



# SERRAPHIM

Volume 13

December 2011

## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. - Luke 2:10-11

### Christmas Caroling 2011

The 2011 St. Peter's Caroling was the most joyous occasion of the month and certainly the biggest turnout of the caroling years. In order to celebrate the birth of Jesus all men, women and children visited each family's home and sang their hearts out, some melodious, some loud, but certainly a very happy event. Their dedication to joining together infuse the holiday warmth was welcomed with open arms. Through the night, long miles, cold weather, few surprises on the road and over the musical din, they belted out their tunes. The families welcomed them into their warm homes, sang along and offered them holiday treats. All in all, it was an event to be remembered and filled with the spirit of Christmas.



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#### Announcement:

- Please let Paul Varkey or Jingle Thomas know if you are interested in teaching Sunday School. We want enthusiastic teachers.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Can and Clothing Drives.

### Story of Esther by Steven George

Esther, an Israelite, was married to King Xerxes, the ruler of Persia. At that period of time, all of the Israelites were hated and Mordecai, Esther's relative told her not to tell anyone that she was an Israelite. One night, Mordecai happened to hear a couple of people plotting to kill the king. Mordecai quickly went and told Queen Esther, and she warned the king, which lead to the men getting arrested. Later on, a man named Haman had disputes with Mordecai and he found out that Mordecai was an Israelite. Haman encouraged King Xerxes to make it legal to murder all the Israelites. When Esther heard about this dilemma she told Mordecai that she will try her best to take care of it and that she would need everyone to

keep her in their prayers. Queen Esther prepared a banquet for the King and Haman, shortly after the king asked what he could do for the queen. Esther requested that both the King and Haman should come back for another feast tomorrow where she would present her request. The next day after the banquet was over, Queen Esther said to the king to spare her life and the lives of her people. She said she would not have minded if they were sold as slaves, but she thought that death was unfair. The king asked her who brought up this issue, she pointed right at Haman and he was hung that same day. Esther and her people were safe from Haman.

Dear Sangeetha,

What does it mean to say "Faith without deeds is dead?" I believe in God, I go to church almost every Sunday and I pray before I go to bed every night. That means I'm a good person, right? I definitely have a lot of faith. ~Sincerely, Anonymous

Dear Anonymous,

First, I'd like to congratulate you on your almost perfect attendance at church and your nightly talks with God. Not everyone these days does what you do. Believing in the Almighty Lord is definitely the first step in the right direction! But, as St. James points out in James 2: 14-26, "What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Basically, what James is saying is that just because you repeat a string of mindless words in prayer every day or you aced your latest Sunday school exam, it doesn't exactly guarantee a spot in paradise for you. The Bible actually says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). In this case, it's bad to be all bark and no bite. To have perfect faith, your actions have to follow through with your words. So now let me tell you a story to help you understand better (if you want the full effect though, you should read the poem, "The Plate of Gold" by James Henry Leigh Hunt). *On day in a famous temple-court in Benares, a wondrous gold plate fell from the heavens. To figure out who was worthy to receive God's gift, the priests made a proclamation that every day, people who felt that they were righteous should come and be judged to see if they were worthy to have the gold plate. Soon, a whole bunch of nobles, scholars and holy men who were all renowned for their gracious deeds came to see if they could have the gold plate. Out of all the contestants, the priests chose one person who had given away their whole estate for the poor, who seemed to be the most righteous and full of faith. But, when the chosen man went to receive the plate, it turned to lead in his hands! When he let go, the plate turned back to gold. So for another year, the priests tried again and more contestants came forth to receive the plate. Three times they awarded the plate to whom they thought was best, but all three times Heaven refused the gift to them, and the plate kept turning to lead in the chosen ones' hands. Meanwhile, there were poor, maimed beggars who lay by the temple gate every time these contestants for the gold plate came forward. In the hopes to win the gold plate by proving they were the most loving and righteous of them all, these contestants would give hundreds of coins to the beggars as great displays of their charity. But none of these contestants looked with compassion or kindness into the eyes of these poor, sad beggars. Another year passed, and one day a simple peasant came by to the temple to fulfill a vow he'd made to God, not knowing about this strange contest for the gold plate. As he passed by the line of shriveled, sad, sightless beggars, his soul was moved by pity, he cried for them, tried to comfort them and took their hands in his and prayed for them for a long time. Then he walked into the temple court and heard and saw the lines of people who were professing their great deeds of love before the priests. One of the priests caught sight of the peasant, and handed him the gold plate, which the peasant took without understanding what was going on. The minute he took it in his hands, the plate shown with even more luster and stayed gold! God had chosen him to receive the gift from heaven above all of the others!*

Because of our faith in Jesus Christ, we are no longer slaves of sin and to show gratitude for this gift of salvation, our job is to do good unto others. Jesus Christ instructed us that we should love one another as he has loved us (John 15:12). Showing our love for others reflects His love for us, and this feeling of wanting to do good to others should be a natural, unforced feeling. Like the simple peasant in the story, we should not just open our pockets, we should open our hearts. Faith does not mean burnt offerings, lip service or great shows of giving. Jesus actually says "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men" (Matthew 6:2). As you can see from the story, all the other contestants lost out on receiving God's gift because they did only that—even the guy who gave away all his properties for the poor. In the Bible, St. James remarks that your faith is no good if you see someone with no food or clothes, and you just say a bunch of halleluiahs and tell them to be at peace because God is with us, instead of actually trying to help them out (James 2:17). Really, what good did you just do for anybody? If you're serious about having strong faith, then just attending church and praying isn't going to cut it. You have to truly do what Jesus told us to do. 1) Obviously, follow the Ten Commandments. (The Ten Commandments are called commandments for a reason, they aren't an option.) But above all, follow the greatest commandment, which is the basis of our whole Christian faith—love one another as He has loved us. 2) For those of you, who are finding yourself spiritually stagnant in today's world of moral upheaval, try to do some community service. Not for the hours, but to obtain the natural, unforced feeling we were talking about. Work at a soup kitchen, help out at a hospital, and talk to old people in a nursing home. Understand that people are suffering out there, see the world for what it is, and let your heart feel. 3) Pray to God for your own spiritual enlightenment.

Hope this helped!

Sincerely, Sangeetha



**Hey My People, My name is Sangeetha.**

**Welcome to the latest edition of my advice column! Sometimes in these troubling, conflicting times, it's hard to find God in our lives. Well, that's where I come in, as your Christian connector. I will try to answer any questions you may have related to Christianity, so that you will achieve a deeper understanding and connection with our Lord. So, ask away! As I said before, we're going to cover a lot of interesting topics throughout the year.**

## God Determines the Events of Life

Composed by **George Cherian**  
Based on the Book of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-7

There is a season for everything,  
**A time for every purpose, under Heaven**

A time to born and a time to die,  
A time to plant and a time to reap again.  
**A time for every purpose...under Heaven**

A time to kill, and a time to heal,  
A time to break down, and a time to buildup again  
**A time for every purpose...under Heaven**

A time to weep, and a time to laugh,  
A time to mourn, and a time to dance once more... a time to dance once more  
**A time for every purpose...under Heaven**

A time to gain, and a time to lose,  
A time to keep and, a time to through away.  
**A time for every purpose...under Heaven**

A time to tear, and a time to sew  
A time to silence, and a time to speak again... a time to speak again  
**A time for every purpose...under Heaven**

A time to Love and a time to Hate  
A time to War and a time to Peace always  
We Love you Jesus...Lord we thank you...All our lives  
Lord we thank you...All our lives  
**There is a season for everything; A time for every purpose under heaven**

## Recap- V.B.S 2011 - PANDAMANIA

This year's Vacation Bible School was held July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The theme for this year's VBS was PandaMania. During the course of the VBS the kids understood that God has a unique purpose and plan for each and every human being and that made us all with his own loving hands. The VBS consisted of 5 sessions and each session had a theme attached to it, such as, God made you, God listens to you, God watches over you, God loves you no matter what, God gives good gifts.

The kids also participated in several song sessions and they even had the opportunity to make their own crafts. Due to the hard work of VBS Director Mr. Paul Varkey; Coordinators Basil Aleyas and Jafin Isac, Sunday School Headmaster Ninan Varghese and all the volunteers, this year's VBS turned out to be a great success.

## Highlights



**25th Ecumenical celebration—Team St. Peter's**



**Idea Star Singer Season SPYC**

This is the second edition of Seraphim for the 2011 year. It is our hope that you enjoyed the works written by the Board Members, the youth, Sunday School, and by the adults of our church.

Jingle Thomas : Managing Editor/Design layout

Sandra Johnson: Ask Sangeetha

Steven George: The Good Shepherd/Stories

Simi Mathew: Solomon's Corner/Games

## Youth Board Members 2012

Sunitha Flowerhill- Youth Coordinator

Jees Varghese- Vice president

Basil Tharu- co-Vice President

Steven George—Secretary

Juliya Pattammady- co-Secretary

Basil Aleyas- Treasurer

Shalu Kodyattu- co-Treasurer

Jerril George- Webmaster

Juff George- Youth Committee Representative

Thank you to the 2011 E-board members!

**We're on the Web!**

[www.stpeterspalli.com/SPYC/Seraphim/](http://www.stpeterspalli.com/SPYC/Seraphim/)

### Can You Find The Words?

R A A S S U M H T E R A Z A N  
R N G A B R I E L P T I O N A  
E G D B X F O Y A W D C J U O  
B E K Y S C C Z N I S Q E E U  
M L L F K K S F F S Z B A L N  
E X P R V O K E W C W X T I O  
C R F T W T A N J D S B B Z S  
E H N C W P V T H E X O A A U  
D M U X K K F Z A H V W P B S  
B C O L T B X V O C P L Z E E  
I P N T M O H E X F D L W T J  
L L J A H P I T X L I D J H F  
W G R O F E N Q F Z R H F B C  
A Y E Z H G R D M N M Z G K M  
I R D O P N R A P S U N A B G

ANGEL  
ELIZABETH  
GABRIEL  
JESUS  
JOHN

MARY  
MOTHER  
NAZARETH  
DECEMBER

## SOLOMON'S CORNER

### Bible Verses

The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God." - Luke 1:35

"And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him." - Romans 15:12

"I have shown you in every way by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' - Acts 20:35

### **A MOMENT TO REFLECT**

John 2:5 "Jesus' mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Take a moment and listen- have you been doing as He says?

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Please send us your thoughts, games, pictures, poems, and other works. We can be contacted at [spycpublication@gmail.com](mailto:spycpublication@gmail.com)