

THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR REV. A.J. FOSTER AND PAST HEADMASTERS

Flyer Sent By Hon. Secretary STCG OBA

S.THOMAS' COLLEGE GURUTALAWA



DIAMOND JUBILEE 2002

A short service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving will be held for the past Heads of the School, now deceased, on Tuesday the 3rd December in the Anglican Chapel of the General Cemetery Colombo at 5.30 p.m.

The Service will be conducted by Rt.Rev Duleep de Chickera Bishop of Colombo and Chairman of the Board of Governors assisted by Rev Nihal Fernando, Chaplain S.Thomas' College Gurutalawa.

At the conclusion of the service prayers will be offered at the grave site of Rev Canon. A J Foster of blessed memory, the first Chaplain of S.Thomas' College at Gurutalawa.

Your committee has thought it fit and proper to hold this service as an important part of the events to mark the Diamond Jubilee year of the College. Please try and be present.

Yours sincerely,

Shervon Fernando
Hony. Secretary

HYMN SHEETS

S.THOMAS' COLLEGE at GURUTALAWA

DIAMOND JUBILEE 2002

A Service of

COMMEMORATION and THANKS GIVING

For

All Headmasters of S. Thomas' College

At Gurutalawa

(Deceased during the period May 1942 - December 2002)

at

The Anglican Chapel, General Cemetery Kanatte, Borella

Held on

December 03, 2002 at 5.30 p.m

Officiated by

Rt. Rev Duleep de Chickera,
Bishop of Colombo

Assisted by

Rev Nihal Fernando Chaplain S. Thomas' College at Gurutalawa

Esto Perpetua

OPENING AFFIRMATION

I am the resurrection and the life, said the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die

I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Lord, by your death you help us to die to sin and to
Live in holiness. Lord have mercy.
Lord, by your resurrection you opened for us the gate to eternal
Life. Lord have mercy.
Lord, now seated in glory at the right hand of the Father, you
intercede for us who aspire to thy presence now and in the here after
Lord have mercy.

PRAYER

Almighty God, who holdest in thy hand the souls of the righteous; we give thee thanksgiving and praise for all the generations of the faithful who have served Thee in godliness and love, and who dwell in Thy nearer presence. We bless thee for all who have enriched the world with truth and beauty, who have laboured in the service of their fellows who have done great things for Thee and for Thy Church, and who have handed on to us our great heritage. We bless Thee for all who are near and dear to us, for those who have helped and defended, taught and loved, served and cherished us; grant that all the good we have seen and known in them may continue to inspire and guide us, that we may hallow their memory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

O Lord before whom generations rise and pass away, we bless and praise Thee for Thy servants who have left us after a life lived in faith hope and love. We give Thee thanks for our Headmasters whom thou has called to Thyself and for all Thy gifts mediated to us through their lives, and for their devotion to the School they served.

Thou knowest how much our lives have been filled by their example, and help us at this time to persevere in the way before us so that we may prove worthy of their service by our loyalty and dedication to the ideals they held before us.

All this we ask in the name of Him who taught us to pray

OUR FATHER

Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And do not put us to the test. But deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory for ever and ever . Amen.

THE READING

Romans 12.6-10 and 16-20 (N.E.B)

The gift we possess differ as they are allotted to us by God's grace, and must be exercised accordingly, the gift of inspired utterance, for example, in proportion to a man's faith, or the gift of administration, in administration. A teacher should employ his gifts in teaching and one who has the gift of stirring speech should use it to stir his hearers. If you give to charity give with all your heart; if you are a leader exert yourself to lead, if you are helping others in distress, do it cheerfully. Love in all sincerity, loathing evil and clinging to the good. Let love for our brotherhood breed warmth of mutual affection. Give pride of place to one another in esteem. Care as much about each other as about yourselves.

Do not be haughty; but go about with humble folk.

Do not keep thinking how wise you are.

Never pay back evil for good. Let your aims be such as all men count honourable.

If possible, as far as it lies with you, live at peace with all men.

My dear friends do not seek revenge, but leave a place for divine retribution;....

Do not let evil conquer you, but use good to defeat evil.

HYMN

Immortal, invisible, God only wise.

W. Chalmers Smith, 1824- 1908

1. IMMORTAL, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

2. Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love

3. To all life thou givest - to both great and small;
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish - but nought changeth thee.

4. Great Father of Glory, pure Father of Light
Thine Angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render: O help us to see
'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.

The Gospel Reading

By the Chaplain

St. John 14.1-6

ADDRESS

By an Old boy

PSALM 102

In antiphon

Priest: The Lord is compassion and love
Slow to anger and rich in mercy;

People: He does not deal with us according to our sins
Nor repay us according to our faults.

Priest: For as the heavens are high above the earth
So strong is his love for those who revere him:

People: As far as the East is from the West
So far does he remove our sins from us.

Priest: As a father has compassion on his children
The Lord has pity on those who seek his mercy:

People: For he knows of what we are made
He remembers that we are dust.

People: The love of the Lord is everlasting
For those who revere him;

People: His justice reaches out to generations
When they keep his covenant in faith.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning and is now and for evermore. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS

As God is the author and sustainer of all life let us pray to him
For all past Headmasters, Chaplains and Teachers who have departed this life.
Very especially today we remember our Headmasters
Dr.R.L. Hayman, Rev. Canon, R.S. De Saram, C.H. Davidson, Rev.Canon A.J. Foster
E.L.Perera, M.L.C.Illangakoon, Patrick Gunewardena and Bala Gunasegaram.

Lord hear our Prayer

That in his boundless mercy the Lord may forgive their sins

Lord hear our Prayer

That in his great love he will draw them to his Kingdom

Lord hear our prayer

That their memory will remain with us in gratitude

Lord hear our prayer.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of all the faithful are in joy and felicity, We praise and magnify Thy holy name for all the servants who have finished their course and kept the faith, remembering especially at this time the Headmasters of our college. We uphold them to thy gracious mercy and love so that they will have their true consummation in Thy eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty God our heavenly father who has committed to Thy church the care and nurture of children. Prosper with Thy blessing those who learn. We pray Thee today for our incumbant Headmaster, the teachers under his direction and the students in their charge. We thank Thee for all teachers who teach with their lives as well as with their lips. Stir up our nation that she may awaken to the importance of her children and show us that all our dreams of the future will be brought to naught if their highest welfare is forgotten and that in their hearts lie the hopes of the future, This we ask in the name of Thy son who gathered them in his arms and blessed them as a paradigm of the kingdom of Heaven.

Amen

THE BLESSING

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Blest are the pure in heart

Blest are the pure in heart,
For they shall see our God,
The Secret of lord is theirs,
Their soul is Christ's abode.

The Lord, who left the heavens
Our life and peace to bring,
To dwell in lowliness with men,
Their Pattern and their King:

Still to the lowly soul
He doth himself impart,
And for his dwelling and his throne
Chooseth the pure in heart.

Lord, we thy presence seek;
May ours this blessing be;
Give us a pure and lowly heart,
A temple meet for thee.

S.T.C. GURUTALAWA DIAMOND JUBILEE

Address delivered by Mr. P.S. Duleepkumar at the Service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration held on Dec, 3rd 2002

My Lord Bishop, Chaplain of S. Thomas' College, Friends.

It is appropriate that in our celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee of the College that we should set a little time apart to focus our minds in remembrance and thanksgiving on the past Headmasters of the College who governed its destiny and influenced our lives.

Inevitably our thoughts turn to Dr. R.L. Hayman and Rev. A.J. Foster who pioneered the school. But first let us remember Mr. Leslie de Saram for his gift of the beautiful 36 acres Farm without which this College would never have been. It was the collective wisdom of that time that such an act of munificence was in reciprocation for all that he had observed Dr. Hayman giving freely out of his own pocket to the development of the school at Mt. Lavinia. Be that as it may, we remember him with gratitude for the gift given.

The truth of Ralph Waldo Emerson's aphorism - that properly there is no history only biography is borne out most forcefully in the life of S. Thomas' College Gurutalawa and lives of its Headmasters.

In the Commemorative Plaque to the Dr. R.L. Hayman Science Laboratory, there is this inscription -

"To spend and be spent in the service of others was his greatest privilege" and these words have been taken from a letter written by Bishop Chapman to his brother-in-law just before he set sail for Ceylon as it was then known to become the first Bishop of Colombo and to found S. Thomas' College at Mutuwal. There are many parallels between Bishop Chapman and Dr. Hayman but this is not an occasion to follow that trail.

Dr. Hayman became a legend in his life time. Tomes have been written about him none of which he read. He knew the penchant to over praise and the danger of crossing the line to flattery which he abhorred. Prof. C.C. de Silva said it all " No single man has done so much or given more generously both materially and intellectually to S. Thomas' College or any school, for that matter, in the history of Ceylon. I think I can pronounce that as an indisputable, incontrovertible statement of fact.

When Dr. Hayman left in 1963 Canon Foster took over from him. But before that there were two Wardens who were Heads of the school. Firstly the great Canon De Saram, a benign autocrat with a cherubic smile which emanated from time to time from the rich strands of humanism which lay like some hidden treasure beneath his stern exterior. It was Warden De Saram at a critical time of the College's history who ensured that it continued as a Private School and maintained its identity within the structure of a national system of education.

There was also Warden Davidson a revered teacher at Mt. Lavinia and also a classics Scholar who came as Headmaster to Gurutalawa to enable both Dr. Hayman and Canon Foster to go on a much delayed furlough at the end of the War after the sea lanes had been cleared of mines. They returned to Mt. Lavinia to assist Warden De Saram in re-establishing the school. A feature of Warden Davidson's temperament was, being a Senior Cadet Master, he did not like to see boys slouching along in a slip shod manner - " pull yourself together man" he would say " put your

shoulders back and keep your head high". As a Headmaster he ruled by a simple dictum rendered in Latin - Habeo in loco parentis - I stand in place of your parents.

Rev. Bowyer Yin who came as Chaplain to Mt. Lavinia in 1947 has written of Rev. Foster "that he was and is a saint". One notes the present tense. Rev. Foster loves gardening and the garden was his metaphor for life - we were the plants he nurtured clipping off the dead leaves of a misdemeanor and uprooting the evil weeds that choked our moral and spiritual growth. One facet of his saintliness was that he saw a redeeming feature in every boy however reprobate or wayward he was and spoke up for him sometimes against heavy odds at staff meetings. But Headmastering was not Rev. Foster's line of country. It subjected him to great stress and he succumbed to a heart condition while yet in office.

There was an interregnum which was filled by two stalwart members of the staff A.K. Chapman and Lucien Amarasinghe both disciplinarians who as teachers had provided the steel infrastructure to the Gurutalawa edifice. Also when Mr. Chapman fell ill Mr. Kingsley Dissanayake, Principal of the Deaf and Blind School filled the breach. His ebullient personality helped restore confidence in the uncertainty that prevailed about the school's future. Later another stalwart Asst. Master J.de S. Jayasinghe acted as its Head. He was a Dr. Hayman loyalist to the core and his love and dedication for the school was second to none.

Then there was Mr. E.L. Perera a great teacher from Mt. Lavinia days. He specialized in Mathematics and came back fortuitously as Headmaster as the new Maths was introduced in the school curriculum. His stewardship bore the mark of gentle persuasion and he introduced for all boys a period of reading and meditation of sacred texts as a daily routine. This reflected his own personality, equanimity and a tranquil presence.

He was succeeded by Mr. Lyn Illangakoon an Old Boy and one time teacher at Mt. Lavinia . He was one of two masters who helped Dr. Hayman to dismantle, inventorise and pack all the instruments of the science laboratory within the three days notice given them by the British military. Mr. Illangakoon was a very private person and was somewhat distant. He upgraded agricultural teaching and practice in Gurutalawa and loved the school agonizing over the decision he had to make, and go to Mt. Lavinia as the Warden. It was significantly at the instance of Dr. Hayman that agriculture was included as a subject for the S.S.C. examination. With his departure to Mt. Lavinia, Mr. Patrick Gunawardene, Sub Warden was switched to be the Headmaster at Gurutalawa. An Old Boy, he had been a teacher all his life and an educationist who brought with him a host of fresh ideas but most importantly he emphasized the teaching of English and adopted a multi pronged strategy applying the language in a culture of lived experience through its use in the day to day life in the school.

Finally, there is Mr. Bala Gunasekaram. A man of deep faith, he brought to the Headmastership a missionary zeal, intent on restoring discipline and re-orienting a College in decline. His two years in office 1988 and 1989 were marked by a dangerous social unrest and uncertainty; but we knew he was equal to any challenge and our expectations soared. His violent death was a brutal shock, and smashed our hopes to smithereens. How could this be ? One's faith was shaken.

History has many cunning passages wrote T.S. Elliot - there are events difficult to understand. But he also wrote - For us the trying, the rest is not our business; In a cemetery in Montreaux in Switzerland there is a grave for a small girl of twelve, with a headstone inscribed with one word in French, " Pourquoi", why? It is in the book of Job in the Bible that one is confronted with the awesome majesty of THE Fundamental question - a question which itself is the answer to all questions. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the World ? " Gurutalawa survives.

What have we gleaned from this survey in cameo of the Headmasters we have come to remember and give thanks for ? To live unselfish lives, share and give generously: To be firm and

yet have a heart: To carry ourselves with dignity and confidence: To be kind and to see the good in others: To set apart a little time each day for serious contemplation: To enjoy our environment, to nurture, protect, and improve it: To be open to the good influence of other cultures: To have the courage of our convictions and stand up and be counted.

In one of his four visits to Sri Lanka after his retirement, Dr. Hayman confided in a moment of introspection. "All in all, I have been a failure". We all know that the truth is exactly the opposite. But he was using a particular yardstick. He explained that not half enough Thomians had taken to the teaching profession. In a way he was anticipating the present problems of the Diocese in manning its schools, with the leadership required. Perhaps also there is a hidden irony in his confession which bears out a great pedagogic principle that a good teacher defends his pupils against his own personal influence.

But there was a notable exception. Mr. A.C.M. Laffir, who joined the staff of Gurutalawa soon after he left College and remained on the staff till his retirement. For us Old Boys he proved to be a resilient thread which kept the crumbling fabric of the school's traditions from complete disintegration. Also, so long as he was there, he was a common bond between Old Boys of successive generations and a catalyst of their own bonding, specially noticeable during the Reunion day celebrations.

One final thought. Let us thank God for the men and women who join the Teaching profession. Whoever they are and whatever they may be, let us be thankful for the teachers of S. Thomas' College Gurutalawa. Let us value them for what we are not, with our good incomes and comfortable living. Let us resolve then to give our best to them so that they could give of their best to the school and for the boys they teach.

And so let us hold up our collective thoughts and Prayers for Gracious acceptance within the Divine dispensation which determines all things and shapes all ends. Amen.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR PAST HEADMASTERS AND FR. A.J. FOSTER.

Memorial Service for Fr Foster.

The grave of Fr. Foster has been located by Mr.P.S Duleep Kumar who has already got the site cleared. A Memorial Service for Fr. Foster is being arranged for December 09, 2002. Details will be announced later.

OBA Newsletter No.2
July 17,2002

The above service was held in the Anglican Chapel at the General Cemetery Kanatte on December 03, 2002. It was officiated by His Lordship the Bishop of Colombo Rev. Duleep de Chickera, who is also the Chairman of the Board of Governors of S. Thomas' College. The Headmaster and the Chaplain of S. Thomas' College Gurutalawa Rev. Nihal Fernando were present. Flyers had been sent by the OBA to the Membership. There were about 40 Old Boys present on this occasion. Mr. N.D.U. Kurutumpala gave the reading and Mr. P.S. Duleepkumar made a short address with regard to the Headmasters who are no more and also of Fr. Foster. At the conclusion of the service the congregation moved to the grave site of Fr. Foster where further prayers were offered. It was considered appropriate that in this Diamond Jubilee Year a service of this nature should be conducted.

Petals of Flowers brought down specially from Gurutalawa by the Headmaster and the Chaplain, were strewn on the grave by some of the Old Boys present.

Though it was intended that this service be held on 9th December, the date of Canon Foster's death, it was brought forward to the 3rd to enable the Bishop to officiate at the Service.

It will be recalled that Canon Foster died in 1964

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