

# one

may 2006

god • world • human family • church

**ethiopians  
honor mary**





# **Ethiopia's Catholic Schools Need You**

Ethiopia's children are hungry:  
hungry for knowledge

**They need your help**

Your gift can buy the  
books and materials teachers  
need to give their students  
a basic education

**Send your gift today**

In Canada, call  
1-866-322-4441

or email

[cnewa-canada@cnewa.org](mailto:cnewa-canada@cnewa.org)

In the United States, call  
1-800-442-6392

or email

[cnewa@cnewa.org](mailto:cnewa@cnewa.org)



18 Holding on in Hungary

## Cover Story

### 30 Ethiopia Celebrates Mary

*A photo essay focuses on Ethiopians' annual pilgrimage to Aksum by Sean Sprague with text by Michael J.L. La Civita*

## Features

### 6 Through Settlers' Eyes

*For many, it is all about affordable housing — not religious zeal by Michele Chabin with photographs by Kevin Unger*

### 18 Holding on in Hungary

*Greek Catholics preserve their traditions in the modern world by Jacqueline Ruyak with photographs by Balazs Gardi*

### 26 Prison Ministry in Kerala

*Ex-convicts get their lives back on track in India story and photographs by Sean Sprague*

## Departments

### 4 news

*from the world of CNEWA*

### 12 profiles

*The Romanian Church United With Rome by Michael J.L. La Civita*

### 38 perspectives

*Classifying Catholics by Robert L. Stern*

**Above:** Greek Catholic women say a prayer in the Hungarian village of Nyirascád.

**Front:** Ethiopian Orthodox deacons celebrate the feast of Mary of Zion in Aksum.

**Back:** The Konyáris shovel snow in their backyard in Nyirascád.

#### Photo Credits

Cover, pages 5, 26-28, 30-37, Sean Sprague; page 2, Gabriele Dalmonaco; pages 3, 18-25, back cover, Balazs Gardi; page 4, Miriam Sushman; pages 6-11, Kevin Unger; pages 13, 15, Alfred/Sipa; page 16, George Martin; page 39, Corbis.

**ONE** is published bimonthly. ISSN: 1552-2016

#### Editorial Board

Msgr. Archimandrite Robert L. Stern, J.C.D.  
Chorbishop John D. Faris, J.C.O.D.  
Brother David Carroll, F.S.C., Ph.D.  
Sister Christian Molitor, R.S.M., M.A., M.S.

#### Editorial Staff

Michael J.L. La Civita, Executive Editor  
Paul Wachter, Assistant Editor  
Daria Erdosy, Graphic Designer  
Cody Christopoulos, Photograph Editor  
Dorothy Humanitzki, Copy Editor

**CNEWA** is an agency of the Holy See, established by Pope Pius XI in 1926, to support the Catholic churches of the East, to provide humanitarian aid to the needy without regard to nationality or religion and to promote the union of the Catholic and Orthodox churches. CNEWA serves the churches and peoples of the Middle East, Northeast Africa, India and Eastern Europe.

#### Officers

Cardinal Edward Egan,  
Chairman and President-Treasurer  
Cardinal William Keeler,  
Vice President  
Msgr. Archimandrite Robert L. Stern,  
Secretary General  
Chorbishop John D. Faris  
Associate Secretary General

#### Editorial Office

1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022  
1-212-826-1480 • www.cnewa.org

©2006 Catholic Near East Welfare Association.  
All rights reserved. Member of the Catholic Press  
Association of the United States and Canada.



*Amman's Italian Hospital cares primarily for the city's poor, including a large number of Iraqi refugees.*

## **Canadian Fund Aids Refugees**

Georges Azzaria established the Good Samaritan Relief Fund in Canada in 1974, primarily to assist Palestinian refugees in Jordan, many of whom were seeking health care at CNEWA's Mother of Mercy mother and child clinic in Zerqa and the Italian Hospital in Amman. Since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the fund is now helping Iraqi refugees in Jordan.

Louis Azzaria of Ste.-Julienne, Québec, secretary-treasurer of the fund, said the change honors the memory of his father, Georges, who died in 1984.

The elder Azzaria was born in Tall Kayf in northern Iraq and moved his family to Canada in 1949. Louis Azzaria said his father, a successful importer-exporter, never forgot his roots and always wanted

“to share the fruits of his labor with the less fortunate.”

Therese Azzaria of Montréal agreed. “The fund is our father's legacy and that it's now helping Iraqis is doubly meaningful.”

## **Global Solidarity**

The flight of Christians from the Holy Land and the difficulties faced by those who remain were issues addressed by De La Salle Christian Brother David Carroll, CNEWA's Under Secretary General, at a Lenten lecture series sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland.

The collapse of tourism has been particularly hard on the Christian minority, many of whom rely on pilgrims and tourists for their livelihood. CNEWA has

responded, Brother David said, with community work programs that employ heads of families while beefing up community infrastructure.

Brother David was among several experts on the Middle East who spoke on "The Church: A Sign of Hope in the Holy Land," a program of the Cleveland Diocesan Council of Global Solidarity. Some 5,000 persons attended sessions at 25 venues in late March through early April.

### **New Patriarch in Egypt**

The Coptic Catholic synod of bishops has elected the retired bishop of Minya, Antonios Naguib, Patriarch of Alexandria of the Copts. The synod, which met in Cairo in late March, also accepted the resignation of 86-year-old Patriarch Stephanos II, a good friend of CNEWA, who led the church since his election in 1986.

The new patriarch was born in Samalout, Egypt, in 1935, ordained a priest in 1960 and consecrated a bishop in 1977.

As is customary for the Eastern churches in full communion with Rome, newly elected patriarchs seek ecclesial communion with the bishop of Rome. In an exchange of letters published in early April, Benedict XVI approved the election and offered prayers that Patriarch Antonios would "guide the Coptic Catholic Church with wisdom and prudence."

Some 250,000 Coptic Catholics live in Egypt with a growing number immigrating to Europe, North America and Oceania.

### **State Accredits Theology Faculty**

Ukraine's Ministry of Education has granted academic recognition to the theology department of Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv.

Speaking at a news conference following the announcement in early March, Father Borys Gudziak, rector, urged theological schools of various denominations in Ukraine to seek government approval of their programs. Father Gudziak, New York-born and Harvard educated, singled out Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko for supporting the university's efforts to



*Ukrainian Catholic University theology students wrap up a group project.*

enhance its theology program and thanked the many people and institutions, including CNEWA, for their encouragement.

Nearly 1,000 full- and part-time students attend the university.

### **Church and State**

While separation of church and state is a given in the United States, "according to Islam, there can be no distinction between religion and the state," Chorbishop John D. Faris, CNEWA's Associate Secretary General, told a gathering of Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre in Brooklyn, New York.

While "religious affiliation does not figure in our thinking ... in the Middle East religious affiliation is everything," he said.

"But let us look at it a little more closely: If a person holds religious beliefs as being absolutely true, how may one act otherwise in civil society?" he asked. "To assert that my religious beliefs are one thing and that my political positions are distinct — and perhaps contradictory — is schizophrenic."

To read Chorbishop Faris's speech in its entirety, visit the following page on our web site: <http://www.cnewa.org/bulletin-bodypg-us.aspx?bulletinID=770>.

# THROUGH SETTLERS' EYES

by Michele Chabin  
photographs by Kevin Unger

**T**wo years ago, Gedalia and Yocheved Meyer decided to move. With their seven children, they were living in Telshe Stone, a fervently Orthodox Jewish community a few miles west of Jerusalem. They loved how the neighborhood celebrated the Sabbath and the support its tight-knit residents gave to new mothers and others

in need. But the community was a bit too religious for their liking. Everyone dressed and spoke alike, they complained. And the community was too involved in what was taught — and what was not taught — in the local schools.

“We were seeking a place with more open social attitudes,” said Mr. Meyer, an Orthodox rabbi who is writing a series of books on spirituality. “At the same time, we wanted a place where we could be religious.”

The Meyers were drawn to Jerusalem’s aura of holiness and ethereal beauty. But houses were exorbitantly expensive, both in the city itself and the suburbs that extended westward toward Tel Aviv. In the end, the couple decided to make what they called “a leap of faith,” given the political uncertainty that hovers over the region. Rather than stay inside the Green Line, the internationally recognized borders of Israel prior to the 1967 war, they moved to the West Bank, to Ma’ale Adumim, a settlement about five miles east of Jerusalem’s municipal border.

“Affordability was definitely an important factor,” said Rabbi Meyer as he gave a tour of his spacious but modestly furnished



2,750-square-foot home. His front yard boasts a fish pond, while a rear terrace provides a sweeping view of the reddish brown Judean hills that give Ma'ale Adumim ("reddish hues") its name.

"We were also drawn to the mixed religious and ethnic community where everybody gets along," added Mrs. Meyer, a technical writer.

"Being in Judea and Samaria is a fringe benefit," Rabbi Meyer continued, using the biblical terms for the area more commonly known as the West Bank. "Look, I'm not a political extremist, but I believe Jews should be able to live anywhere in the world, including all of the land of Israel."

"What we were really looking for was quality of life," Mrs. Meyer said. "We're very happy here."

**O**n a clear day in Ma'ale Adumim you can see the mountains beyond the Jordan River. The settlement lies along the ancient route from Jerusalem to the Jordan Valley, and the ground on which it is built is mentioned in the Book of Joshua as belonging to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, Jacob's sons.

Ma'ale Adumim was established by 23 Israeli families in 1975 and was recognized by the Israeli government two years later by Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Though built outside the Green Line, it is not included among the settlements that any subsequent Israeli government has ever publicly considered dismantling. Many Israelis believe the settlement, and others, are vital for the country's defenses, part of the buffer zone that Israel built up after the 1967 war with Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

"We are the gate to Jerusalem from the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley," said Benny Kashriel, the settlement's mayor, who has pushed the settlement's expansion during his three successive terms in office. "If we weren't here, the Palestinians would string their villages together all the way to Jerusalem."

Meanwhile, Palestinian advocates insist that international law requires that the settlement, like others in the West Bank, be

---

*Ma'ale Adumim sits below the hills of the Judean desert.*





*Left, Rabbi Gedalia Meyer takes a break from writing on spirituality.*

*Below, shoppers in the malls of Ma'ale Adumim are protected by soldiers.*

## I was looking for affordable housing very

dismantled. And they dismiss Israeli security concerns as unjustified, given Israel's undisputed military preeminence in the region.

Today, 32,000 Israelis live in Ma'ale Adumim. Most of them work in Jerusalem, a 20-minute commute. And like the Meyers, most of them were drawn to the relatively inexpensive housing. In Ma'ale Adumim, thanks to generous government subsidies, a three-bedroom apartment costs about \$150,000, while in Jerusalem it can cost more than twice as much.

The settlement boasts two shopping malls, hospitals, swimming pools and tennis courts as well as a \$2 million Peace Library. There are also 100 companies and small factories in an industrial zone inside Ma'ale Adumim. There used to be a Burger King, until an international boycott forced the multinational company to withdraw its branches from settlements in the Occupied Territories. A local burger shop replaced it.

The air is clean, the schools are among the country's best and the crime rate is low. "This city is so quiet that it has only one traffic light," said Jacob Richman, a soft-spoken internet consultant who runs the city's unofficial web site. Like the Meyers, Mr. Richman said he "wasn't specifically looking to live in a settlement" when he moved to Ma'ale Adumim 16 years ago. "I was looking for affordable housing very close to Jerusalem with a lot of green spaces." What





has kept him here, a bachelor surrounded by families, is the community spirit, he said.

He enjoys the Purim parades when children and some adults dress up in costumes to celebrate the holiday commemorating an ancient Jewish victory. "We [also] had a snow day where they imported snow from Mount Hermon," part of the Golan Heights that Israel won from Syria and continues to occupy. "People move here, like it and tell other people," Mr. Richman said. "They find it an attractive place to live."

Mayor Kashriel said he is most proud of the "harmony" among the diverse mix of residents in Ma'ale Adumim. About 40 percent consider themselves Orthodox or

fully observant. The remaining 60 percent either consider themselves secular or attend synagogue but also drive on the Shabbat (Sabbath). Most of the residents are Sephardic Jews, who trace their origins to Arab countries. The Ashkenazic Jews, who hail from Eastern Europe, are a minority. Unlike other such communities, there is no "turf fighting" in Ma'ale Adumim, the mayor said.

"Most of our residents are religious and political moderates," Mayor Kashriel continued. "Most are young couples not long out of the army, living on a low income and looking for low taxes and good facilities." Most voted Likud in the last election, but are not "fanatic right wing," he added.

**close to Jerusalem with a lot of green spaces.**





## Settlements will be uprooted. Let's be

"Twenty-five percent voted for Meretz or Labor, left-of-center parties. We're not a place for extremists."

**B**arring a peace agreement with the Palestinians, Ma'ale Adumim's future will remain uncertain, its residents admit. "We do have concerns that Ma'ale Adumim could be uprooted, but we try not to think about it," Mrs. Meyer said.

Many residents take comfort that the settlement will lie on the Israeli side of the country's new and expanding security wall, which, though it diverges from the internationally accepted border, may someday divide Israel from a future Palestinian state.

For years, Mayor Kashriel and other supporters of an expansionist Israel have sought to implement the controversial E1 building plan. The plan, which won government approval under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, calls for the creation of 3,500 housing units on 3,250 acres of land that abut Ma'ale Adumim. The construction would link Ma'ale Adumim to Jerusalem, making it all but impossible for the

Palestinians to annex East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state, since it would be cut off from other Palestinian territories. Thanks to United States pressure, development has been put on hold for more than 10 years. But now work is being done on a main road linking the area to the Jerusalem-Jericho highway. A police station is also being built.

Mayor Kashriel believes E1 is essential to Ma'ale Adumim's security and is "vital to Israel."

"E1 sits above the road to Jerusalem," he said. "During the second intifada, Palestinians shot and killed a priest driving in a car. They thought, because of his black clothes, that he was an Orthodox Jew. The Palestinians have a lot of guns. They will make our lives miserable."

Others believe that the implementation of E1 will not make Israelis safer, but rather make a peace agreement with Palestinians more unlikely and further endanger Israelis.

Along with the security wall, E1 would effectively divide the West Bank in half, said Amos Gil the Israeli director of Ir Amim, an Israeli-Palestinian organization that opposes the E1 plan. "This means that a contiguous Palestinian state will not be able to exist alongside Israel," he said. "If these projects are completed, even moderate Palestinians

---

*Above, construction never stops in Ma'ale Adumim, as new apartment complexes go up. Opposite, children have fun at one of the many playgrounds in the settlement.*



**honest. There will be a price for peace.**

will be unwilling to sign a peace agreement with Israel. What would they gain from it?"

**I**t was natural after Israel pulled out of Gaza last summer, abandoning settlements, that the residents of Ma'ale Adumim gave more thought to their future than at any time before.

"Settlements will be uprooted," said Amir Cheshin, a secular, sixth-generation Jerusalemite who moved to Ma'ale Adumim 24 years ago. "Let's be honest. There will be a price for peace." But Mr. Cheshin said Israel should not withdraw unilaterally, as it did in Gaza. "You cannot make peace without talking. Any pullout should be done within the framework of peace with our neighbors."

Mr. Cheshin, a 61-year-old retired army officer, said he would never physically resist a pullout order, as some Israeli settlers have threatened. But he would want adequate compensation.

Others in Ma'ale Adumim draw different lessons from the Gaza withdrawal.

Had the Gaza settlers "not created so many little mini-utopia settlements, and instead built a settlement bloc [like Ma'ale Adumim], they might still be here today," said Shelly Levine, a 20-year resident and local real estate manager. "I'm not concerned at all,"

she said. "You can't move this number of people."

Mrs. Levine was driving past the neighborhood, called Zero-Seven, she helped develop, a mix of high-rises and apartment complexes. "I don't think any Israeli really thinks of Ma'ale Adumim as a settlement," she said.

Of course, whether or not they were just looking for a good deal, the residents of Ma'ale Adumim are nonetheless part of a larger religious, political and cultural puzzle that has yet to be solved. But meanwhile, life goes on.

Rabbi Meyer works on his book. Mrs. Levine plans her next deal. And Ayela Hevroni, a 38-year-old mother of three, watches her toddler run around a Ma'ale Adumim playground, the likes of which cannot be found in Jerusalem. "We came for the children," she said, declining to venture whether her children would be able to live here through adulthood. "For the children, this is Gan Eden," she said — the Garden of Eden.

---

*Michele Chabin is the Middle East correspondent for Religious News Service and has written for USA Today and other periodicals. Kevin Unger is a freelance photographer based in Jerusalem.*

## The Romanian Church United With Rome

by Michael J.L. La Civita

The last two weeks before Christmas 1989 were more frenzied than usual for Romanians. Fueled by the fall of the Berlin Wall, rallies in the city of Timisoara, first held to protest the ouster of a popular Protestant pastor, László Tőkés, became anti-Communist marches. The Romanian regime's dreaded secret police, the Securitate, responded ruthlessly, firing on the crowds, killing hundreds. Riots spread to other Romanian cities, including Bucharest, where civil war soon erupted.

By Christmas morning, however, the violence had ended as quickly as it had begun: The nation's dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu, lay in a pool of blood with his wife, Elena, both executed after caught fleeing the capital. A provisional government, calling itself the National Salvation Front, quickly restored order and began a new chapter in the life of the country. It abrogated orders of the former regime, including one that dissolved the Romanian Church United With Rome (also called the Romanian Greek Catholic Church) 41 years earlier.

Until Ceaușescu's spectacular fall, Romania's surviving Greek Catholics rarely revealed their faith. Their last known bishops, jailed as "class enemies," died in prison or under house arrest. Churches, schools and other assets were seized and turned over to the Romanian Orthodox Church, which had absorbed most of the clergy and laity after a government-sponsored synod of Romanian Greek Catholic priests severed ties with Rome in 1948. Now suddenly, in less than a fortnight, the nightmare for Romania's Greek Catholics had ended, ironically beginning a painful process of regrouping and rebuilding, for which they were ill-prepared.

Who are Romania's Greek Catholics? And what is the Romanian Church United With Rome? These questions are some of the

most controversial in Central Europe. For what motivates this community of faith — who share the Byzantine legacy with their Romanian Orthodox brethren — is their ardor for their nation, which they helped nurture into being, and their union with Rome, itself prompted by their quest for civil rights.

**Background.** Until 1918 (excluding a brief period from 1599 to 1601) a united Romania never existed. For some eight centuries, the people who now call themselves Romanians lived in three adjacent principalities: Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania. They nevertheless shared a Romance language, a legacy it is thought of the Roman colonization of the former Dacian kingdom. They followed the Byzantine form of Christianity, which they had received from the Bulgarians in the ninth century. And they tenaciously defended their identity from more powerful neighbors — Greeks, Hungarians, Ottoman Turks and Slavs — who coveted their natural resources.

While the Romanians of Wallachia and Moldavia managed to prosper as vassals of the Ottomans, their kin north and west of the Carpathian Mountains — in Transylvania — were bound to the land as serfs.

In 1438, after squelching a peasant rebellion, Transylvania's Hungarian and German nobles and merchants formed a coalition enacting the Union of the Three Nations. This pact restricted the movement of the Romanian peasant majority, binding them to the land, deprived them of participation in the diet (or parliament) and overtaxed them. It recognized only the Roman Catholic Church, denying the Orthodox Church, to which most Romanians belonged, any legal status.

---

*A Romanian Greek Catholic priest in Bucharest protests the presence of a statue of Lenin.*



The Protestant Reformation changed the principality's confessional dynamics. With the support of the Ottomans, who increasingly exerted influence in Transylvania in the 16th century, the Calvinist, Lutheran and Unitarian churches grew considerably, particularly at the expense of the Roman Catholic Church. The Edict of Turda (1568) guaranteed religious freedom for the principality's Catholic and Protestant churches (the first of its kind in Europe), but continued to hold in contempt the Orthodox faith of the population. Orthodox serfs were obliged to support the church of their landlord, while Orthodox priests, most of whom were married, were forbidden to levy tithes on their parishioners. Calvinists also administered Orthodox parishes, forbidding the sacraments to those who could not recite the Nicene Creed or the Lord's Prayer.

As the Ottomans lost their hold in Central Europe, the Hapsburg emperor of Austria hastened to fill the void, assuming control of Transylvania in 1688. Though nominally affirming the principality's confessional balance, Emperor Leopold I encouraged the Jesuits, the vanguard of the Catholic

Reformation, to reopen their schools (which had been shuttered by the Protestants), thereby reinvigorating Roman Catholicism. Eager to keep in check the successes of the Jesuits, the Protestants boosted their work among the Romanian Orthodox serfs.

**Union and schism.** Alarmed by the activities of the Protestant churches and encouraged by the Jesuits, Transylvania's Romanian Orthodox leaders convoked a synod in 1697. There they agreed in principle to unite with the Church of Rome, provided the diet and the emperor recognized the principality's Romanians as an "accepted" nation with legal rights.

At a liturgy in October 1698, Metropolitan Atanasie Anghel accepted the Act of Union, having been assured of his people's emancipation and the extension to his clergy of the same rights and privileges granted to the Roman Catholic clergy.

In September 1700, delegates representing some 2,000 priests and lay leaders throughout Transylvania formally ratified the union. While accepting the primacy of the pope, the legitimacy of unleavened bread in the celebration of the Eucharist, the existence of





purgatory and the theology of the *filioque* (“and the Son”) as used in the Nicene Creed, the Romanian Church United With Rome retained its Byzantine heritage and its method of electing bishops. But unlike its sister Orthodox churches in Wallachia and Moldavia, which officially employed Church Slavonic in the celebration of the liturgy until 1863, the Romanian Church United With Rome used the vernacular, transcribing it in an Italian-inspired alphabet as opposed to the Cyrillic. This set the stage for Romanian Greek Catholic leadership in the further development of Romanian language, culture and identity.

At first, the majority of Transylvania's Romanian Orthodox accepted the union. In 1721, Pope Innocent XIII formally erected in the city of Făgăraș an eparchy for the care of an estimated 200,000 Romanian Greek Catholics. More than a decade later, the

---

*Romanian Greek Catholics in Transylvania attend an open-air liturgy.*

formidable Bishop Innocențiu Micu-Klein moved the site of the see to the town of Blaj, where he and his successors founded a seminary and schools, establishing Blaj as the intellectual center of the Romanian national movement.

But the civil rights promised by the Jesuits and the emperor never materialized, and dissatisfaction grew among Romanian Greek Catholics. From his seat in the Transylvanian diet, Bishop Innocențiu, a Jesuit-educated Basilian, persistently lobbied for these civil rights, but his efforts were rebuffed. Exiled from Blaj in 1744, he continued to press his agenda, but was forced to resign in 1751. The bishop died in Rome in 1768.

In spite of the Austrians' efforts to enforce the union with Rome, popular resistance sparked a widespread movement back to Orthodoxy. In 1759, Empress Maria Theresa reluctantly permitted the appointment of a bishop for Transylvania's Romanian Orthodox, which included about half the Romanian community. In 1992, the Romanian Orthodox



## Prayer invoking Mary's protection

We fly to your protection,  
O Virgin Mother of God.

Do not despise our prayers in our need,  
but deliver us from all danger,  
for you alone are pure and blessed.

O most glorious ever Virgin Mary,  
Mother of Christ, our God,  
accept our prayers and present them to  
your son and our God,  
so that through you, Mother of God,  
he may enlighten us and save our souls.  
Amen.

---

Îți cerem protecția ta, O preacurată Fecioară Maica  
lui Dumnezeu. Nu trece cu vederea rugăciunea noastră  
când suntem în nevoi, ci ne izbăvește de tot pericolul,  
căci tu sigură ești binecuvântată și fără de prihană.

O mărită Fecioară Marie, Maica lui Dumnezeu,  
primește rugăciunile noastre și dule înaintea  
Fiului Tău și Dumnezeului nostru, astfel încât prin tine,  
Maica lui Dumnezeu, El să ne lumineze și să ne  
mântuiască sufletele noastre.  
Amin.

Church recognized those who led the resistance to union as confessors and saints. Their feast is celebrated on 21 October.

**National awakening.** The schism in Transylvania prevented a unified resistance to the Hungarian and German oppression of the Romanians, but it did not prevent a flowering of ideas that nurtured the creation of a unified Romanian nation.

Late 18th-century Romanian Greek Catholic scholars Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai and Petru Maior formed the Școala Ardeleană, or Transylvanian School, which from its base in Blaj contributed works that discussed the Latin origins of the Romanian people, the Roman origins of their language, the continuity of the Roman culture in the Romanian principalities and the history of Christianity among the Romanians. Ironically, Ceaușescu and his henchmen would manipulate these theories in the 1970's and 80's to pursue their own xenophobic policies.

Later in the 19th century, Romanian Greek Catholics played a leading role in establishing equity for Transylvania's Romanian majority and their confessions, Romanian Greek Catholic and Orthodox. But when the principality was absorbed by Hungary in 1867, these rights were rescinded. Harsh reforms were instituted to assimilate the Romanians. These included plans, developed as late as 1907, to suppress both the Romanian Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches. Until the collapse of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire in 1918, this process of ethnic assimilation would guide Hungarian policies in Transylvania.

**United Romania.** With the collapse of the empire after World War I, Transylvania's Romanian Greek Catholics voted to unite with the Kingdom of Romania, which was formed in 1859 with the merger of Wallachia and Moldavia. A revised constitution (1923) recognized the Romanian Orthodox Church as the "dominant" church of the kingdom, while giving the Romanian Church United With Rome "precedence" over other confessions. Romanian Greek Catholic bishops participated in the political life of the kingdom as well, having been given seats in the senate.

By the eve of World War II, the Romanian Church United With Rome counted 1.5 million



people in five eparchies, including the Metropolitan Archeparchy of Făgăraș and Alba Iulia, served by an estimated 1,500 priests, almost all of whom were married.

The church's prosperity was short-lived. Early in 1948, Romania's Soviet-backed Communist government began a campaign to wipe out any "fascist or anti-democratic" associations, singling out the Romanian Church United With Rome. By autumn, the church that had advocated for the rights of repressed Romanians and nurtured the Romanian identity ceased to exist.

Most Romanian Greek Catholics, wary of Hungarian and German Roman Catholics, remained loyal to their parish churches, which no longer commemorated the bishop of Rome in the Divine Liturgy. He was replaced by the "archbishop of Bucharest, metropolitan of Ungro-Wallachia and patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church." With this exception, little changed in these former Romanian Greek Catholic parishes, as the Byzantine rites and traditions of the church had been meticulously maintained.

**Rebirth.** Soon after the fall of Ceaușescu, Romanian Greek Catholics began to emerge, as did three secretly ordained bishops. In March 1990, eight years after he created an exarchate for Romanian Greek Catholics living in the United States, Pope John Paul II reestablished the hierarchy of the Romanian Church United With Rome, appointing five bishops throughout Romania.

Almost immediately, confrontations between Romanian Greek Catholics and Orthodox flared up over the restitution of property. Romanian Greek Catholics demanded the return of all facilities taken by the Orthodox after 1948. The Orthodox, meanwhile, insisted that current pastoral realities had to be taken into consideration — Orthodox properties had also been taken by the former regime — and the Orthodox claimed the numbers of Romanian Greek Catholics had not reached prewar levels. (A government census taken in 2002 recorded 195,481 Romanian Greek Catholics and 18,817,975 Romanian Orthodox. The 2006 *Annuario Pontificio* lists just under 755,000 Romanian Greek Catholics.)

In 1998, a joint Romanian Greek Catholic-Orthodox commission was established to

resolve these property issues. To date, more than 170 churches, including the cathedrals in Blaj, Cluj, Lugoj and Oradea, have been returned, more than half in the Banat, a region in western Romania. Orthodox Bishop Nicolae Corneanu of Timisoara, whose see includes the Banat, has publicly apologized for collaborating with the Communists:

"I could have acted differently, but at the time I thought for the good of the church I had to make compromises with the regime. Now I must confess my sins with all sincerity. I did not fulfill my obligations as a bishop because I did not protest against the regime.

"I feel an obligation to speak openly of those years and of the way we acted," he concluded. "If a church belonged to the Greek Catholics it should be returned."

While Romanian Greek Catholic demands, coupled with their criticism of the ecumenical movement, at first adversely affected the once warm relationship between the Catholic and Romanian Orthodox churches, Pope John Paul II's visit to the country in May 1999 thawed the ecumenical ice.

With property issues dominating, the Romanian Church United With Rome has made the formation of priests a priority. More than 60 percent of the church's 750 priests serving some 760 parishes are at or near retirement age. To date, more than 345 men are enrolled in seminaries in Baia Mare, Cluj and Oradea and theological institutes in Blaj, Cluj and Oradea.

Vocations to religious life for men and women have blossomed, reviving communities such as the Basilians, who were driven underground, and the Jesuits, Conventual Franciscans and the Brothers of the Christian Schools, whose communities were dispersed.

On 16 December 2005, Pope Benedict XVI elevated the Romanian Church United With Rome to the status of a major archiepiscopal church, naming Archbishop Lucian Mureșan of Făgăraș and Alba Iulia as the church's first major archbishop — an act Bishop Innocențiu Micu-Klein, who now lies interred in Blaj's Baroque Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, would never have imagined.

---

*Executive Editor Michael La Civita is CNEWA's assistant secretary for communications.*



# *Holding on in Hungary*

In a village in rural Hungary, Greek Catholics hold on to



*ary* by Jacqueline Ruyak • photographs by Balazs Gardi

their traditions even as the world changes around them.

*Wherever he goes in the Hungarian village of Nyíráscád, Father György Mező is greeted with the traditional*

*“Dicsőség Jézus Krisztusnak,”*

or “Glory to Jesus Christ.” Most of the residents are Greek Catholics, and Father Mező has headed the village’s Greek Catholic parish, Protection of the Virgin Mary, for 15 years. Life is not easy in this village in northeastern Hungary, near the Romanian border. The birthrate is down. Couples used to have five or more children, but providing for a family that size has not been possible for the last 50 years or so. Even now, in this post-Communist era of the European Union, forestry, the main occupation of most villagers, is not the industry it once was. Most couples have one child these days. And jobs are scarce too. Many villagers work in nearby cities or, if they are well educated, they go to Budapest.

But as the world changes around them, the villagers of Nyíráscád hold on to their traditions, which is why Father Mező is held in such high regard.

“People have preserved the traditional rites, both liturgical and legal,” said Gyula Katona, Nyíráscád’s mayor since 1973. He said the village was an exception to most of Hungary, where Communist rule and the enticements of the modern, secular world had combined to dilute the faith. Even under Communist rule, “catechism

---

*Previous pages, Father Mező bears confessions at Protection of the Virgin Mary Church.*

*Opposite, an elderly woman braves the harsh winter in Nyíráscád, a village of 4,400.*



## Who are Hungar

Nyíráscád is a religious an  
Of Nyíráscád's 4,400 resic  
Catholic, 900 are Roman  
90 are Baptist and there  
Jehovah's Witnesses and  
in all of Hungary, 52 per  
Roman Catholic, 16 perce  
Lutheran and 3 percent  
other 26 percent either  
unaffiliated. Most of th





## *People have preserved the traditional rites, liturgical and legal.*

remained in the schools because the villagers wanted it there.”

“Processions were held each year, at Easter and on the feast day of the church,” he continued. “In other villages they held processions just on the church grounds, but here they paraded through the streets. From Good Friday to Easter morning, the holy tomb is always guarded by young men, as is traditional. We could do all this because tradition is very strong here.”

Father Mező was my guide on my recent visit to Nyíráscád. A convivial man in his 60's, he, like most Greek Catholic priests, is married. At the rectory, his wife, Erzsébet, had prepared a lunch of vegetable soup, fried fish, potatoes and parsley, cabbage salad, biscuits, rolls, fruit and homemade apple juice. Mrs. Mező runs the rectory when Father Mező is out on his parish visits. A former teacher, she also leads the singing during the daily liturgy.

Among other things, we talked of their upcoming trip to the United States, to visit

their daughter in Los Angeles. Father Mező was born in Máriapócs, a town famous for its icon of Mary, but his mother was born in the United States. His paternal grandfather was among the first Greek Catholics in Cleveland, and Father Mező also had an uncle, a Basilian monk, who often went to the United States for retreats. The couple was looking forward to the trip, but still had not received the necessary visas. “Two of my grandfathers helped build America,” Father Mező said with a twinkle. “But I’m still having a hard time getting a visa.”

Across from the rectory is an old schoolhouse, now used to store local artifacts, including an altar made in the 1950's by the father of the current bishop, Szilárd Keresztes. Despite laws against religious expression during the Communist era, the parish's liturgies were so popular worshipers spilled outside the church and this additional altar was needed. Father Mező hopes to transform the building into a senior center, but lacks the necessary funds.

After lunch, we visited the parish church, which is more than 200 years old. Protection

---

*Father Mező shares a meal with his wife, Erzsébet, and son, Nandor.*

## Who are Hungary's Greek Catholics?

Nyíráscád is a religious anomaly in Hungary. Of Nyíráscád's 4,400 residents, 2,500 are Greek Catholic, 900 are Roman Catholic, 700 are Calvinist, 90 are Baptist and there are a small number of Jehovah's Witnesses and some atheists. In contrast, in all of Hungary, 52 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, 16 percent Calvinist, 3 percent Lutheran and 3 percent Greek Catholic, with the other 26 percent either practicing other religions or unaffiliated. Most of the country's Greek Catholics are in northeastern Hungary, which explains their high numbers in Nyíráscád.

In the year 1000 Stephen, a Christian convert, became Hungary's first king. He declared as official the faith as observed in Rome, but allowed those who followed the "Greek" rites of Byzantium to hold on to their faith. Most of Hungary's Byzantine Christians were wiped out in the 13th-century Mongol invasion of Europe. But soon afterward, Byzantine Christians from the Carpathian Mountains (Ruthenians and Romanians) settled in the region. Since then, northeastern Hungary has been the historical and spiritual center for the country's 282,000 Greek Catholics.

While Greek Catholics, since the 17th century, may be the dominant faith community in Nyíráscád, others also have a strong presence. The oldest religious structure in the region, dating to the 13th century, became a Calvinist church in 1534. Nearby Debrecen was the center of the Hungarian Reformation. There was once a significant Jewish presence. In 1941, Nyíráscád had 198 Jewish residents, but today it has none. (More than 560,000 of the country's 825,000 Jews were killed in the Holocaust.) The village's synagogue is now a Baptist church.

As Greek Catholics became an accepted part of Hungarian society, they lobbied for the use of the Hungarian language in the liturgy. In 1900, a group of Greek Catholic Hungarians presented Pope Leo XIII with a petition asking him to approve the use of Hungarian and also to create a distinct eparchy for them. Twelve years later, Pope Pius X established the Eparchy of Hajdúdorog for the 162 Greek Catholic parishes that spoke Hungarian. But he limited the use of Hungarian to nonliturgical functions, requiring the clergy to use Greek. This was never enforced.

The Eparchy of Hajdúdorog, which originally encompassed eastern Hungary and Budapest, saw its jurisdiction expanded in 1980 to include all the country's Greek Catholics. A small number of Greek Catholic Hungarians have immigrated to North America. Their few parishes are a part of the Ruthenian Byzantine Metropolia in the United States and the Ukrainian eparchies in Canada.



of the Virgin Mary is a popular feast among Christians of the Byzantine tradition — Catholic and Orthodox — and refers to the Virgin Mary's protection of the capital city of Byzantium, Constantinople. About 50 years ago, Bishop Keresztes, then a newly ordained priest, celebrated his first Divine Liturgy in the old church, the last before it was enlarged. Among the church's beauties is its iconostasis that dates to 1788. As we left, Father Mező said, "Whenever visitors come to the church, I ask them to offer a prayer for themselves and others." So we did.

It was naptime when we arrived at the village's public nursery school, where we were greeted by its director, Júlia Kabály, with

*Children take a nap at the public school.*

Hungarian sparkling wine and apricot-jelly doughnuts. "Wishing wine and wheat and all the best to your house this year and next," Mrs. Kabály said, repeating a traditional toast. She has worked at the school for 40 years, joining as soon as she finished high school. "Even under communism, I always spoke my mind," said the bubbly director.

The school has about 170 students, ages 3 through 6. Here they will prepare for the village primary school, which has about 470 children in eight grades.

Once a week, Father Mező leads a religion class for the children. The classes are not compulsory; the other village churches have their own catechism classes. But his offers another opportunity to ensure that the

*I'm happy when Father Mező visits. The children look*





village's traditions are passed down to its young.

"I'm happy when he visits," Mrs. Kabály said. "The children look forward to the lessons. He always brings them something — books, pictures or candy." The highpoint of the school year is the Christmas pageant, when the students go caroling to each church.

When these students grow up many of them will study, work and live elsewhere. Those who go on to high school attend one of the schools in Debrecen, Hungary's second-largest city just 20 miles south of Nyíráscád. Currently, there are 71 Nyíráscád children studying in Debrecen. Many graduates settle there. "There are enough Nyíráscád natives in Debrecen to [start] a whole other village," Mayor Katona said.

*forward to the lessons.*



Ferenc and Ilona Konyári are village elders — both are in their 80's — who have seen their children leave the village. Their son lives in Debrecen and their daughter married a man from another village.

Though Mr. Konyári is now frail, Mrs. Konyári grows vegetables, raises chickens and walks to church each Sunday. "They know all the prayers in the prayer book by heart," Father Mező said.

In a few days, Mrs. Konyári would join the pilgrimage to the famed icon of Mary in Máriapócs. Under Communist rule, Hungarians still made the journey, enduring taunts and harassment along the way. In earlier days, Mrs. Konyári walked the 22 miles to the shrine. Now, she takes a bus. But her faith, and that of many of her fellow villagers, is the same.

"Younger people don't have the same faith," said Demeter Kosztin, a widower who oversaw church finances when Father Mező first came to Nyíráscád. "My son, who lives near Nyíregyháza, is very religious but also is occupied with things of the world," Mr. Kosztin continued.

Father Mező and I were finishing our day together in Nyíráscád. We had just come from the village cemetery. In the Greek Catholic tradition, there is no eucharistic funeral liturgy. There is a home service, followed by another at the grave. The ceremony is an ancient one, with well-known chants so "lovely, sensitive and colorful," I am told that even villagers who are not Greek Catholic often request it.

At 76, Mr. Kosztin had seen his fair share of funerals. Marriages too. He used to preside over the village's wedding receptions, lively affairs that would last through the night. He said he has done his best to pass on to the next generation the traditions he grew up with, teaching his son: "And my son teaches his children all that he learned from his parents." Mr. Kosztin's grandchildren are religious too, he said. "But they live another kind of life," much different from the village life he had known as a child.

"Times change," Mr. Kosztin said. "It's normal."

---

*Jacqueline Ruyak is a freelance writer who reports frequently from Central Europe for ONE. Balazs Gardi is an award-winning photographer based in Budapest.*

# Prison Ministry In Kerala

by Sean Sprague

**F**ather Joy Cheradiyil did not blame Rajesh's wife, Anu Rajesh, for not wanting her husband back. Their arranged marriage had been a disaster. Rajesh, now 35, was a petty gangster, a thug-for-hire who specialized in extortion and intimidation. He even used to threaten his wife's family.

who heads a branch of Prison Ministry India in Ernakulum, a city in Kerala. Through the organization, which originated in Kerala in 1986 and has since spread throughout the country, clergy try to rehabilitate prisoners like Rajesh.

"In prison, Rajesh came to regret the way he had lived," Father Joy said. "We worked with him, offering counseling and guidance."

Rajesh was released after three years, but the life of an ex-convict in India is as difficult as it is in most places, and perhaps more so. Typically, ex-convicts are shunned by the small communities from which they come. Jobs are hard to come by, especially in Kerala, where the unemployment rate is around 50 percent. But most difficult of all for Rajesh was the rejection by his family, including his two children.

"I went and spoke to his family, and no one wanted him back," Father Joy said.

## An ex-convict's life in India is as difficult as it is in most

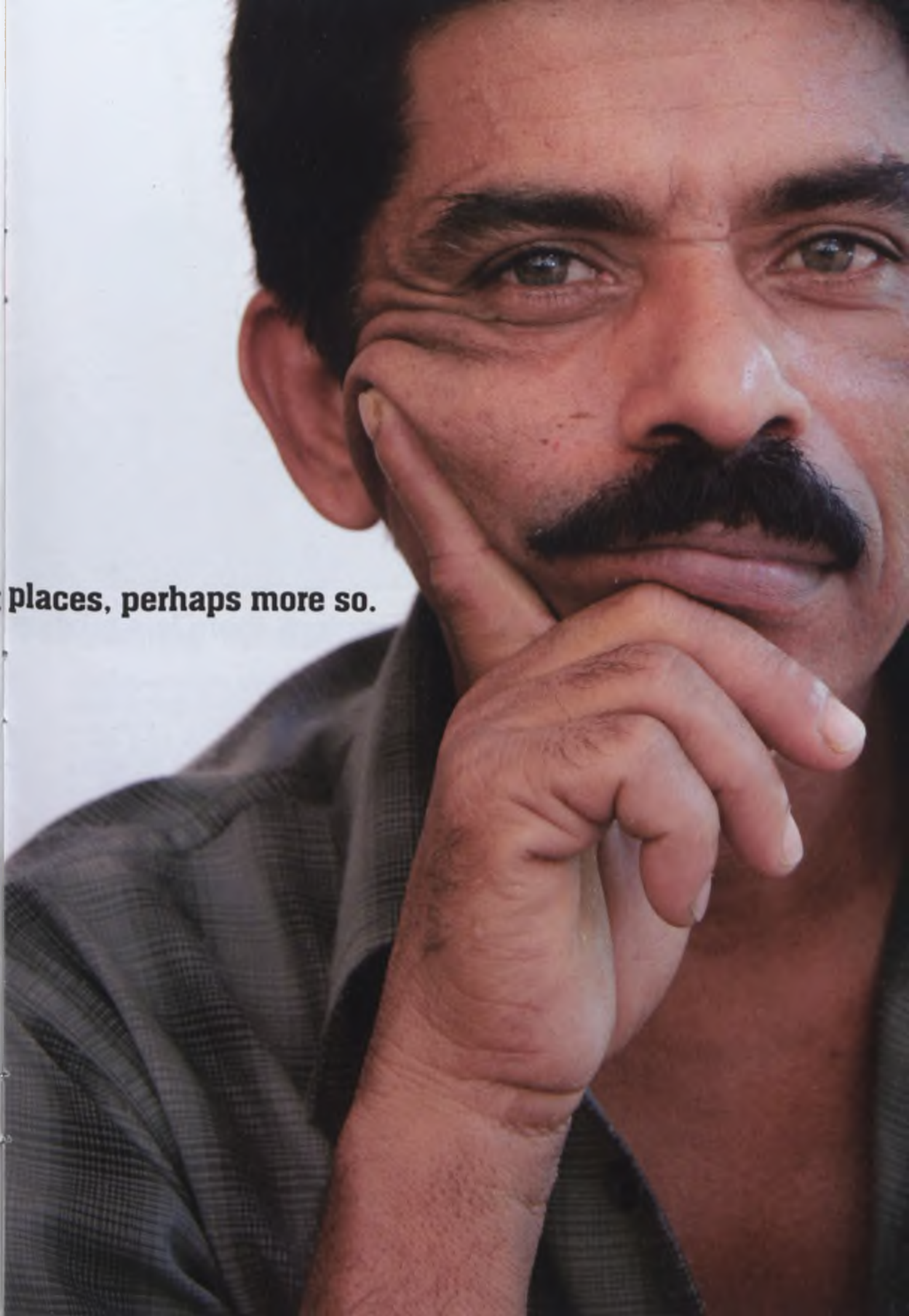
Then Rajesh was caught and sent to jail, and who could blame Anu for saying good riddance.

But jail might have been the best thing for Rajesh, said the Syro-Malabar Catholic priest

*Below, Father Joy pays a visit to a Prison Ministry India-funded home in Paracode.*

*Opposite, Francis Joseph tries to get his life together at Shanti Bhawan.*



A close-up portrait of a man with a mustache, resting his chin on his hand in a thoughtful pose. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

**places, perhaps more so.**



## At each of the ministry's centers, there is a mixture

Once he got out of jail, Rajesh spent several months at the ministry's center, Shanti Bhavan, which means Home for Peace, in the small town of Edappally. Here Rajesh received additional counseling and job training, turning farther away from his life of crime.

Finally, Rajesh and Father Joy visited Rajesh's family. Father Joy spent two hours with his wife. He assured her that Rajesh had indeed changed. This was not just some act to get back into her good graces. Okay, she said, I'll give him one more chance.

Today, Rajesh and his family live in a rented house. He does laundry for Indian Railways, a job the ministry arranged. They are poor but are saving to buy their own home. The ministry may help out. It has helped purchase about 50 modest homes for ex-convicts, who do not gain control of the title for 10 years to ensure they do not return to crime.

"We are poor, but I'm very happy," Rajesh said. "Now, I have a life I never dreamed possible."

---

*Residents of Shanti Bhavan share a meal between counseling sessions.*

Prison Ministry India, also known as Jesus Fraternity, was born from a discussion group of seminarians at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary in Kottayam, Kerala. There was an obvious need to rehabilitate the nation's prisoners, prostitutes and beggars. In 1990, the ministry was incorporated into the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference, and soon afterward it established support groups to tend to the needs of prisoners in each of Kerala's 44 prisons. It also opened support centers specifically designed to help female prisoners, child prisoners and prisoners with H.I.V. Funding comes from local churches, communities and other benefactors, including CNEWA.

In the mid-1990's, the ministry expanded from Kerala, where Christians are a significant minority, to other parts of the country, where the Christian presence is relatively minimal. But the ministry was never intended to help only Christians, in Kerala or anywhere else (Rajesh is Hindu). Though Hindu and Muslim religious organizations also have prison outreach programs, Prison Ministry India organizers knew more could always be done. In 1996, the ministry established a

national office in Bangalore. Its first national conference, inaugurated by Mother Teresa, was held in New Delhi.

Father Joy and his colleagues work with criminals who have committed much worse crimes than Rajesh. Take Francis Joseph for example. After a village political dispute turned ugly, he was convicted of murder and spent eight years in jail. Previously, he had worked six years in Libya as a driver, making a good living. But while he was in prison, Mr. Joseph's brother took control of his property. Now, after spending several months at Shanti Bhavan, the 46-year-old ex-convict is trying to get his life back on track. He has taken jobs as a cook and day laborer and is working on becoming a professional driver again.

"Father Joy is trying to bring us back to life, gradually, in a systematic way," said Anwar, a 48-year-old Muslim who spent three months in jail for stealing. "He tries to clear our minds of the past and think only of the future." Anwar taught English and

which is not an easy thing to do," Father Joy continued. "But once they come to know these people as people, not as criminals, they see how meaningful the work is and how necessary."

Finding a job is one thing, finding a wife is something else. In Kerala, as with India as a whole, most marriages are arranged by families. This holds true for Hindus, Muslims and Christians. A single man just out of prison is not a hot prospect to most Indian women, whose families are expected to pay a dowry to the groom's family. Thus, marriages are difficult to arrange.

Once the staff is satisfied that one of its unmarried clients has reformed, it sometimes approaches one of the church's many orphanages and sees if a marriage can be arranged. The sisters who run these homes generally help the orphans into their adulthood, helping them find husbands and jobs.

Saju Joseph (no relation to Francis) was involved in petty crime at an early age. His

## of counseling, spiritual renewal and job training.

economics at a high school in Nilamboor, Kerala. But after his students saw him in handcuffs, it is unlikely that he can return to his former job. Currently, he is staying at Shanti Bhavan, one of 10 such centers in Kerala. He works as a night watchman, but is itching to return to the classroom.

At each of the ministry's centers, there is a mixture of counseling, spiritual renewal and job training. The ministry helps the men find jobs, and once ex-convicts have gotten themselves reestablished, Catholic clergy continue to look in on them and offer support.

It is a difficult job and one that some of his fellow clergymen sometimes resist, Father Joy said. "These criminals are seen as the worst of our society, and that can even put off some of us in the church from wanting to spend too much time with them," he said. "I have been working in this field for eight years, and I can tell you that the first two or three were hard. To understand these people and live with them is not easy.

"Sometimes we ask seminarians to stay in an ex-prisoner's home and look after him,

father ran a toddy shop, India's version of a dive bar, and he grew up around criminals. Mr. Joseph, now 35, used to extort money from local businesses, for which he spent two years in jail. It was time to turn his life around, Mr. Joseph said.

Once he did, the ministry arranged his marriage to Roymol, 31, who grew up in a Catholic orphanage in Kerala. She is well-educated and pretty, but being orphaned meant she could not pay a dowry to a potential husband. Now, the couple live in a three-room concrete home in the small village of Paracode, not far from Ernakulum. He works as a driver and has not strayed back into crime. And soon the church will transfer its stake in the family home to the Josephs. Best of all, the couple have two young children.

The Josephs were delighted when Father Joy paid a visit recently. There was tea and tapioca and laughter all around. "You see, if you touch their hearts then you can get them to change," Father Joy said.

---

*Based in Wales, photojournalist Sean Sprague is a frequent contributor to ONE.*

# ETHIOPIA

---

# CELEBRATES

---

# MARY

The people of the Law of Moses —  
as Ethiopians call themselves —  
commemorate their legacy as  
children of Israel honoring  
Mary as the Mother of Zion.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEAN SPRAGUE



TEXT BY MICHAEL J.L. LA CIVITA



vessels in which the presence of God, the God of the Old and New Testaments, dwells.

Pilgrims to Aksum are not unlike the Christian pilgrims of the Middle Ages, who traveled to the Holy Land, or the Muslim pilgrims of today, who journey to Mecca. A pilgrim's trek to Aksum is an outward expression of his or her faith, a quest for the sacred, an expedition that includes prayer, reflection, penance and almsgiving. And while this quest is not obligatory, it is a practice that has remained widespread among the region's Orthodox Christians —

**N**ot far from Ethiopia's disputed border with Eritrea lies the sleepy town of Aksum (population, 41,000). Though not a common tourist destination, Aksum holds its place as an important heritage site. It is littered with archaeological ruins, including the steles for which it is famous. Once the capital of a prosperous empire that stretched from eastern Africa to Arabia, Aksum controlled the East-West trade routes linking India and Rome. Its emperors were among the first to embrace Christianity, using it to forge a distinct culture and nation from a bewildering number of ethnic and linguistic groups.

Each year, on 30 November, Aksum is aroused from its sleep. Tens of thousands of Ethiopians, wrapped in their white pilgrimage attire, or *gabris*, converge on Aksum to celebrate one of Ethiopia's holiest days, Mariam Zion, or Mary of Zion. They focus their attention on a modest shrine that is actually part of a cluster of churches all dedicated to her. Surrounded by a simple iron fence, and guarded by a solitary monk who alone has access to its contents, the chapel houses Ethiopia's greatest treasure, the Ark of the Covenant.

Mariam Zion commemorates this African nation's Judaic heritage and its Christian faith: Ethiopians believe the Ark of the Covenant, which enshrines the Ten Commandments, has been in Ethiopia since their first king, Menelik, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, took the Ark from Jerusalem. Others have suggested it came after 587 B.C., when references to the Ark disappear from Scripture after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. Mariam Zion therefore celebrates God's presence in the Ten Commandments and honors Mary as the New Ark.

Legend or fact, Ethiopians take seriously what the Ark and Mary both represent:





clergy, religious and lay — despite coups, civil strife and famine.

Several days before the feast, thousands of pilgrims leave their homes and head north on foot (many take buses, few fly), carrying their bedding and food. Pilgrims must abstain from meat and dairy products as well as sexual intercourse for three days before the feast. Some practice acts of mortification — a rite of purification — as they process to Aksum. Others give alms to the beggars who line the paths leading to the object of the pilgrims' devotion.

For those pilgrims who abstained and fasted, the climax of the feast — which includes the chanting of psalms, the reading of sacred works, liturgical dances and a plethora of sermons and pious exhortations to follow the example of Mary — is the reception of the Eucharist during the Divine Liturgy, which is celebrated in a vast modern church built by the last emperor, Haile Selassie. Awed by the presence of God, Ethiopians rarely receive Communion.

Mariam Zion concludes with a simple lunch, the fast broken by the Eucharist.







While Ethiopian affection for Mary dates to the earliest days of Ethiopian Christianity, devotion to her as the New Ark of the Covenant is more recent. The 15th-century emperor Zara Yacob added the observance of Mariam Zion to the Ethiopian calendar to unite the peoples of his empire, which, as it spread south, absorbed animists and Muslims.



Thousands of holy men and women, who wander from shrine to shrine throughout Ethiopia all year, converge on Aksum for the feast of Mariam Zion to beg for alms, counsel pilgrims and celebrate the feast with dancing and singing.





Throughout the festive celebrations, pilgrims to Aksum — including Abune Paulos, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church — hear sermons likening Mary to the Ark of the Covenant, focusing on her role as God-bearer and as Ethiopia's special protector.

## Classifying Catholics

The Catholic Church is actually a family of churches united not by discipline, customs or rites, but by their common faith and common understanding and acceptance of the primacy of the bishop of Rome.

This creates confusion in terminology: all Catholic churches are linked to the bishop of Rome, but every Catholic Church is not Roman Catholic.

**The Roman Catholic Church.** The largest Catholic Church by far and the most international is the Roman Catholic Church. Sometimes called the Western or Latin Church, it refers to all those peoples, places and churches that trace their evangelization directly or indirectly to the Church of Rome.

The Roman Catholic Church is loosely organized into ecclesiastical provinces headed by the bishop of the metropolitan diocese (archdiocese) — who may use the title of metropolitan archbishop or simply archbishop. Also, in most countries there is a mechanism for collaboration among bishops called an episcopal conference or conference of Catholic bishops.

Strictly speaking each diocesan bishop in the Roman Catholic Church is not bound by these structures; his immediate superior is the pope, the bishop of Rome.

**The patriarchal churches.** From ancient times, the bishops of certain major cities like Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Jerusalem have been known as patriarchs. They have a special role of authority and preside over other dioceses and even over other metropolitan dioceses.

These patriarchal churches have their distinctive rituals, use particular languages in their liturgy and have their own internal discipline, with a special emphasis on the role and authority of the synod (assembly) of bishops.

The six Catholic patriarchal churches are the Armenian, Chaldean, Coptic, Maronite, Melkite and Syriac.

**Major archiepiscopal churches.** Similar to the patriarchal churches are those headed by a major archbishop, with authority a little less than that of a patriarch.

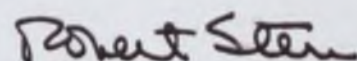
The four Catholic major archiepiscopal churches are the Romanian, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara and Ukrainian.

**Metropolitan churches.** Some smaller Eastern Catholic churches not yet canonically organized into major archiepiscopal churches are called metropolitan churches. At present, there are two: the Ethiopic and Ruthenian.

**Bishops under Rome.** In several countries, bishops have been appointed by the Holy See for Catholics who are not members of patriarchal, major archiepiscopal or metropolitan churches. Such eparchies and exarchates exist in Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine.

**Other Eastern Catholics.** In Albania, Belarus, Georgia and Russia, there are some Catholics of the Byzantine tradition without a bishop of their own.

This rich variety of traditions, practices and disciplines is the precious patrimony of the whole Catholic Church. What an impoverishment it would be if there were no other Catholics than the Roman kind.



Msgr. Archimandrite Robert L. Stern

# Turn your nest egg into the gift that keeps on giving.

## Make a Life Income Gift to CNEWA

- You make a gift – hopefully a large one
- We invest the money you send
- We use it to generate for you a regular income for the rest of your life (the interest rate depends on your age)
- After your death, we use your gift to do good work in your name

**For more details, call 1-800-442-6392**

*Available only in the United States*