrol."

"Oh," said the minister. "That's all right then, because I never question anything that comes from above."

\*Dr Karunakara Rao is Consultant in Community Health AL Dept., *Sevabharat*

# The Sunday School Annual Report 2006-07

Train up the child in the way he should go and  
when he is old he will not depart from it. *Prov 22:6*

## Dear Fellow Christians and Members of the Church of St. John the Baptist,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As we come to the end of another academic year, it gives me great pleasure in presenting to you the Sunday School Annual report for the year 2006-07. At the outset I would like to thank our Lord Almighty for His gracious presence and guidance to all of us the teachers and the children throughout the last year.



Having been born and brought up in a Christian family it was indeed a great learning and fun experience to attend the Sunday school every Sunday for me, as a kid and even as a teenager. The lasting impression my Sunday School Days had on me made me to join the St. John's Church Sunday School. It is only God's guidance that I have now completed 4 years as the Superintendent of St. John's Sunday School.

### The Year That was...

Last year has been quite eventful with a number of varied activities being carried out by our Sunday School Children and Teachers. Be it participating in the Harvest Festival or leading the congregation around the church on Palm Sunday, the Sunday School children have participated actively. The Sunday School Christmas Pageant was indeed a grand event with even the parents getting actively involved. Some of the other activities of the Sunday school were:

- ◆ Children took part in World Sunday School Service in the Church.
- ◆ We had great fun at 'Pragathi Resorts' where we had our Picnic.
- ◆ Some of our Sunday School Children lead by Maureen Uday participated in the 'All India Sunday School Association' retreat.
- ◆ We conducted various competitions (singing, painting, sports, memory verses) and had one Bible exam where children participated actively and prizes were given.
- ◆ On the Sunday School Anniversary Day each class presented an item from the lessons they had learned during the year. Sheba Uday did a great job as the MC for the Sunday School Anniversary program.

It was under the guidance of Rev. Dr. Surya Prakash, the then Resident Presbyterian-in-charge (Presently Bishop in Karimnagar Diocese) that we adopted the Sunday School curriculum developed by the All India Sunday School Association for the year 2006-07.

### Give Thanks with a Grateful heart...

I would like to thank our Pastor Rev. Suresh Kumar and all the pastorate committee members for their kind co-operation and guidance. I appreciate all parents who come along with

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If you want your child to walk the righteous path, do not merely point  
the way— lead the way. - *J A Rosenkranz*

their little ones (those who are less than 3 years old) to the Sunday school.

Last but not the least, a word of appreciation to all the Sunday School Teachers who gave their valuable time with love, patience and commitment:

Mrs Krupavathi Daniel  
Mrs Kalpana Anthony David  
Mrs Christiana Samson Gandhi  
Mrs Subhashini Noel  
Miss Sheba Pritika Uday  
Mr Kapil

Mrs Sunitha David  
Mrs Anna Alexander  
Mrs Sheba Mridula  
Mrs Vinolia  
Miss Candita

### **An Appeal to Parents...**

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

A special request to all the parents – please send your Children / encourage every child to attend Sunday School every Sunday.

Yours truly in Christ

**N. Usha Sagar**

*Sunday School Superintendent*

## **Sunday School Anniversary 2006-2007**



**The Message:** *Rev. Suresh Kumar  
bringing the message*



**Bidding Adieu:**  
*The outgoing Senior Adults Class*

### *Pictography*



**Yes Madam:**  
*A Sunday school class in progress*



**Twinkle, Twinkle little stars:**  
*The Beginners captivating the audience*

## Sunday School Anniversary...



**Silence Please:**  
*Bible exam in Progress*



**Rocking Performance:**  
*Seniors praising God in style*



**Get Set Go:** *The Lemon and spoon race on Sports Sunday*



**Chock-a-block:**  
*The jam-packed Parish Hall*



**Recognising the Talent:**  
*Prize distribution in progress*



## Wedding Bells



St. John's Church wishes

Persis Pavitra  
&  
Pradeep

*A Happy Wedded Life!*

### Theme

For the next edition of  
*The Parish Messenger*

Possibilities and  
pitfalls for youth

### You are cordially Welcome to Services in our Church



#### SUNDAY :

Morning Holy Communion Service	:	8-30 a.m.
Sunday School	:	8-30 a.m.
Men's Fellowship	:	10-30 a.m.
Women's Fellowship	:	10-30 a.m.
Youth Fellowship	:	10-30 a.m.
Even Song Service	:	6-30 p.m.

#### THURSDAY :

Mid-week Holy Communion Service	:	7-30 a.m.
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### EDITORIAL BOARD

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*Articles, Testimonies, Book Reviews, Anecdotes, Prayer requests, Praise items, etc.,  
are welcome from the Church members.*