



# The Archangel

Newsletter of  
The St. Michael's College, Batticaloa, Alumni Association (Colombo Branch)  
Published Quarterly For Private Circulation.

Apr - Sep  
2011

No. 53

## Michaelites Shine here and abroad

### First bishop from SMC Dhiloraj Ranjit Canagasabay is 15th Bishop of Colombo

Venerable Dhiloraj Ranjit Canagasabay B.Th., B.Div., the first ever past pupil of SMC to become bishop, was consecrated and installed as the 15th Bishop of Colombo of the Church of Sri Lanka by 8 Anglican Bishops, local and foreign, at a festive trilingual service at the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour, Colombo, on May 14, 2011. Bishop Dhilo Canagasabay succeeds Rt Rev. Duleep de Chickera and is the second Tamil after Rt Rev. J.J. Gnanapragasam (1987 - 1992).

Among the over 5,000 well wishers present to greet the new Bishop were the President of Sri Lanka and his first lady, the Leader of the Opposition, Ministers, dignatories of other religions, heads of missions, relations and friends. I.T. Canagaratnam, F.R. Ragel and Alston Jeganathan represented the Alumni of SMC.



L-R 1st Bishop Dhilo 3rd Bishop Chickera

At the end of the service the new Bishop was welcomed with the beating of the drums and the ringing of the church bells. Two baskets of flowers were exchanged as a token of reconciliation and peace between the Country's North and South.

Prior to this, SMC, AA and St. Michael's College, National School jointly felicitated the Bishop - elect in Batticaloa, his home town.

Dilo, a trilingual Tamil Anglican with Methodist ancestry and Catholic formation, from east Sri Lanka married to Harshini, a Sinhalese from the west of the country, blessed with a daughter Dhilukshini and son Dhiranjan is undoubtedly God's choice to shepherd his multilingual and multicultural flock during these trying times the Church and Country are going through and it is hoped that he will with God's grace, be a courageous witness and force for reconciliation and peace and that his saner counsel will prevail with those who matter.

Recalling Dhilo's school days his mentor F.R. Ragel writes

#### First Head Prefect to First Bishop வினாயகம் பாயிர் முகையிற் தெரியும்

'Dhilo' as he was popularly known among friends and school mates hails

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### Rev. John Jegasothy - An Outstanding Australian Helping Refugees

Rev. John Daniel Jegasothy B.Th.Hon., B.D., M.Th., J.P. was ordained as Minister of the Methodist Church in 1977. After serving in Colombo he moved during the height of the Eelam war to Trincomalee as Circuit Superintendent (1981-1983).

In Trinco he headed the Human Rights Group and in association with the Rotary Club of Trincomalee, the YMCA, the Trincomalee Welfare Association, *Ghandiam* and his church he took up the cause of the displaced and otherwise affected people and demanded justice. It did not take long for him to come under the adverse notice of the security establishment and he sensed danger. In 1984 he was posted to Cheankaladi where he continued working for the victims of war particularly young widows and sought the release of those detained by the army. Living as he did between army and LTTE camps on the main road at Chenkaladi he and family faced an increasingly life threatening situation and he had no alternative but to accept sponsorship, under a Special Humanitarian Programme of the Australian Government, by his sister-in-law Nirmala and husband Mahilraj Rajasekaran from Canberra and migrate to Australia in 1986.



James, Rev. John with award, Shanthi, Edward

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### T. Dineshkanthan - National Tennis Champion - First from the Outstation

"A tale of ten years of pain of bitter alienation, after they settled down in Colombo coming from the war-torn eastern town of Batticaloa, and untiring commitment of a whole family run by an ordinary school teacher, a graduate of the Jaffna University named Arumugam Thangarajah, reached a fairytale climax, when their youngest son Dineshkanthan clinched the Men's Singles National title of one of the last bastions of the elitist sport in the island, tennis, yesterday, Aug.27.

Leaving St. Michael's College, Batticaloa in 2001 where he began tennis, young Thangarajah, supported by his brothers and parents who dedicated

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*We Care for our School, Always*

## Committee Meeting 05

This luncheon meeting hosted by N.Sivanandarajah and Judixon Mariadasan was held on May 01, 2011 at the residence of Siva at Kotahena.

President T.Mahenthiran chaired the meeting which was attended by 13 members. In the absence of the Secretary F.R.Ragel, Assistant Secretary Julian Jeyaratnarajah officiated as Secretary.

Two minutes silence was observed in memory of Mr.A.E.Emmanuel, father of Godfrey Anton.

I.T.Canagaretnam informed the members that the earlier decision to take over a section of the Alayadicholai Cemetery at Batticaloa has been put on hold and that burials were permitted to continue. The efforts of I.T. towards this end were appreciated.

Dr.S.Thirumal and S.Vithyanathan were accepted as new committee members.

The President informed that the Museum Project has had the Ministry approval.

Fellowship and lunch followed.

## Committee Meeting 06

This luncheon meeting was held on Sunday 19th June at Hotel Mount Breeze, Mount Lavinia with President Mahenthiran in the chair and 20 other members in attendance.

Two minutes of silence was observed as a mark of respect to Magician Dr.A.Alexander who had passed away in Chennai. (Alex was the main performer at the Fund Raising Project in Colombo in 2009)

Alston Jeganathan was to liaise with Principal, SMC and obtain the name of the deserving student for the presentation of the Rs. 10,000 donated by Mrs. Celine Arulanantham (USA)

The two new committee members, Dr.S.Thirumal and S.Vithyanathan were welcomed in to the committee after self introductions.

Julian Pathmanathan and Bradley Ockersz were appointed Captain and Vice Captain, respectively for the forthcoming annual cricket encounter against Methodist Central, Colombo Branch.

Fellowship and lunch hosted by S.Selvaruban, Dr.L.S.Thomas and Ms.Sumathy Asokan followed.

## Committee Meeting 07

This dinner meeting was held on Saturday 16th July 2011 at The Bunker, Galle Road, Colombo - 06 with T.Mahenthiran Presiding and 19 other members attending.

Greetings to the members from past pupil S.L.Johnpillai from Rome, En route to Canada, was received on the mobile phone of I.T.Canagaratnam.

S. Vithyanathan was appointed Chairman, Membership Drive Committee. Alston Jeganathan was appointed Co-ordinating Officer for College and Parent Body affairs.

As Bradley could not be present for the Central-Michael Cricket match to be played on 31.07.2011 Bonney Joseph was appointed Vice Captain.

R.C.Perumal reported that he had met 10 members of the Australian Branch at an ad hoc meeting in April 2011 at Sydney.

Dr.S.Thirumal brought to the notice of the members the sorry state of the College buildings. Taking note the members looked into the possibility of utilising the Rs. Four Lakhs lying to the credit of the Australian Branch for renovating the building. R.C.Perumal was to write to the Australian Branch seeking their approval to utilise their money for College renovation. In the meantime F.R.Ragel was to contact Father Paul Satkunayanayagam to get a rough estimate of renovation costs.

A proposal by Fund Raising Chairman, S.Sivakumar, for making key tags with the college crest for sale in Colombo and Batticaloa was accepted.

J.C.Daniel proposed the organising of an Invitation Basketball Tournament in Batticaloa as a Fund Raiser. He was asked to prepare a feasibility report with the assistance of Kumar David and S.Selvaruban and submit at the next meeting.

To an inquiry by I.T.Canagaretnam, the President said that the Museum Project was getting delayed due to a lack of funds.

It was decided to invite the Parents Association officers to the next meeting to participate in a joint discussions.

The Meeting concluded with the College anthem followed by fellowship and dinner hosted by M.Suthaharan, J.C.Daniel, M.Pushpaharan and F.R.Ragel.

## Committee Meeting 08

This out-of-Colombo luncheon meeting was held at Hibiscus Beach Hotel, Kalutara North on Aug.21, 2011 with President Mahenthiran in the chair and 19 members in attendance. Shasha Canagasuriyam of the UK Branch was a guest.

I.T.Canagaretnam informed that the Association Constitution had been revised and that the final draft will be available before the next meeting.

The Treasurer S.Selvaruban reported that at last the Rs.50,000 from the Pramuka Bank had been transferred to the Sri Lanka Savings Bank and was earning interest, thanks to J.C.Daniel and S.Selvaruban.

Alston Jeganathan tabled a letter from the College Principal giving the names of the two students, P.Luxmikanthan and G. Amuthesan, who were eligible for the Rs.10,000/= donated by Mrs.C.Arulanantham from the USA.

President T.Mahenthiran informed that the Rotary Club of Colombo South was organising a residential course on **Supply Chain Management** from 26-30th Sep. in Colombo and that he has arranged for two past / present students of SMC to undergo the training free of charge. Bradley Ockersz was to select the two candidates.

The officers of the Parent Association who were expected for a joint meeting could not make it due to unavoidable circumstances

Fellowship and lunch followed after swimming and outdoor activities. This was a picnic meeting hosted by S.Sivakumar who himself could not be present as he had to rush to India due to his son's sudden illness N.Sivanandarajah attended to all arrangements.

## Committee Meeting 09

This final meeting for the year was held on Saturday Sep.17, 2011 at the Wesley College Sports Club with President Mahenthiran in the chair.

The Revised Constitution was discussed and approved for presentation and adoption at the forthcoming AGM.

Arrangements for the AGM on 15.10.2011 were finalised.

Fellowship and dinner were hosted by S.Elilventhan, Julian Pathmanathan, Bonney Joseph, J.A.Raveendrarajah, S.Vithyanathan and R.C.Perumal.

## St.Michael's wins Seventh Central Michael 2011 Cricket Match in Colombo

This match played for the seventh time at Cooray Park, Colombo - 06 on July 31, 2011 was won by the Colombo Branch team led by P.J.Julien (Captain) and Bonney Joseph (Vice Captain).

The highlight of the day was the participation of former SMC cricket captain, Daniel Thiagarajah, who displayed his master strokes of yesteryear.

There was a proposal by the Centralites to carry out joint projects in Batticaloa. Good fellowship and lunch followed.

**Anton Dilan**, son of **Alston Jeganathan** and **Rohini** enrolled at the University of Swinburne, Melbourne, Australia in Feb.2011 for the degree course in Electronic Network Communications Engineering.

Wedding Bells rang for **Brenda Deshini**, daughter of **M.Suthaharan** and **Shyamala** and **Mayurajit Wijeyanayagam** on April.10, 2011 at Hotel Ramada, Colombo. Colombo Branch members were there to meet and greet the new couple.

**R.C.Perumal** was on holiday in Melbourne, Australia in April 2011. On invitation from M.Sathiamoorthy, former Treasurer, Colombo Branch, who works for Sydney WATER the visitor flew into Sydney and attended a specially convened meeting of the Australian Branch on April 17,2011.

T. Pious (President), T.Sivakumar (Vice President), Dr.T.Sivaseelan (Secretary), Winton Anton (Treasurer), M.Radhakrishnan, Arul Arumugam, Ronald Coilparampil, K.Sabaratham, M.Sathiamoorthy and Rev. John Jegasothy were present.



The visitor was informed that the Australian Branch is in existence since 1998 and that they had just completed a fund raising project netting Aus \$ 24,000 (Rs.2.5m) to be used for community projects in and around Batticaloa. Perumal distributed copies of the Archangel No.52, thanked all present for coming at short notice and Sathiamoorthy for making the Sydney visit possible.

Special thanks to Sathy and wife Indira for hospitality in their magnificent home, driving him around Sydney in adverse weather conditions, for the photographs and for putting in touch with Kingsley Thiagarajah, younger brother of Daniel Thiagarajah, who lives within walking distance of where RCP stayed, with whom many pleasant hours were spent.

Kingsley Thiagarajah is an avid reader and writer. The following contribution by Kingsley published in the Reader's Digest, Australia Edition of Oct.2010 earned him a monetary award.

### Fools of Fortune

A man went to a palmist to learn his future. The palm reader studied his hand for a long time and said, 'For the next 10 years you will have a very bad time.'

'Then what will happen after that?' asked the man.

The palmist looked at his hand again and said 'After that you will get used to it.'

## An Appreciation

### SELVARAJAH RATNAJOTHY - A MICHAELITE PAR EXCELLENCE

Selvarajah Ratnajothy affectionately called *Jothy Annan* was called to eternal rest on Sep.17, 2010.

Jothy was the eldest among ten in a respected family of Batticaloa.

Jothy, an outstanding student at SMC, much loved try his fellow students and teachers, was moulded by the Jesuits. Having completed his studies he enlisted into the Sri Lanka Air Force, Mechanical Section, and served until his marriage to Christina (Kitty) also of Batticaloa. Thereafter the couple moved to London where Jothy was gainfully employed with British Airways as Aircraft Engineer.

While comfortably settled in London he wished to be of service to his school and the people of Batticaloa who were close to his heart. He started the UK Branch of the SMC alumni association and as Founder President for many years served his alma mater with distinction working closely with the Colombo Branch.

He worked for the development of Batticaloa by founding another organisation BUDS Comprising of People of Batticaloa origin domiciled in the U.K.

Although Jothy is no more his memory will be treasured by all Michaelites both young and old for his commitment to his alma mater.

He is the father of three wonderful children, two girls and a boy, all in the UK. May the Almighty God guide his family.

### Ignatius Canagaretnam, Rtd.DIG

Senior Vice Patron, SMC, Bco, AA, Colombo Branch.

### Obituaries

Past Pupil **Arokiam Edward Emmanuel**, father of past pupils Godfrey Anton (SL Customs), Gratien Dolly (Australia), Julian Neville (Dialog PLC) and Jean Amitha (Canada) passed away on April 11, 2011 in Colombo and burial took place on April 14, 2011 at Batticaloa.

**Lily Thanganesam Sivapragasam** wife of late S.V.Sivapragasam, mother of past pupils late Dudley, late Huxley, Laurel, Morley, Dr. Lily, Dr.Gaston, Kingston, Samson and Pushpam, died in Batticaloa on Aug.01,2011. The funeral was on Aug.03.

Pp **Anthony Thiagarajah**, brother of Pp late John, Mrs. Therese Arulanantham, Pps Daniel, late Rev.Fr.Alphonso, Kingsley (Australia), died on Aug.05, 2011 in Batticaloa.

Master Magician **Dr.A.Alexander** died on May,01, 2011 in Chennai. Funeral took place at Thiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu.

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## Rev. John ..... from Page 1

He joined the Uniting Church in Australia. When the Federal Government introduced the Temporary Protection Visa program, the first TPV holder in Australia happened to be a Tamil youth who had nowhere to go. One of Rev. Jegasothy's first acts of charity at that time was to take this young man into his home, where his wife Shanti provided motherly care and his sons James and Edward brotherly love and support to this refugee. From then on, this became his mission in life. There was no turning back.

He worked with even greater zeal as conditions for such service are more favourable down under. To date John has helped more than 200 young men and women who were helpless and hopeless, and vulnerable and needy in a foreign land, to find their feet and more. He is friend philosopher and guide to those immigrants and asylum seekers with no one to turn to and nowhere to go. He is always at hand to share their joys and sorrows. May his tribe increase.

Needless to say that John's selfless humanitarian work came under the favourable notice of not only the immigrant community but also the Government of Australia and Amnesty International, Australia, as evidenced by the following Refugee Humanitarian Awards.

**An Outstanding Australian, Helping Refugees** awarded in 2009 by The Refugee Council of Australia and STARTTS (Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors)

**Service with Compassion** in March 2010 sponsored by the Tamil Community on behalf of the Tamil Refugees for sixteen years of service.

In 1997 John was invited to join the Australian Council for Tamil Refugees Inc. Vic., an effective service organisation in Melbourne. He ended up as its President in 2002.

During this period he organised a 350-person sitdown dinner and conference with the late Joseph Pararajasingham M.P., an SMC alumnus, as the keynote speaker to tell the Australian GOs and NGOs and service providers about the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

John Jegasothy born in 1946 at Batticaloa had his education at Methodist Central College, St. Michael's College and Government College, Batticaloa. He married Shanti Thiagarajah in 1979. All what John is doing in Australia will not be possible if not for God's grace and whole hearted support of his wife and sons.

John who is also an active member of the SMC, AA, Australia found the time (only busy people can find time) to attend the committee meeting in Sydney called to greet this writer where he met John after 50 years! John had a pleasant disposition and looked young for his age, may be because his heart is pure, with malice to none and love to all.

Having heard at the meeting that John was recognised as an Outstanding Australian, the writer requested John for relevant information for publication in the Archangel. 'These things are not done for publicity' was John's response. After repeated e-mail requests from Melbourne and Colombo John reluctantly yielded (அடிமேல் அடி அடித்தால் அம்மியும் நகரும்) and hence this glimpse of John's mission based on the little he revealed.

(The writer came to know John as a teenager in 1960 after he married Esther who was a great Vincent School friend of Selvamalar (Sella) now in UK, whose younger brother was John)

St. Michael's and Batticaloa are justly proud to learn that their son John is in Australia to help those who have gone there to help themselves. Let his life be an example to others in these days where money and power is everything.

எல்லா புகழும் இறைவனுக்கே

## bishop of Colombo from Page 1

from a respectable, devoted Christian family in Batticaloa. His father was Station Master at the Batticaloa railway station and his mother was a teacher at Vincent Girls High School in Batticaloa. His aunt, Miss R.S. Canagaratne was the Deputy Principal at Vincent's and the first and only Vice Chairperson at the Batticaloa Urban Council.

Dressed in immaculate white, Dhilo was one of the very few students to arrive at the College very early and was never late. He served as the bell ringer of St. Michael's, where he had his entire education. He rang the first and second bells to announce the commencement of classes in the morning. Dhilo was an intelligent student who won many awards at the College Prize Givings. He was a pet of the Jesuit Fathers, especially of the well known, Rev. Fr. Harold J Weber who was Sports Coach and Student Counselor.

Dhilo was the most respected of all students and, as Prefect of Discipline, had no choice but make him the First Head Prefect of the College. He lived up to the expectations of his superiors. He was ably assisted by his Deputy Head Prefect, now W.S. Santharaj M.D., a cardiologist of repute.

The College is proud of its student who was unanimously chosen to the very top position as the Bishop of Colombo.

*Ad Multos Annos*

By all accounts 'Fr. Dilo' as he is affectionately called is a Godfearing and honest priest loved by all. We wish him God's choicest blessings to continue building God's Kingdom on earth.

## Dineshkanthan..... from Page 1

everything for his tennis since the day he joined St. Peter's College in Colombo, earned what could be the best possible accolades for their unrelenting effort when 'Dinesh' beat Amresh Jayawickrema in Men's Singles final in a gruelling four setter 6-4, 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (8) to become probably the first National Tennis Champion to emerge from outside Colombo in the recent history, if not the entire history of this nearly a century old tournament.

"He's broken a barrier for others to follow. Now the lesser privileged ones than even Dinesh can follow his footsteps. Money has not been a factor in his entire career so far," said his coach, a usually composed Dinith Pathiraja, who coached Thangarajah for ten years at St. Peter's since the time he noticed this talent when the boy was not even 10, "I'm extremely proud today," he added. Input **Sunday Island** 28th August, 2011

## A star is born : Sri Lanka tennis should shine

"My two elder brothers Thivakar and Krishanthan first started playing tennis at St. Michael's College Batticaloa and I also fell in love with the game while watching them playing.

Coach J.S. Wasanthan provided me with excellent support and with the blessing of my parents I decided to start a career in tennis at St. Michael's College Batticaloa." **The Nation** Sunday Sep. 4, 2011

Dinesh is grateful to his sponsors Dunlop and K. Mathivanan of East West Marketing. The Colombo Branch helped him with tennis gear when he came to join St. Peter's College.

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Typeset at	: UKAAYE Card (Pvt) Ltd. Home for Wedding Cards No. 333,335, Sea Street, Colombo-11.
Printed at	: Rajeswary Institute, Colombo - 13.