

Celebrating Christmas Traditions through Ethiopian Iconography

With its rich tradition of Byzantine and Coptic Christianity and ancient religious shrines, Ethiopia has an impressive array of religious art, extending over many centuries. Most notable are its richly coloured icons, which sometimes cover entire walls of historic churches and religious chapels. Churches also display single icons on canvas or goat skin hung on frames, as well as diptychs and triptychs painted on wood, which are set above altars or posted on walls.

Shrines in private homes will be set up with a variety of religious art, such as carved wooden crosses, small icons on wood or metal, perhaps even hand-illuminated pages. Favorite subjects are Jesus and Mary, angels, apostles, scenes from the New and Old Testaments, and various saints, notably St. Michael and St. George.

For this Christmas issue of the Newsletter, we are proud to display a large Madonna and Child icon painted by Mr. Natnael Samson Antonio, a Jesuit from Ethiopia preparing for the priesthood. He spent two years of his Jesuit training teaching at Loyola High School in Dar es Salaam, where two large icons of his are hung on the walls of the school chapel. Below the picture is the inscription “Behold the Handmaid of the Lord” in Amharic, Kiswahili and English.



celebrate each day in the Mass. Finally, Christ returns to draw us into an abiding union with him, lived in a spirit of intimate, mutual love. As Christ has shared himself totally with us, we are led to give him everything we have, everything we are, in a supreme bond of love.

For those acquainted with Ignatian spirituality, the Sacred Heart devotion can be seen as a natural outgrowth of the intimacy inspired by the Spiritual Exercises. In the midst of a life of intense service to the people of God, our devotion to the Heart of Christ reawakens the deep, personal inspiration gained from our attachment to Christ our beloved Leader. As Father Fleming says, the Sacred Heart devotion may be seen as a particular distillation of the intimacy with Jesus that permeates the Exercises. Even a spirit of reparation should not merely look back to our offenses, but should open our eyes to the ministry today of reconciling people with a wounded Church to instill a deeper attachment to Christ our Savior.

These reflections are inspired by the article “The Exercises, Jesuits, and the Heart of Christ” by Fr. David Fleming, S.J. in *Ignis*, No. 2004:4, Gujarat, India.

Why the Sacred Heart devotion is integral to Ignatian spirituality

Ignatius focuses his Spiritual Exercises on the movement of the heart. In the Second Week of the Exercises (in the full 30-day retreat), we ask for the grace of intimacy with Jesus, a response of the whole person, a response of the heart. We seek a deepening relationship with Jesus. After an honest appraisal of our relationship with God in the First Week, we hear the call of Christ to work in close union as his companions. We move to gratitude for the Eucharist, an extraordinary token of Christ’s love and his total sacrifice on Calvary, which we

Morning Offering

God our Father, I offer you my entire day — my thoughts, words, prayers, actions, joys and sufferings — in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as he offers himself in the Eucharist for the salvation of the world.

May the Holy Spirit, who guided Jesus, be my guide and my strength today so that I may witness to your love.

Together with Mary, the mother of Jesus, I pray with all the members of the Apostleship of Prayer for this month's special intentions as proposed by the Holy Father.

Join 40 million others in this worldwide union of persons praying for the intentions of the Pope

Apostleship of Prayer Pope Francis' Intentions for 2015

January

That people of diverse religions and all people of good will may work together for peace.
That religious men and women may rediscover the joy of following Christ and serving the poor.

February

That prisoners, especially the young, may be able to rebuild lives of dignity.
That married, but separated, people may be welcomed and supported in the Xtian community

March

That scientific researchers may serve the well-being of the whole human person
That women's unique contribution to the life of the Church always be recognized

April

That people may learn to respect creation and care for it as a gift of God.
May persecuted Christians feel the consolation of the Risen Lord and the Church's solidarity

May

That we be not indifferent to, but may care for the suffering, especially the sick and the poor
That Mary's intercession may help Christians in secularized cultures to proclaim Jesus

The Morning Offering—in this form or another like it, is at the heart of the Apostleship of Prayer
We dedicate our entire day to God through the Sacred Heart of Christ.
We join others like ourselves throughout the world in offering ourselves and everything we do to the glory of God for the intentions of our Holy Father the Pope.
Each month the Pope asks our prayers, especially for a general intention and for a mission intention.
These intentions for 2015 are listed in brief form in the columns below.

Apostleship of Prayer – P.O. Box 1140 – Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

June

That immigrants and refugees may find welcome and respect in their new countries
That personal encounter with Jesus may draw many young to the priesthood or religious life

July

That political responsibility may be exercised at all levels as a high form of charity
That Latin American Christians may bear witness to loving the poor and contribute to brotherhood

August

That volunteers may generously serve the needy
That setting aside ourselves, we may be neighbors to those on the margins of human life and society

September

That the young find more education & employment
That catechists may give witness by a life consistent with the faith they proclaim

October

That human trafficking, the modern form of slavery, may be eradicated.
That Christian communities in Asia may announce the Gospel to those still waiting to hear it

November

To be open to encounter and dialogue with all, even those whose convictions differ from ours
That pastors may lovingly accompany their flock and enliven their hope.

December

That all may experience God's never-tiring mercy
That families, especially the suffering, may find in the birth of Jesus a sure sign of hope.

Canadian Sacred Heart Messenger ends publication after 124 years

The *Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart* closed down in August 2014 after publishing since 1891. The editors had hoped to keep this genial journal going in digital form, but the decision was made to stop with volume 124, no. 8 (August 2014) because it was too expensive to continue in view of the diminishing number of subscribers. The U.S. Messenger of the Sacred Heart had reached the same decision already in 1968.

And so a well respected Jesuit landmark of the English Canadian Jesuit Province, to the regret of its followers, went the way of many newspapers and magazines, large and small, in North America and elsewhere. With people turning to attractive news sources on the internet, it wasn't cost-effective for these organs to continue publishing. Some newspapers simply went out of existence, usually because many advertisers had gone electronic; others, like the *Washington Post* were bought out, in that case by the owners of Amazon.

In 1966, Fr. Frederick Power, SJ was made editor of the *Messenger*. He was 42 years old, and 46 years later, in 2010, he brought out the 500th edition of this venerable magazine. Without any advertising, the Messenger depended on subscribers and on donations secured by Fr. Power. It just wasn't enough.

The *Messenger* was a substantial magazine in its printed editions, and even 24 pages in the electronic issues. The quality and relevance of the Messenger was beyond question. As former Canadian Bishop Thomas Fulton said on the centenary of the journal in 1990, "The *Messenger* speaks to people in a language they can understand about matters that are relevant to their lives against a background of faith and devotion. It is a remarkable instrument of evangelization and social communication."

The Messenger will continue for a time publishing from a backlog of articles over its website www.sacredheartcanada.ca.

The Irish Sacred Heart Messenger continues its impressive history

The Irish *Sacred Heart Messenger* (www.messenger.ie), which has been in publication since 1888, has had a roster of subscribers exceeding 200,000. It is recognized as the official publication of the Apostleship of Prayer in Ireland. A handsome and colourful 13.5x19 cm (5.5x7.5") 56-page booklet, it always carries an opening article on the spirituality of the Apostleship of Prayer. It features articles on the Pope's monthly intentions, the Scriptures, on Catholic life and Catholic lay persons whose lives offer an inspiring example. It carries reviews of films, books, and art exhibitions, and has articles on marriage and the family and areas such as gardening and cooking. It carries a set of pages for young readers and makes an effort to inspire young men and women to serve others in the spirit of Christ. (cover picture over)

Overview

In 1969, there were 48 Messengers of the Sacred Heart published in 30 different languages. Among other places, they were published in Austria (in German), Belgium (in Flemish), England, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Argentina, Brazil, Canada (French, English), Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru, United States (Hungarian, Polish, Ukrainian), Venezuela, Ceylon (English, Singalese), India (English, Hindi, Gujarati, Kanarda, Konkani, Telegu, Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam and Marathi), Indonesia, Japan, Madagascar, Uganda, Zambia, and Australia. At the present date, the only country where the Messenger of the Sacred Heart is published appears to be Ireland.

This newsletter is produced at Loyola High School, P.O. Box 1140, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania by Fr. Ted Walters, S.J. Editorial contributions to the newsletter are warmly welcomed. Please send us the names and email addresses of additional persons who would like to receive issues of the newsletter. (To send such names or for items to contribute, you may email: [<twalters2002@yahoo.co.uk>](mailto:twalters2002@yahoo.co.uk)) Thank you.

4th Pan-African Meeting of the AP and EYM Held in Cameroon mid-April 2014

National Secretaries of the Apostleship of Prayer (AP) and Directors of the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM) held their fourth Pan-African meeting in Douala, Cameroon from 7-15 April, 2014. Delegates came from 14 African countries: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa and Togo, as well as leaders from Rome.

Previous Pan-African meetings had been held in Lagos in 2002, Dar es Salaam in 2009, and Kinshasa (DRC) in 2011. This meeting featured updating on the *Re-creation of the Apostleship of Prayer*, a process of inner renewal of this service to the Church, which started in France in the year 1844. Fr. Claude Barriga had led an international committee in Rome the past four years in preparing challenging documents and giving a new dynamic to the Apostleship of Prayer, which has served the Church since 1844 and has some 40 million members throughout the world.

Fr. Barriga retired in 2014 as international director of the AP and turned the leadership of the AP and the EYM over to Father Frederic Fornos, SJ, who will continue to guide national directors of the AP throughout the world in implementing the new AP statutes once they have been approved by the Holy See. The Apostleship of Prayer has always been regarded as a strong support of Catholics worldwide for those spiritual and missionary intentions especially dear to the Holy Father each year. (This Newsletter publishes the Pope's intentions for the coming 12 months in each December issue.)

The Douala meeting also highlighted the impressive growth of the Eucharistic Youth Movement, which is particularly dedicated to youth up to about 25 years of age and shares the same spirituality and practices as the Apostleship of Prayer. The EYM will celebrate its first centenary in Rome 4-10 August, 2015 on the theme "So that my joy may be in you" (John 15:11). The Eucharistic Youth Movement inspires in young persons a solid dedication to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and a special regard for the

concerns of the Sacred Heart. It is a valuable cohort of the Apostleship of Prayer, where young men and women continue to grow in the spirituality of the Sacred Heart.

Apostleship of Prayer Publications Showing a Different Face Today

We note that, as publications in print are phased out, other media are being used to convey the message of the Apostleship of Prayer. One remarkable example is the monthly 8-panel internet presentation of the Mensajero del Corazon de Jesus, a product of the Apostolado de la Oracion-Mexico (apormexico@prodigy.net). Striking colour images and bold print are used to present the monthly intentions of the Apostleship of Prayer, the Morning Offering, information about the Apostolado, and prayerful dedication to Our Lady of Guadalupe. This handsome ensemble offers a very attractive introduction to the message of the Apostleship of Prayer.

The Gebetsapostolat in Vienna presents two handsome colour folders with essays on the monthly intentions and a list of the intentions for the year, as well as the morning offering and other prayers. There undoubtedly are other new approaches throughout the AP world that could be cited. Of course, our own quarterly *Sacred Heart Newsletter* is a publication of this kind.

