



THE PATRICIAN

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EDITORIAL

Dr Arulraj Joseph

Cancel Christmas!!!

In recent years the cry to do away with Christmas and the celebrations during this season has possibly been getting louder, although not all have had the same reason for this out cry. The reasons have extended over a wide range to the down right ridiculous, with the recent fad for political correctness not being an insignificant reasoning.

Let me first of all dismiss and condemn the political correctness where in schools nativity plays are banned, even in a predominantly catholic school, so as not to offend children and parents of other denominations who might not be able to participate, often by their own choice. The rights of young children not to be indoctrinated with religious beliefs is often resorted to. Since when did recalling a historical event amount to indoctrination. It is to say the least incongruous when the objection is even from those who in their own countries ban outright the practice of any religion other than their own. Parents should express their strong disapproval of individuals and public organisations that have been responsible for this attitude of 'moving with the times'.

Yet others on scriptural and other grounds object to the celebrations of Christmas on the basis of it being a pagan festival adapted into the Christian faith.

There are however those who object not to the celebrations of the feast of Christmas but to the extravagant celebrations and revelry that go with it. The emphasis they assert is on the extravagance: a sentiment that one can sympathise with. Who kneeling at the crib would not be reminded of the starkness of the stable in Bethlehem? How could one not then be reminded of the millions who live not just in poverty but are dying of hunger and starvation? This while in some parts of the world each family would spend over a thousand dollars with billions estimated to be spent in the country over the Christmas season. Yet many would not spare a second thought for

the plight of those in refugee camps exposed to the elements as they wrap themselves up warm complaining about the priest who did not even have the central heating on in church. One can go on endlessly of the plight of the unfortunate millions in this world. Even if they are not remembered during other times, Christmas more than any other feast in the calendar brings home this stark reality.



Perhaps those who wish to 'cancel Christmas' hope that we channel our generosity away from ourselves and those close to us for the benefit of the needy and the deserving. There is perhaps a better reason for keeping Christmas rather than 'cancelling' it. The celebrations of Christmas, and we need make no apology for celebrating the birth of Jesus for our redemption should on the other hand serve as a powerful reminder of those who need our help as we gaze on the helpless infant in the crib.

Charity begins at home. Let us pray this Christmas at the crib before the very infant who suffered the fate of a displaced individual and remember those in our own homeland living displaced and homeless. Let us pray that the God who inspired Joseph to carry Jesus to safety and bring him back home would inspire world leaders to act to protect the rights of these displaced people and ensure their safe return home. Let us pray that the God who saved the first born from Herod's sword would save these

people from the atrocities of those seeking their death and destruction.

The crib pictured is one that I have put up at home. Even now into my seventies I have no intention of giving up what I have done since I was a little boy. Although I would not pretend that it reminded me of the plight of the poor and the needy during those early years it has over the last several years served as a reminder of the many helpless and their plight. May I recommend that we all do something to help us bring home our responsibilities towards the millions less fortunate than ourselves? It is not something for me to be proud of accepting the need of a prop from time to time to be made aware of the hunger, starvation, death and destruction suffered by many of our brethren, but human nature perhaps makes us succumb to the selfishness within us.

Greed and avarice not only caused a melt down of institutions but nearly destroyed the financial stability of many countries. Many politicians would be reluctant to admit to have to return to the old fashioned socialist principles, but few would doubt the need for change. One can only hope that the current crisis would result in a new capitalism, a softer, generous, kinder form that recognises the needs of the starving millions all over the world both in the developing and the developed world.

Never in history have so few gained so much at the expense of so many. Promised aid should be delivered to those in dire need and not into corrupt hands. May the many not go empty handed.

The Rector has made a fervent appeal to those who are in a position to help rebuild the school affected badly by the storm and the torrential rain. Our President would be making a strong appeal to the association to come to the aid of our Alma Mater and help rebuild the school to continue the enormous efforts to provide education at St. Patrick's College. Please contribute generously to his efforts.

Wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

From the President

Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure, I write to you all again my Christmas message through our biannual News Letter. On behalf of the Association, I would like to give the activities in a nut shell. It is almost an year since I took over the reins of Presidency and what an year it has been. As we are a charity organisation and fully run by volunteers, we have been working hard to achieve our goals in different ways.

Our goals:

Helping our Alma Mater to grow and improve specially in academic curriculum (sports and other extra curricular activities are sponsored by other Alumni Associations around the globe).

Helping as many less fortunate students as possible to achieve their dream in their academic career Raising awareness and funds for our Perpetual Trust Fund.

What have we achieved during the past year?

- We have sent money for Ramakrishnan Scholarship. Though this is donated by one of our members, the college benefitted an increased amount of cash due to our charitable status.
- We also received a donation from Sloane Robinson for funding the less fortunate students who are not in a position to pay their facility fees.
- Due to clever investment strategy, we have raised our Perpetual Fund to £80,000.
- We have also succeeded in forming a group of trustees to administer the Perpetual Trust Fund.

The total amount of money sent by our Association to our Alma Mater this year so far:

- Ramakrishnan Scholarship **£2118**;
- Donation by Sloane Robinson for Patricians in Need **£1250**;
- From the SPC AA fund for Patrician in Need **£700**;
- From the interest of Perpetual fund for teaching aids **£3000**;
- From Individual donors for the Cyclone 'Nisha' relief fund **£2100** (to be sent shortly)

What is our plan for the coming year?

- We are planning to raise funds by approaching individuals and various companies
- With the help of Rev. Fr. Rector, we are planning to compose a

prospectus which would facilitate the contributors to understand the predicament easily

- Promote the uptake of new memberships and update the membership database
- Host our annual Dinner Dance in more attractive and innovative way

Hope you all have received my previous letter regarding Cyclone 'Nisha' Appeal which has damaged our school very badly and Fr. Rector has appealed personally to all the Global AAs for relief fund. If you have not sent any relief fund so far please be generous and forward your funds to our Treasurer. Our Alma Mater needs your help at this dire situation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to appeal to you all to render your support in every way you can, so that we can achieve our worthwhile goals in a short time as possible.

May I also take this opportunity to thank all the donors and supporters for their endless generosity and their consideration for the well being of Our Alma Mater.

Finally, I wish you and your families a Very Merry Christmas and a Joy, Hope, Peace and Prosper filled Year 2009.

Dr. N. R. Rubakumar
President

FORTHCOMING EVENT

- **St. Patrick's Day-5.00 pm AGM 6.30pm Holy Mass**
Date: Sat 21 Mar 09
Venue: Northolt Village Community Centre, Ealing Road, Northolt, Middlesex UB5 6AD
- **Charity Run – 29 March 09**
(See Page 3)
- **Oasics British 10K London Run**
Date : 12 July 09 (See Page 3)
- **Christmas Function**
Date: Sat – 12 Dec 09 @ 7.00pm
Venue: Harrow Teachers' Centre
Tudor Road
Harrow
HA3 5PQ

From the Rector

Report of the Destruction caused by the Cyclone Wind- November 2008 St. Patrick's College, Jaffna has been serving not only the Tamil community but also the people of other ethnic communities of Sri Lanka for the last 158 years. Its contribution to the society is so vast that it has produced great intellectuals and men of great service both in the secular and religious sphere. The College has been subject to severe destruction and damage due to the ongoing war. On several occasions, the displaced people and people in the neighborhood sought refuge at the College. And on such situations, with the generous assistance of the N.G.Os and the Old Boys' Associations we were able to safeguard the people and later on, we have refurbished the College and worked with renewed strength.

The Cyclone and pouring rain which befell last week is another disaster for the College. There is severe damage to many sections:

- three classrooms completely demolished,
- parapet wall about 110 meters on the eastern side of the college playground had fallen,
- section of wall beside the main entrance of the College damaged,
- Several roof sheets in the College Hall, Hostel Dormitory and Study Hall have been blown away,
- The College Store contents completely damaged,
- Rooms with the sports items were flooded,
- two wells in the college compound have been contaminated due to the floods.

An Estimate for the Reconstruction and Repairs of these—**Rs 1,890,800**

We hope that you would help us to repair the damages.

Rev. Fr. M. Jero Selvanayagam
Rector

Please donate - cheques payable to:

SPC AA UK,
The Treasurer, SPC AA UK
165 Monmouth Road,
London N9 0LE

Or make online transfer to:
SPCAAUK, A/C 70972983, Sort code
20-73-53 giving membership no. –
'Nisha xxxxx' as ref.

'Patrician in Need' Charity Run

I, **Wilfred Dilip Tisseverasinghe** am now at the ripe old age of 51 and I am very much looking forward to take part in the forthcoming **Reading Half Marathon** on **Sunday March 29, 2009**.

I aim to do this 13.1 miles half marathon towards this chosen worthy appeal. God willing I intend to finish the race, and if for some reason if I cannot complete, I would like you all to sponsor me for the every full mile out of the 13.1m I complete. I am in no doubt that you will give me all your encouragement and help

me with your generous donations, to raise enough funds for our Alma Mater's worthy and humane cause.

For more information please take a moment to visit:

http://www.readinghalfmarathon.com/info/race_halfmarathon.htm

Oasics British 10K London Run



We seek applicants to take part in the 10 kilometres London run on Sunday the **12th July 2009**. We have with us a few volunteers and would like have a few more young and old to take part. Please send in your application to

Secretary,
SPC AA UK,
3, Sunningdale Court
Queens Road,
Kingston
Surrey KT2 7SG
Tel: 020 8546 8416

For more information please take a moment to visit
<http://www.thebritish10klondon.co.uk/Frameset/British10K2008.htm>

Personal Details: Applicant

First Name

Surname:

Address1:

Address2:

Town:

Post Code:

Daytime Phone:

Evening Phone: Mobile

Date of Birth:

Sex Male Female

Email:

Charity: SPC AA UK - 1088167

Terms & Conditions: I declare that I will abide by the Laws and Rules for the competition of the IAAF and other bodies, that I will be 15 years or over on 12th July 2009, that I will compete on foot (no baby strollers, roller blades, Skateboards etc) and that I enter and intend running entirely at my own risk.

Signature

Date

SPONSOR THE EVENTS: 1. 'Patrician in Need' Charity Run
 2. Oasics British 10K London Run

Please forward your contributions to:
Treasurer SPC AA UK
165 Monmouth Road
London N9 0LE

I, wish to sponsor the above event/s and in support wish to donate a sum of £ to the St Patrick's College Jaffna Alumni Association UK. I also confirm that I am a UK tax payer.

Signature

Date

Address

Post Code