



# St Patrick's College Jaffna OBA

Melbourne, Australia

P.O.Box 574, Rosanna, Vic 3084



Newsletter 11

August 2010

## Dear Fellow Patricians

Once again, it is with great pleasure I write a few words for the August 2010 edition of the Melbourne OBA's newsletter. This is the first one published since we celebrated St Patrick's Day at St John's Heidelberg on March 20, 2010 and held our AGM.

The annual St Patrick's Day mass and AGM were very well attended and the members and their families enjoyed a string-hopper dinner with all dishes provided by Committee members. Thank you, Committee. Angelo's wife took the official photograph of the members who attended, which is published on our website (It is also included in this newsletter).

It is with sadness we heard of the death of Rev. Fr Mathuranyagam, who was the Rector of our College from 1966 to 1976. A Holy Mass for the repose of his soul will be offered on Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> September. More on this elsewhere in the newsletter.

Our present Rector, Rev. Fr. Jero Selvanayagam celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination to priesthood on 6 August 2010. The staff and students of the College marked the day with a mass at St Mary's Cathedral followed by reception at the Mathews Hall which was attended by the Bishop of Jaffna and many other dignitaries. The speakers paid tribute to Fr. Jero describing him as a dedicated, compassionate and courageous priest committed to the service of God and to the school. Fr Jero is now taking a well-earned break and has planned to visit the OBAs in the UK, Canada and Norway.

Our next function is the annual dinner - Patrician Nite scheduled for 18 September 2010. We hope to see all our Patricians and their families at this event. It has been a sell-out for the past 3 years and we hope it will be a successful event this year as well.

*James Joseph*

President

A Memorial Mass for our former Rector the Late Fr T A J Mathuranyagam will be offered at 3.00 pm on Sunday, 5th September 2010 at St. Scholastica's Church, 348 Burwood Highway, Burwood. All are welcome.

*May He Rest in Peace*

## SPC Jaffna OBA—Melbourne

Established : ..... 1992

Current Membership:..... 46

No. of Patricians in Vic : ..... 100 Approx

Annual Membership Fee: .... \$20.00

### Our Objectives:

- Socialise and share the Patrician spirit with benevolence
- Support our Alma Mater in meaningful ways

Website:

[www.spcaustralia.com](http://www.spcaustralia.com)

Email:

[secretary@spcaustralia.com](mailto:secretary@spcaustralia.com)

## Committee— 20010/11

President: James Joseph

Secretary: Philip Ravindraraj

Treasurer : William Nimalraj

Committee Members: Jeevaranjan Fernando

Angelo Fernando

Dr Anton Mariampillai

Chris Gunanayagam

Jeyandra Antonipillai

Dilip Manuelpillai

Valentine Manuelpillai

Vincent Pius

Canisius Gnanasooriar

Antony Gratian

# In Memoriam



## Rev. Fr. Alston Mathuranyagam

Former Rector of St Patrick's College Jaffna, Sri Lanka

06-04-1916 — 27-07-2010

Fr Mathuram, as he was affectionately known, began his priestly ministry as an assistant to the Nallur Swami Gnanapragasam. He has served the Diocese of Jaffna in many different capacities such as the Director of St Martin's Seminary, Manager of Catholic Schools, Vicar General and of course, as the Rector of St Patrick's College from 1966 to 1976. The following is an extract from the *Tribute delivered by the present Rector, Rev Fr Jero Selvanayagam at the funeral of Fr Mathuram*:

"I deem it a great honour and a privilege to render my Tribute to a great Patrician Stalwart and an Architect of Greater St. Patrick's, for more than a decade and also a Guru of mine at this moment of Final Farewell. I was fortunate to have been a student at St. Patrick's during the time of Fr. Mathuram. He was a stern disciplinarian and at the same time, a very down to earth person outside the school.

Being pioneers in establishing a well trained and well equipped Diocesan clergymen in the Diocese of Jaffna, Fr. Mathuram was the First Diocesan Priest to take over the reins of St. Patrick's from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who had been guiding its destiny over one hundred and ten years.

Creating a great legacy at St. Patrick's during his tenure of office as Rector from 1966 to 1976, he is ranked among the best of his illustrious predecessors. As the head of a private school of our stature and at a time of severe financial stress he had so long laboured to maintain the College in all its efficiency. This is a unique achievement of late Fr. Mathuranyagam during the most needy hour of the College.

He had a flair for thinking out an uncommon but effective approach to problems that made him a very successful administrator. He made St. Patrick's Day celebration more meaningful for the Patrician Family by introducing fellowship meal for the Staff, Students and Old Boys, and thereby fostered the patrician spirit. He founded the Social Service League and instilled social concern among the students. Through many pious associations and devotions, he enriched the Catholic atmosphere prevailing at the College.

He realized that mere intellectual ability wouldn't help our youth to find employment. Hence he opened the Long's Institute of Technology as another segment of Greater St. Patrick's. His initiative and farsightedness opened new avenues of employment for many young men. Thus he had been a very exemplary Diocesan Priest throughout his seventy years of Priesthood.

Even in retirement his enthusiasm for the welfare of the youth had not flagged. He continued to work at Long's Institute of Kilinochchi and Boys Town and rendered yeomen service for 34 long years.

We thank him for his steady stewardship at St. Patrick's at a time of crucial need and great concern. His commitment and preferential option to serve the poor and the needy is very evident from his simplicity and encouraging presence in the Vanni District during the most critical time of war. The Patrician Family pays its homage and expresses its gratitude to a great Stalwart and Architect in the 160 year long history of its Alma Mater.

Dear Father, We the members of the Patrician Family stand here, carrying the deep sentiments of gratitude of all those who had come under your loving care and guidance. We submit the prayers and petitions of all of them that the Lord of Eternal Bliss may welcome you in His Heavenly abode."

### **Paying respects and last rites**

On 29 July 2010, Patricians of the Colombo Alumni Association paid their last respects to Fr. Mathuranyagam during a half-hour Vigil Service held in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at the Archbishop's House, Borella. Holy Mass was said by the Bishop of Anuradhapura Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi assisted by Rev. Fr. Justin Gnanapragasam, Vicar General of Jaffna Diocese and Rev. Fr. Sahayam, the nephew of Fr. Mathuram.

On 30 July 2010, the remains of Fr. Mathuranyagam was taken to St Joseph's College, Anuradhapura, for homage by students and staff where he was the Rector in the early 1960's. The cortege later arrived at St Patrick's Jaffna where it was led by the College Band surrounded by Flag Bearers to the "Mathuram Square" for the staff, students and the people of the North to pay their last respects. Funeral orations for this illustrious Rector were delivered by the present Rector, Rev. Fr. Jero Selvanayagam, Mr. A.S. Augustine, the veteran retired teacher, and Mr. Arulanandam Jeyarajah, Vice President of the UK Alumni Association.

On 31 July 2010, the cortege wound its way to St. Mary's Cathedral for the final rites. The honour of carrying the casket was shared by priests and young students of SPC. The body lay inside St. Mary's Cathedral and the three Bishops, namely Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Savundaranayagam, Bishop of Jaffna, Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Rayappu, Bishop of Mannar and Rt. Dr. Norbert Andradi, Bishop of Anuradhapura administered the last rites – flanked by young Patricians holding the College Flags.

Fr Mathuram is buried in the St Mary's Cemetery adjoining St. Patrick's College, Jaffna.



**“எடுத்து வாசி, எடுத்து வாசி .....”**

Fr Mathuram used to say many short stories at his Assembly Talks in the then Upper School Hall. One of his stories that stuck in my mind from the late 60's is “எடுத்து வாசி, எடுத்து வாசி”.

His long life itself is a great story of inspiration, courage, conviction and self-respect. A great many of us, Patricians and others, owe our life to him. We stand to benefit by reading his life story from start to finish – a life dedicated to God and love of fellow human beings.

***Farewell to a great patriot of Eelam.***

Editor

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### St Patrick's College Jaffna OBA Melbourne - Annual Dinner — Saturday, 18 September 2010



#### Rector Celebrates Silver Jubilee of Priesthood

The Jaffna Catholics honoured two of their priests celebrating their Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee last week.

Rev Fr Jero Selvanayagam of Karampon, Kayts and Rev Fr J P Jesuthasan of Soorawatte, Illavalai reached the climax of priesthood and donned the mantle of educational excellence as Rector, St. Patrick's College, Jaffna and St Henry's College, Illavallai respectively.

The students, teachers, old boys and parents congregated at the college hall to participate in religious events to bless Father Jero. Rev Fr Jero had his secondary education at St Anthony's College Kayts and at St Patrick's College, Jaffna. After a brief pastoral experience he joined St Patrick's as Vice Principal.

*Daily News , 10 August 2010*

The staff and students of the College, the Bishop of Jaffna and many other dignitaries from other Colleges and the community attended the Holy Eucharist celebrated by Fr Jero at St Mary's Cathedral on Friday 6 August 2010 to celebrate his Silver Jubilee. Reception and lunch held afterwards.

*We join the thousands of Jaffna Catholics and Patricians all over the world in wishing Fr Jero God's choicest blessings .*

**"I will go Lord if you lead me. I shall keep your people in my heart"**

### Senior Patricians

are invited to **Share your Experience, Stories and Memories of the Good Old College.**

You have many fabulous stories of the 40s, 50s & 60s.  
Write to us or ring us.

**It could be a joke, an incident or a great achievement that can add flavour to our newsletter!**

Let us share the collective memory of the

**Glory of our Alma Mater**

## Notice Board

### Annual Dinner

As most of you are aware, 'Patrician Nite 2010' will be held on Saturday, 18 September, at St. Scholastica's Primary School Hall, 348 Burwood Highway, Burwood.

Tickets are being sold by committee members. Anyone who needs extra tickets for friends and family members please contact committee members or email [secretary@spcaustralia.com](mailto:secretary@spcaustralia.com)

This year the Patrician Nite will have a bollywood flavour, with wine and soft drinks for each table. Catering by Gold An Fork (Reddy's Kitchen) and DJ music throughout the night.

The program will start at 7.00 pm. Please BYO, enjoy the food, make new friends and have a great night.

### Excerpts from the Rector's email....

**"I really admire the Patrician spirit and your tremendous effort that make you gather even though you live in a far distant country with so many needs and worries.**

**You know that the purpose of an Alumni Association is first of all to continue to foster the values and friendship that was natured at school and secondly, to be able to assist the school as a token of love and gratitude.**

**I greatly appreciate the spirit with which you commit yourselves to the Association and to the College."**

**Fr. Jero**



Patricians who attended the St Patrick's Day Mass and AGM 2010

❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

### Annual subscription

**Have you renewed your membership?**

**If not, please contact our Treasurer William Nimalraj on 9436 4124 and help us help our Alma Mater.**

**You can also pay your subscription by direct crediting our OBA account number: 063000 11520575 with CBA.**