Sex abuse lawsuit against Vatican withdrawn

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - A high-profile federal lawsuit accusing Pope Benedict XVI of covering up sexual abuse has been withdrawn.Lawyers for the plaintiff in John Doe 16 v. Holy See filed a notice of voluntary dismissal Feb. 10, bringing the case effectively to an end. The lawsuit was filed in April 2010 in the U.S. District Court in Milwaukee by an unnamed Illinois man who claimed he had been molested by Father Lawrence Murphy during the latter's time on the staff of Milwaukee's St. John's School for the Deaf.

The lawsuit claimed that the Vatican "has known about the widespread problem of childhood sexual abuse committed by its clergy for centuries, but has covered up that abuse and thereby perpetuated the abuse." The lawsuit also sought to prove that the Vatican is a global business empire, engaging in "commercial activity" in Wisconsin and across the United States, and holding "unqualified power" over each diocese, parish and follower.

Jeffrey S. Lena, an American attorney for the Holy See, welcomed the withdrawal of "fallacious allegations of Holy See responsibility and liability for John Doe 16's abuse." "A case like this one against the Holy See, which was held together by no more than a mendacious web of allegations of international conspiracy, amounted to a misuse of judicial process and a waste of judicial resources," Lena said in a statement.

The plaintiff was represented by Minnesota attorney Jeff Anderson, who has filed thousands of abuse lawsuits against priests and representatives of the Catholic Church. Anderson is still pursuing a sex abuse lawsuit against the Holy See in Oregon. Another such case in Kentucky was withdrawn in 2010.

Father Murphy worked at the school for the deaf from 1950 to 1974. In the early 1970s, multiple allegations of sexual abuse against the priest were made to civil authorities, who investigated but never brought charges. He was placed on a leave of absence for a while and later returned to pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Superior, where he worked until 1993.In 1996, then-Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee referred Murphy's case to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The Vatican decided not to laicize Father Murphy, but eventually suggested that he continue to be restricted in ministry, and he died four months later, in 1998.

(please turn to page 10)

APNU claims evidence of people trafficking

Leader of A Partnership for National Unity, (APNU) David Granger, says his party has evidence that young girls are being trafficked in the Rupununi.

At a press conference on Wednesday Mr Granger said the partnership can verify that in the Amerindian village of Aishalton young girls are taken into the mines and 'raffled' prior to be forced into being sex slaves.

Allegations of trafficking for forced prostitution or forced labour, particularly in interior locations, are often made by various groups and individuals.

For four consecutive years Guyana has been on a Tier Two Watch List rating by the United States with regard to human trafficking.

This means that it has been determined that this country is not making sufficient efforts to combat human trafficking or has not been living up to its commitments to enforce its anti-trafficking measures.

A country is also given the tier two ranking if it has a significant number of trafficking victims. *(Please turn to page 10)*

New Bishop in Caribbean

More than 800 people filled the Holy Family Cathedral at Michael's Mount, St John's, Antigua, Wednesday February 8 for the Episcopal ordination of the diocese's third bishop, Bishop Kenneth Richards, a Jamaican. Governor General Louise Lake-Tack and Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer were among the hundreds to witness the historic event. Bishop Richards, 53, will shepherd the Catholic communities on the islands of Antigua & Barbuda, St Kitts & Nevis, Montserrat, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands. ❖

Exciting start to Bible Quiz

"It is really heartening to see so many young people eager to test their knowledge of the faith." This was a comment from one of the organizers of this year's Inter Parish Bible Quiz as the event got going at the Marian Academy last Sunday.

About 200 young Catholics mainly teenagers Georgetown and along the Coast came together either to participate in the quiz or support their team.

About nine parishes fielded both senior and junior teams to participate in the annual event organized by the Diocesan Youth Office. One of the aims of deepen their knowledge of their faith and the bible.

Questions at each round are based on specific books in the bible which parish teams are asked to study in advance.

Participants can be asked to give a straight answer to a question. In some cases they are multiple choice or they can be shown a picture and asked to explain it.

The team scoring the lowest at each round is eliminated. On Sunday that team was Brickdam Cathedral!

The finals of the competition will be on

Bishop's Engagements

7th Week in Ordinary Time

Sun. 19th Feb.	08:00 - 12:30 hrs Parish Assembly at Linden
Mon. 20th Feb.	17:30 hrs Planning [illegible] for Bishops' Conference
Tues. 21st Feb.	08:45 hrs Mashramani Concert at Marian Academy
	18:00 hrs Bible Quiz meeting
Wed. 22nd Feb.	ASH WEDNESDAY 17:00 hrs Mass and distribution of Ashes at Cathedral
Fri. 24th Feb.	17:00 hrs Stations of the Cross and Mass at Cathedral
Sun. 26th Feb.	07:30hrs Mass at Cathedral with rites of Election and Continuing conversion for RCIA candidates

REPUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

The major national activity to mark Guyana's attainment of Republican status is the Mashramani parades. What that means or what it should mean for us as a people to have become a Republic in the Commonwealth of Nations does not play much of a part in our remembrance celebrations. This dimension is not addressed in any serious way. Some of children's Mash activities, the float parade and costumes do depict various strands of this diverse country and culture made up of six peoples.

The masks, tribal beats and group camaraderie are typical and much appreciated components of this fabulous spectacle. Accompanying this party atmosphere there's a strong sense of the satirical with jokes, calypsos and other songs relating to popular characters, public figures, situations and local events.

There still seems to be among most Guyanese that Republic celebrations or Mashramani endeavors equals carnival. What is also of growing concern to many is that over recent years Mash is becoming increasingly vulgar Carnival.

In many countries there is Carnival pure and simple with none of the nationalist and other overtones of the Guyanese celebrations.

CATHOLIC STANDARD

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In a message before the start of Carnival celebrations in Trinidad and Tobago Archbishop Joseph Harris reminded his people of the need to be responsible as they celebrated. "As we draw closer to carnival we recognise the right of children, young people and adults to have a "good time". As adult Catholics [some of us are parents or teachers] we all have a responsibility to ensure by example and correction that a "good time" does not have to diminish our dignity as persons or lead others along paths that are self-destructive. Let us all strive to enjoy ourselves in a manner that is harmonious with our dignity as people of God," the T&T Archbishop said.

Perhaps some elements within the celebrations have more responsibility than others to ensure that our dignity is not diminished. Those responsible for broadcasting the celebrations on television should let it be known that unacceptable behaviour will not be aired. Disc jockeys and band leaders often promote and encourage the actions that are simply crude and ugly. We hope revelers will not blindly follow their directions.

Republic Day has been taken over by the concepts of big business that see the sole importance of the day in terms of dollars and cents.

To continue to emphasize the "Carnival" dimension as the only national celebration on this day when Guyana became a Republic, reflects sadly as a major event which should enhance the consciousness of our people of many races towards our common destiny of nationhood

Republic Day is also a day to lift up our Nation to the Lord. We should go to Mass on this holiday; pray for racial harmony; for good leaders, and for true freedom. This is one of the days when all Guyanese should be proud of who they are and of their country, Guyana. ✤

SECURITY

Viewpoint

by Vibert Parvatan

With regularity we read of sad and disturbing situations wherein men, women and children are robbed, assaulted, brutalized and even killed by criminals.

In spite of the efforts of the Law Enforcement Agencies, criminals seem to be having a field day on both Land and Sea; City; Towns; Villages and the Interior areas. The magnitude of this problem is recognised in extracts of recent Newspaper Reports.

KN - FEBRUARY 4TH, 2012

- **"GIRL 7 RAPED BY STRANGER WHO PICKED HER UP FROM SCHOOL."**

GC - FEBRUARY 5TH, 2012

- **"ARMED BANDITS STRIKE LITTLE ROCK HOTEL. CART OFF OVER 1MILLION DOLLARS IN CASH, JEWELLERY."**

This occurred in New Amsterdam Berbice

SN – FEBRUARY 5TH, 2012

- **"PIRATES IN 15-VESSEL RAMPAGE NEAR POMEROON."**

BATTER AND LOCK FISHERMEN INTO TINY CABIN, ESCAPE WITH CATCH, ENGINES WORTH MILLIONS.

KN – FEBRUARY 5TH, 2012

- **"MENTALLY CHALLENGED WOMAN ABDUCTED AND USED AS SEX SLAVE."**

KN – FEBRUARY 6TH, 2012

- **"CITY BUSINESSMAN ROBBED TWICE IN ONE NIGHT."**

KN – FEBRUARY 6TH, 2012

- **"MAN STEALS CAR FROM BRICKDAM POLICE STATION COMPOUND."**

GT – FEBRUARY 11TH , 2012

- **"ROSIGNOL JEWELLERY STORE ROBBERY SUSPECT ESCAPES FROM POLICE."**

GT – February 11th , 2012

- **"GUNMEN BLITZ RAJ'S JEWELLERY"**

This occurred in the busy Sheriff Street at 09:05 h.

SN – FEBRUARY 13TH, 2012

- **"BANDITS SNATCH OVER 8 MILLION FROM UITVLUGT FAMILY."**

Those headlines referred to, tell the serious and sad situation plaguing the lives of Guyanese. Persons are unsafe and insecure whether in the privacy of their homes with grill work, at the busy work place even in the daylight or on the streets.Whether along the Atlantic Coastland or riverain areas; whether on the sea, in their fishing boats or in the interior – gold mining.

It is a situation which pervades the length and breath of the country. Criminal activities have moved from the early days of **'Choke and Rob'** to robbery under arms, piracy, the rape of the young and old and murder.

It is a situation which requires a well coordinated structured approach by the Law enforcement Agencies. There is the demand for security and private security companies seem to have difficulty in recruiting needed security personnel. The ads are always there "Wanted Security Guards."

At the same time the Police Force is undermanned. One does not find a Policeman in the Streets, the Patrol Cars are hardly seen to reassure commuters, and criminals have their day.

What can be done?

Something special needs to be done.

It is self evident that Policemen need to be active and seen in the streets with patrols in the various areas as a deterrent.

We need to get back to regular check points such as at the Harbour Bridge; along the Linden Highway; outside Police Stations on the Coasts and Banks. This should also apply to the Interior Roads.

To expand on cameras which are supposed to be installed and to strengthen the investigative capability of the Police Force.

Too many crimes are unsolved and this has the negative effect of the criminals having confidence. They have become presumptuous and emboldened.

The Guyana Police Force needs to be better equipped with Transportation both Land and Sea, with their numbers strengthened with necessary training.

The Quick Response Unit needs to be really quick with telephones working, personnel and needed vehicles.

This upsurge in crime is not confined to Guyana. It is a Regional and worldwide problem. We must give it priority and recognise that dealing with criminal activities though complicated, it is not insurmountable.

The search for peace of mind and happiness is an ongoing problem but this is torpedoed when insecurity surfaces.

World Day for Consecrated Life

From ***Sister Ark of the Covenant***

"The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple is an eloquent icon of the total offering of one's life for all those who are called to show forth in the Church and in the world, by means of the evangelical counsels "the characteristic features of Jesus -- the chaste, poor and obedient one" (VC 1)." Pope John Paul II, Message for the First World Day for Consecrated Life, 1997, #5.

On February 2, the World Day for Consecrated Life, our Religious Family gathered in missions around the world to celebrate the gift of consecrated life in the Church and to give thanks for our own vocations.

In Georgetown, Guyana, our priests and sisters witnessed a particularly historic moment in the life of the Province of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin (IVE) and of the Church in the Caribbean: the first investiture of IVE novices from the new novitiate in Guyana, and the second investiture of a local Guyanese sister as a novice in our Institute.

The holy Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, the seat of the singular Diocese of Guyana, in the presence of His Grace Bishop Francis Alleyne.

The new SSVM novice, Sr. Mary Temple of the Holy Spirit, grew up in the parish community of the Cathedral and was delighted to receive her religious habit and new religious name "at home" in the heart of the Guyanese church. She is the second Guyanese sister joining Sr. Mary Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, an Amerindian vocation from one of the mission chapels on the Essequibo Coast.

While we recognize that each vocation to consecrated life is a singular gift from God, the religious vocations from the missions especially stand out as striking testimonies to the grace of God at work in the souls of young people.

Please join us in praying for religious vocations in the Church and particularly for the young men and women who have begun the journey of their consecrated lives in the southern most point of our Province.

To read more about the vocation to consecrated life and to see Church documents about the vocations see our Discernment Resources on http://www.ssvmusa.org/Vocations/vocationresources.shtm.

To see another article about this event follow this link to www.ive.america.org. ❖

The face of Christ in the Digital Age

By ***Medino Abraham SJ***

It is not news to anyone that the Internet and its technologies are transforming the way we relate, be it with the world or the people. Pope Benedict XVI, in his address to the 45th World Day of Social Communications, said that "we have a wide cultural transformation." Frequent speeches and messages of the Pope urge Christians to witness the face of Christ on the Internet to embody a strong presence in the Catholic Church in this endeavor.

Some people get scared when they see profiles of the Vatican on Youtube and other social networks, as well as applications for devices such as the iPhone and IPod, for example, which help the faithful to pray and prepare for confession. We know that the new scares us, causes us to distrust, and then we ask ourselves: Is the church encouraging consumerism? And what is the relationship of people who cannot detach themselves from the Internet?

In fact, we face a major challenge of the Church today, but if we close down for this social change we will lose a huge mission field. "The Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is every day more perfect with. It is relying on them that it 'proclaims from the housetops' the message said" of the Apostolic Exhortation of Paul VI Evangelii Nuntiandi. This document is part of the history of the Canão Nova and expresses its mission.

Since 1995, almost the same age of the Internet boom, the community was launched insisted by Benedict XVI to: witness the face of Christ in the digital age. With responsibility and humility we can say that the Canção Nova is a pioneer in the Catholic media in Brazil with regard to evangelism from this digital culture. It is not to alienate or make people dependent on the medium, but use it to make them dependent on God. This is the mission of the Canção Nova: in communion with Benedict XVI and the whole Church in to take the word of God all over the world, whether through the Internet or any other channel. Because God needs no passport, and there are no closed doors for the Gospel.❖

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Letters to the Editor

A Parish gathering in India

Dear Editor,

The month of January is the time when parishes in the Diocese of Tura, in the Garo Hills of Meghalaya, India organize their annual 'Sobha' or 'Assembly'. This is a custom among the 33% Catholics of the Garo tribe. The Tura Diocese has about 250,000 Catholics in 39 parishes – all new Christians who have embraced the Faith during the last 80-90 years.

For the Sobha, the entire parish comes together for a whole week or at least 3-4 days of the particular week. The planning is done by the priests of the parish with the Parish Council. A suitable venue is chosen for the Sobha – sometimes in the Church compound, but mostly in the open spaces of one of the villages, amidst the greenery and picturesque surroundings of hills and valleys.

A huge tent or 'pandal' of bamboo work, covered on all sides with coir-matting, cloths or branches of trees is constructed to accommodate 1000 to 3000 people. The people sit on the ground, usually covered with grass or dry straw. At one end, a big altar is built for the liturgical celebrations, with special arrangements for the choir and first communicants on one side and, on the other side, chairs for the sisters and prominent people in the parish.

There is a detailed programme for each day, from morning till evening, consisting of morning prayer, the Eucharistic celebration, catechetical instructions, Charismatic praise and worship, preparation of children for their first Communion and Confirmation, marriage-preparation for couples, religious discourses by invited speakers, recitation of the rosary, and other devotional practices.

A large number of people make their confessions during these days. Priests from neighbouring parishes are invited to come and help out with confessions. Several marriages are blessed or regularized on one of the days. The Sobha is like an annual retreat and faith-formation programme for the people of the parish.

Garo is the only language spoken in all the proceedings, and all the liturgical and devotional books are in Garo, written in the Roman script.

Arches and banners proclaiming the theme of the Sobha or welcoming people are put up at the entrance and out in the streets. The highlight of the Sobha is the solemn liturgical celebration on the last day, usually a Sunday, when the pandal is packed to capacity, with people coming also

The celebrants are accompanied to the altar by a procession of the first communicants, all dressed in white, and led by a group of young tribal dancers in their traditional costumes, to the beating drums, while the choir of 20-30 singers sings the entrance hymn.

After the homily the main celebrant administers the Sacrament of Confirmation to up to 100 candidates. The first communicants receive Communion from the Main Celebrant. The congregation participates reverently and in a disciplined manner throughout the long ceremony.

Soon after Mass, the Blessed Sacrament is carried in solemn procession. As it winds its way through the scenic pathways around the village, prayers are recited and hymns sung by the choir and group-leaders. It is a moving religious experience and public demonstration of their faith for the simple people.

After the liturgical celebration, the Parish Priest or a representative of the Parish Council conducts a felicitation ceremony for the Main Celebrant, the Priests, Sisters, and prominent guests or leading public officers seated in front of the altar. They are presented with mementoes and bouquets. The entire function, which takes 3-and-a-half to 4 hours, ends with a vote of thanks.

The religious personnel, leaders and guests are then treated to a delicious lunch in a tent reserved for the purpose, not far from the assembly-hall. It is only by 2.00 to 2.30 p.m. that the Sobha finally ends; though some prayers, meetings for evaluation and celebrations continue till late in the evening.

Father Joe Dias SJ

Women should show more self respect at Mash

Dear Editor,

This year Mashramani will be during the time of Lent. This means most Christians will not be participating in it but will be spending their time fasting reading the holy bible and worshipping the Lord. Mash is said to portray the Guyanese culture. I wonder if the indecent types of attire worn by many women who take part in Mash and the vulgar movements they make are Guyanese culture.

Up till now Mash has made many Guyanese women look as though the only reason they exist is to amuse people with indecent forms of dressing and by shamelessly shaking their bodies with all forms of ugly movements. I wish women will have more self respect and dignity and not to allow themselves to be used in this manner to entertain the public. Maybe this is one of the reasons we have so many crimes against women.

If we don't do something to stop women being abused in this manner we will soon be known as a country with very low moral standards.

Surely the organizers of these events will not like their wives and daughters to be ridiculed in this manner.

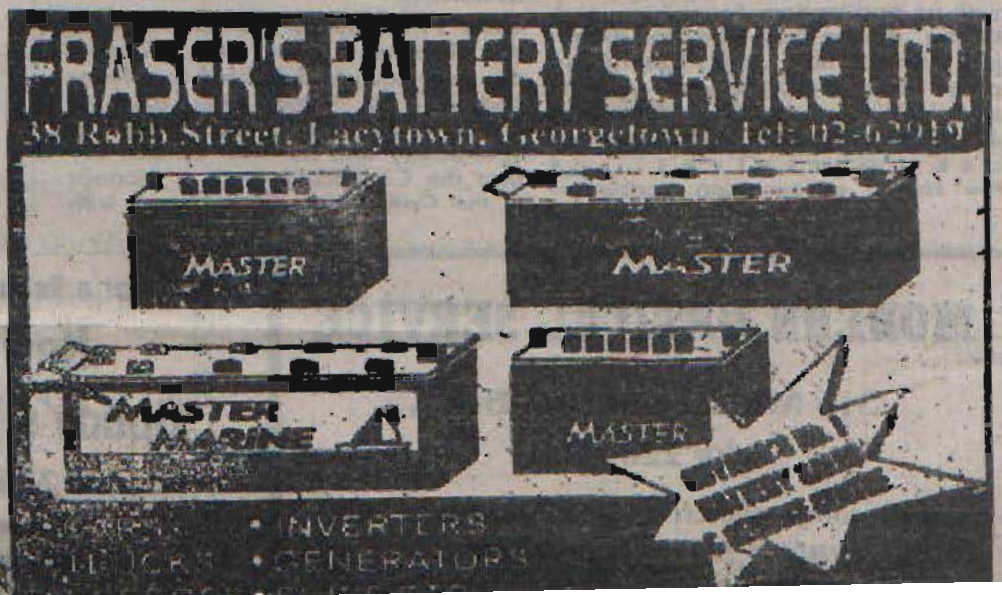
Let us do something to make every woman feel that she is respected by society.

Let us appreciate her for the numerous ways in which she helps to make the world a better place. A house is not a home without the presence of a loving mother who helps in bringing up children along the right way with high moral standards.

I am not against Mashramani but let it be done decently and in a proper manner. Let us walk as God wants us to go that all our thoughts and actions will be without blame in his sight.

Let us behave as children of God and do all to his glory.

Da Thai



Mongolia: Care, Education and Participation: Path of the Missionary Church

(Agenzia Fides) In the fall of the communist regime in 1991, there were no Catholics in Mongolia. In 2006 there were 600, including 350 native Mongolians, and the country's first vocation was born in 2008. Now, thanks to the presence of Vietnamese Salesian missionaries, the process of evangelization of the Catholic Church in Mongolia is being renewed. In 1992, the new constitution which recognizes freedom of religion, different Salesian priests of Vietnam are dedicated to the revival of the local church, they have built places of worship and helped the population after decades of dictatorship. Currently, despite the Catholic community is still small, the local Church carries out a great work of care, promoting educational opportunities for all and promoting the participation in new and creative social activities. The mission of the Vietnamese Salesians today has a kindergarten, a technical training school, social canteens, two farms and a reception center for 120 disabled children. The Salesians groups that deal with social activities help street children in the capital, Ulaanbatar, and women victims of abuse.

DR Congo: Juvenile Court to ensure respect for rights of youngest

(Agenzia Fides) For several months a "juvenile court", has been active in Kinshasa, Dr Congo, an important achievement for the Congolese society. "After the promulgation of the law in January 2009 for the protection of children's rights, the Supreme Court has finally approved the erection of the juvenile court", is what is read in a note from Kinshasa on behalf of Fr. Mauro Cecchinato, Guanellian, responsible for the rehabilitation centres for street children of the Servants of Charity. "Now all children residing in our centres have been reported to the court; a recognition of their rights. The problems that have estranged children from the family is thought to be due to the phenomenon of witchcraft and abuse, which now have become punishable by law. Every time we reintegrate a child in the family or extended parental nucleus, parents and relatives sign a document confirming the family reintegration.

Nicaragua: Education helps to fight poverty

(Agenzia Fides) The new school year for one million and 600 thousand students, from kindergarten to higher education has just started in Nicaragua. The high turnout is due to free access to education proposed by the present government as a strategy to combat poverty in the country. Since 2007, the State has established free tuition, but without the contemporary implementation of social programs the integration of the vast number of students would have been impossible. Programs like "Zero Hunger", where more than 100,000 women benefited from, allowed many families to have at their disposal animals and contributions for the production and sale of food, helping children and young people who often do not go to school because they need to work in the fields with their parents.

China: Catholic Community promotes the role of women

(Agenzia Fides) To reaffirm and promote the role of lay women in the spiritual life, in evangelism, and in the life of the Church in general is the reason for the formation course for women who are active in the Parish organized by the Pastoral Center of Xing Tai, in He Bei Province, China, from 8 to 14 February. 87 laywomen attended the

days of formation related to the parish ministry, the family relationship, the application of the Word of God, Evangelization, prayer, sacred music. Other Catholic communities of the continent have always given importance to women in the Church and society, and continue to motivate and qualify their presence through formation. The Missionaries of the Mother of Mercy of the Diocese of Fen Yang organized a week of formation for young unmarried women based on prayer, faith formation and discernment of vocation.

U.S.A.: Concern about increase in death sentences in Florida

(Agenzia Fides) The Archbishop of Miami, His Exc. Mgr. Thomas Wenski and five Bishops of Florida sent a letter to Governor Rick Scott, asking him to stop Robert Waterhouse's execution and commute the death sentence with life imprisonment without possibility of parole. "This measure would manifest the belief in the unique dignity of each individual and the sanctity of human life. It would acknowledge God as Lord of life and be more consistent with the spirit of the Gospel," said the letter, which is dated February 13,, 2012. The letter expresses the Bishops' concern for the planned increase of the executions: from August 2011 one every three months. Therefore in the letter the Bishops ask the governor to refrain from signing new death sentences. ❖

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CONFLICT AND RECONCILATION
An Exploration

By Fr. Keith Hardless

Widespread conflict and corruption...Christians being sucked into this whirlpool...be on God's side support the cause of the oppressed and the poor....

These are some of the thought provoking statements made by Bishop Singh in his recent article – Conflict and Reconciliation. (C.S.Feb.3rd.2012).

The Bishop states that in the face of conflict we cannot be neutral as this could be beneficial to the oppressor and enables the status quo to be maintained. We cannot use the pretext of Peace in the face of Injustice.

The Bishop says, that this may require struggle, and conflict may be inevitable. However, Confrontation and Conflict may be the only way to free, from the sin of injustice, those who abuse power and oppress others.

Is the Bishop merely commenting on life in the world today or the Conservative shift taking place in the Catholic Church? And why now?

A number of us felt that the Bishop was making a personal call to us. His insights, thoughts and ideas are cherished not only in the church but also in our secular Guyanese society. He has always paid particular attention to the social and justice concerns of our own society. We also doubt that he is immune to the murmurings and to what is happening in the local Catholic Church.

It would be a fruitful exercise to read Bishop Singh's article again and gain more insights from it.

In the coming weeks I will attempt to unpack some of the ideas of Bishop Singh shares in his article. He has given three positions that are possible when we are called to respond to widespread conflict and oppression. We will address these and the challenges to which they call us. ✤

Lawsuit against Vatican Dismissed From Front Page

Pope Benedict was named as a defendant in the case because of his authority to remove priests, and because of his involvement in reviewing sex abuse cases when he was cardinal, as prefect of the doctrinal congregation.

"Mythology about the Catholic Church to the contrary, the Holy See is not responsible for the supervision of the more than 400,000 priests around the world," Lena said.

Milwaukee Archbishop Jerome E. Listecki, currently in Rome on a periodic "ad limina" visit to the Vatican, called the outcome of the case a "reminder of the relationship of the Holy See to the dioceses." "The Holy See offers the direction we should go," but leaves administrative decisions up to local bishops, Archbishop Listecki said. "When I studied law they said in tort action that if you wanted, you can go all the way back to blaming Adam and Eve," the archbishop said. "Reasonable people and society can say, 'this is where responsibility ends.'" ✤

APNU claims evidence of people trafficking From Front Page

The authorities here have continued to maintain that this ranking by the US is unjustified.

Opposition parties have frequently complained that the government's anti trafficking programme and legislation were developed without sufficient consultation.

Mr Granger was responding to a question on whether he felt it was an aberration that within the past week two 14-year olds had been remanded into custody for serious crimes.

He said it was no abnormality but rather a sign that the quality of life in Guyana generally was deteriorating and that there was a pattern of social decay. ✤

PASTORAL AREA
Mass/Service Schedule for Ash Wednesday
Wednesday 22nd February 2012

CHURCH	TIME
Cathedral, Brickdam	6:00 a.m. - Mass 12:00 p.m.- Mass 5:00 p.m. - Mass
Holy Rosary, Kitty	5:30 p.m.- Mass
St. Teresa, Campbellville	7:00 a.m. - Mass 6:00 p.m.- Service
St. Pius X, West La Penitence	6:00 p.m.- Mass
Holy Spirit, North Ruimveldt	5:30 p.m.- Mass
Our Lady of the Mount, Meadow Bank	5:00 p.m.-Mass
Our Lady of Fatima, Bourda	5:00 p.m.-Mass
Sacred Heart, Ursuline Convent	5:30 p.m.-Mass
Church of the Annunciation, Malgre Tout	6:00 p.m.-Mass
Church of the Assumption, Hague	5:30 p.m.-Mass

Getting to know the A.E.C. (Part 2)

Today we continue our feature on the Antilles Episcopal Conference, which will be meeting in Guyana from April 21st for its Annual General Meeting.

The 18 countries that form the AEC are sub-divided into five Archdioceses or Provinces. Guyana is part of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain which also includes Barbados, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and the Netherlands Antilles including Aruba, Curaçao & St Maarten.

Catholic Population of the Archdiocese of Port-of-Spain

Territory	Total Population	% Catholic	No. of Catholics
Barbados	277,000	3.4%	11,000
Guyana	769,000	7.9%	60,588
Netherlands Antilles	295,264	73.8%	217,851
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	120,000	12.9%	15,469
Suriname	524,000	25%	131,000
Trinidad and Tobago	1,310,000	26%	340,000

The Secretariat of the Antilles Episcopal Conference and the Regional Seminary are located in Trinidad and Tobago along with the official residence of the Pope's representative (Papal Nuncio) to the Caribbean.

The head of the Church in Trinidad and Tobago is recently appointed Archbishop Joe Harris. 125 priests, over 150 sisters, 20 deacons and scores of laity look after the administrative and spiritual care of 340,000 Catholics in T&T. There are over 125 Catholic primary and secondary Catholic schools in T&T and a number of diocesan offices responsible for areas such as Social Justice, Catholic media services, Youth, Evangelization, Family Life, Religious Education