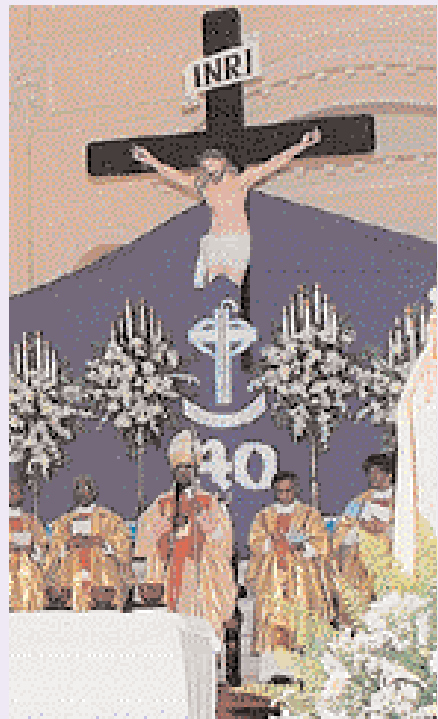


May 1, 2009, marked the 140th Anniversary of the founding of Good Shepherd Convent Kotahena, on a hill over-looking the majestic Cathedral of St. Lucy. It was also the day that signalled the arrival of the sisters of the Good Shepherd Congregation who, from a community of just four nuns, have now expanded to a strength of 400 and working in schools, orphanages, creches and slums.

**Service of Thanks giving and Adoration**

The year long programme of celebration began at the Kotahena Convent on May 6, 2009, at sundown with a service of prayer, reflection, adoration and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Over 1500 teachers and parents filled the basketball and netball courts as the elegant school choir chanted sacred songs in Sinhala, Tamil, English and Latin in impeccable style.



Rev. Fr. Sagara Jayamanne preached after Rev. Sister Gertrude Vithanage, the school Principal. Rev. Sister Gertrude Vithanage began the service with the opening prayer. As twilight grew and the gentle floodlights lit up the square, the gaily decorated altar on a raised dais turned radiant. When the Eucharist was borne by Rev. Bro. Bernard, preceded by red robed cathedral altar-servers, people were on their knees in adoration even as the choir chanted the "Tantum Ergo". After the solemn benediction the service ended with the majestic millennium Italian anthem of praise "Gloria Te".

**Pontifical High Mass**

The celebrations reached a climax on 12th May with the pontifical High Mass, con-celebrated by Rt. Rev. Dr. Oswald Gomis, the Archbishop, together with

Apostolic Vicars; Very Reverend Fathers Ivan Perera and Marcus Ferdinands. The Good Shepherd Congregation, led by Rev. Sister Rohini Mendis, the Provincial Superior, were present in large numbers. So were a few eminent De La Salle Brothers together with their superior Rev. Bro. Denzil Perera FSC.

The Archbishop of Colombo was given a splendid welcome at the entrance to the Cathedral Square spearheaded by the smart school band who put out a splendid display as they led the dignitaries to the main entrance of the cathedral. The fully

After a brief welcome address by Rev. Sister principal and an introduction by Mrs. Mariette Thevarayan, Archbishop Gomis began the Eucharistic service. The Gregorian version of the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei by the school choir joined by the entire student body gave a awe-inspiring solemnity in an interesting homily His Grace the Archbishop traced the history of the early days, the torments of the "School Take-Over" in 1960's culminating in the current days of glory. He exhorted everyone to keep the "blue and white" flag flying through their relentless efforts.

enjoying their own events.

**A Glimpse of History**

As Good Shepherd Convent commemorated the 140th anniversary, it is worth recalling the school's early days. The man who helped the establishment of St. Benedicts College, Kotahena in 1865 was also the prime mover in the founding of Good Shepherd Convent. Bishop Mgr. Hilarian Sillani OSB, was not only the initiator of both schools but indeed the father of catholic education in the Archdiocese. It is he who persuaded Saint - Rev. Sister



# GSC celebrates 140th anniversary



packed church, despite its extraordinary vastness included students of the middle and upper schools, past and present teachers, members of the SDS, and special invitees. As the celebrants made their way to the altar preceded by 140 students bearing lamps and flags, the choir broke out in the harmonious rendition of Beethoven's composition - Joyful, Joyful we above thee" joined by the vast congregation the students.

Before the concluding benediction, Rev. Sister Rohini Mendis spoke on behalf of the Congregation whilst the head prefect proposed the note of thanks". After the Mass, the Rev. Sister Rohini Mendis launched the web site www.goodshepherdconventkotahena-140years". This was followed by a cordial fellowship. For students it was a memorable red letter day as they celebrated the event singing the melodious Jubilee Anthem titled "Song 140" and

Mary Euphasia to send nuns to Ceylon to cater to the education of girls in the City. Thus, four nuns of the Good Shepherd, Congregation, set foot at the Galle Harbour on April 15, 1869. En route they received warm welcome till they reached Cottan - Chena as Kotahena was then called. On May 1, that year, Rev. Sisters Mary Anuncita Marandi Mary Susjanne Cardiff, Mary Euphotie Joseph, and Mary Sacred Heart Masi commenced the new task with

eight newly enrolled students. The school was then known as the Convent of the Sacred Heart and despite the change in name, now still celebrates the Sacred Heart feast as the school day. By early 1870s the school had about 100 day - scholars and it was once again Bishop Sillani who was keen to open an orphanage and in 1894 the foundation stone was laid for a two storey building. Soon his vision came true catering to one hundred orphans. It still exists as Saint Anne's Home. A beautiful chapel designed and built by renowned architect priest Rev. Fr. Stanislaus Jabarrani was blessed and opened on June 21, 1879.

A proper residence had to be found for the nuns and Rev. Fr. Collier helped acquire the suitable land and designed and constructed a spacious building. It was declared open on September 8, 1910 by Archbishop Anthony Coudert CMT. As time passed, many new structures emerged. From academic excellence, the school branched into sports, music, speech, drama and now grooms over 3000 students from Grade 1 to grade 13. This is in addition to the Montessori section that was established in early 1950's.

**The Continuing Saga**

A recent newspaper interview with a lady medical doctor on her 100th birthday revealed that she was a student of Good Shepherd Convent, Kotahena. During her early days at the schools, the story of the founding days would have been part of their contemporary history. From generation to generation the saga continues with Kotahena Convent grooming girls to become women of worth and excellence in whatever they do, in a multiplicity of professions, sports and other competencies. Ultimately, the Shepherdian glory, according Rev. Sister Gertrude Vithanage, the Principal rests on the winning ways of the students, in keeping with the school motto "they conquer who believe".

## Hey let's Meet at Thorana Lounge

Attention: Listen, there is scintillating, vibrant, breath taking music at the Thorana Lounge, every Sunday, with top musicians in action. I'm talking of Karl Katz, the German violinist, with Arusha tickling the ivories, not to forget Rex and Viran as well. This 4 - piece orchestra takes you right to the top of the music world, playing all types of music. They play baila, too - just how baila should be played. The girl at

the piano, Arusha, happens to be his young Sri Lankan wife. She is a very accomplished pianist, playing in a number of hotels in Colombo. WOW!!! She's really wonderful tickling the ivories with her own special style of playing.

So, folks make it a 'MUST' to go yourself and enjoy listening to this amazing exhilarating, vibrating, breathtaking music.

- Yvonne Keerthisinghe



Katz in action



Karl Katz and Arusha



Two books, authored by Dharmasri Tilekewardena, a senior sub - editor of the Lakbima daily titled 'Panhindaka Yathi Lakuna Sadaham Makaranda' and 'Satharakoralayen Kivideshayata' was recently presented to President Mahinda Rajapakse at the Temple Trees. Also present on the occasion was Ellawela Meddhananda MP and Chief Incumbent of Singapore World Buddhist Vihara Yatamagala Sumanasara.



Ananda Pilimathalawa's two books, "The Pilimathalawa In the Last Phase of the Kandyan Kindom" and "The Chieftains In the Last Phase of the Kandyan Kindom" were launched recently at the Ministry of Higher Education. Here the author is seen presenting the first copies of the books to the Higher Education Minister, Prof. Wiswa Warnapala.



'Wisdom for Challenging Times' and 'Jeewitha Rakshana Alewikaranayke Vishistayaku Weeme Maga,' written by Nuwan Samarapathi, will be launched at the Sasakawa Cultural Centre on June 30.