

THE DIARY OF MY MISSION WORK IN SRI LANKA

Part Six

Date: 1st January 2008 - 31st January 2009. Pages: 1 - 30

Thursday 1st January 2009.

Called round to the Bishop's house at 11am for breakfast and briefing before going to back to St. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa. Many subjects were discussed which were of use.

After breakfast I went up to the English café for what will be my last chance to buy some English pies and other English food for the rest of the day.

I was invited for lunch with Father Hugo and his daughter at midday, the lunch was good, but a little bit spicy, during the afternoon I just spent the day visiting the rest of the clergy in the Cathedral grounds before having an early night with supper before getting up early in the morning for the long slow ride back up to St. Thomas' Gurutalawa.

Friday 2nd January 2009.

Got away from the Cathedral at about 5am in the morning for Gurutalawa. The ride back in the School minibus was not so bad. I was the only person with the driver in the 8 seat bus.

Arrived at Gurutalawa about 1130am. Hoping to have a nice long dip in the swimming pool but found that it had been drained and cleaned.

The Chaplains house will not be ready for another 4 days, it is been decorated and put in good order for my new move in. Father Andrew the outgoing Chaplain and his brother who is also a clergyman returned to clear their last things out. We had a good long chat. Fr. Andrew's brother, Charles, wants me to visit his Parish for the week over the Easter vocation to preach on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. His Parish is just outside Colombo. This will have to be confirmed with the bishop (I mean me preaching at his Parish over Easter)

Otherwise today I have just really been unpacking in my temporary accommodation which I will have for 4-5 days. The kids and other staff are not back until the 7th January. The headmaster will not arrive till tomorrow. It is a lot cooler in Gurutalawa, infact to be honest even I can feel the coolness, it is great. All the people who have returned to Gurutalawa, are

walking around with gloves, jackets and hats on, to them it is cold, for me it is just right, like a good summers day in England. I am so happy to be back at St. Thomas‘.

I went to the farm shop to day on the College grounds to order some fresh vegetables for the next day, some, potatoes, carrots, turnip and cabbage, which they will dig up fresh, I then went to the cow shed for some milk, they milk the cow for you there and then, but before they give it to you they boil it first to take any bacteria out, I will get some fresh bread tomorrow straight out of the oven, it is baked at the College bakery fresh every morning.

I have been told if you want a chicken they kill the chicken in front of you, pluck it then give you the whole chicken to take away and sort out yourself, do not fancy doing that.

They have warned me not to go into the village of Gurutalawa just outside the gates looking for or asking for Pork chops or Pork Sausages, it is a Muslim populated village, they told me they would probably roast me for lunch if I mentioned Ham of Pork.

It is so cool tonight I should get a good nights sleep, also there is very few mosquitoes here like there are in Colombo. The surrounding, peace, weather are so much better, already feeling better.

[Saturday 3rd January 2009.](#)

Best sleep I have had since leaving England. Slept well, here it is a lot cooler even in bed I had a blanket over me. The bed is more comfortable also. Today I went to the village to get some odd bits and things I need. It only takes 5 minutes to walk to the village. I spoke with Andrew the outgoing Chaplain who goes to his new Parish on 6 January. At present his brother Charles is also here and who is a priest. He is Vicar of St. Stephen’s Church, Negombo, not far from Colombo. He as asked me to stop with him during my vocation over Easter and help him with the services in his Parish.

He wants me to preach at Mass and assist on Easter Day and conduct Evensong on Easter Eve. He has also asked me to conduct the 3 hour service on Good Friday. Here in Sri Lanka they do not have stations of the Cross in the Anglican Churches, not even in the High Anglo Catholic

Churches. Instead they have a three hour service with seven points. The service starts of with an opening song followed by opening prayer and the Collect.

Then for each of the seven points. There is a

1. Reading
2. Followed by short sermon 5 minutes on the reading.
3. Prayers
4. Meditation
5. Song sung by the Choir.

This is repeated 7 times giving the readings of the Good Friday from St. Marks Gospel starting with his trial and finishing with the resurrection. It takes about 3 hours.

I have been asked to conduct this service because Father Charles will not be available. So I have to prepare 7 short 10 minute sermons for each section.

Today I have also been arranging the Chapel a bit to how I expect it to be. Generally I have just been sorting my sermon out for Easter Day at Negombo and preparing my sermon for next Sunday, the Baptism of Christ. I still have a lot of preparations to do, the kids are back next week. Here at Gurutalawa my job is in away looking after a parish and its Church, but instead a College and its Chapel, but the College campus which I have already explained is set out like a small village.

It looks like I have just left Colombo in time. In the last 2 days there as been serious shootings and bombings taking place. The first bomb which went off on the 2nd, was not far from the Cathedral and killed at least 22 people, other bombs and shootings also followed, again today more bombs have been going off, the number of deaths have not been announced, and again not far from the Cathedral, in fact the first bomb that went off killing 22 people took place in a street where I had been shopping the week before.

It is all to do with government, and down to the politics with the Tamil Tigers, I feel sorry for them in a way, the Tamil people are treated wrongly and I understand their upsets, but still they go about revenge the wrong way. I think the Sinhalese are causing the problems and conflicts, but as before I am not going to go into the politics for personal reasons.

That is why the security was so tight near the Cathedral just before New Year which I also explained, many high government people live in the area.

There are also shootings and bombings going off at Kandy because of the same reason. Kandy is the nearest industrial town to Gurutalawa, only a few miles away.

One of the Government Security Guards which I have a photo of and who I am friendly with which I mentioned a couple of days ago in my diary, who has a little fancy for me I hear was badly wounded in the first bombing. If you get to see the photo, she is the one on the left of the three in the photo, she is so sweet. I am not sure how bad her injuries are, but I will enquire if I can.

So even here at the moment the College are also concerned and worried about the shootings and bombings which are going on, because it is causing problems in Kandy near by.

Kandy is a beautiful place, The Church is beautiful and so is the cemetery. The grave of Bishop Young's first wife was buried at Kandy. His first wife was killed in a car accident when he was Chaplain at Kandy College. Bishop David Young who has just died recently became Bishop of Ripon after his return from Kandy.

I am not scared about the problems and bombings going on, you can never live in fear, if you did you would be looking over your shoulder every day, if you get got, then that's that, you can not live in fear all your life, you just have as much chance of getting run over by a bus. No one knows how long you have or what may happen, you must get on in life, only God knows your plans for the future, and will decide your outcome.

In fact as I am writing this I can hear shot guns going off near by, I am told it is just the local force taking caution and practicing.

Tonight please pray for those who have died in the latest bombings and for their families and for those badly wounded in these terrible recent bombings and shootings in Colombo.

[Sunday 4th January 2009.](#)

Nobody on College site really, so there is no Sunday services I am spending most of the day preparing the rota for the Sunday services and Midweek services in the next coming two months.

The Headmaster is away for a few days at the beginning of next week, so I will be looking after all pastoral and ministerial arrangements on my own, with Father Goodchild.

I Have been looking through the course book for confirmation which I will be responsible for leading. We will hold confirmation classes on a

Thursday night between 6-7pm (to be confirmed) There will be three classes, in English, Sinhala and Tamil.

The kids start back on Wednesday, that is when it will no longer be peaceful. The teachers are due back on Tuesday.

Even so St. Thomas' College at Gurutalawa is one of the top Colleges in Sri Lanka, it is one of the only few Anglican Church establishments left, most of the Church property was handed over to the New Sri Lankan Government when they took over from the British. Most of the education came under the Anglican Church when Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) was governed by the British, but the New Sri Lankan government took this over.

The Anglican Church here still have big connections and follow the Anglican Church in England, in many ways Sri Lanka still are close to the British and proud of it.

That is one of the reasons I was asked to come here, they so much want the British people and especially at education and Church establishments, and to help with the English language. What College's and other organisations the Church have here are very keen to keep it English and English speaking. On the whole as already mentioned, Sri Lanka are still very English, and feel that they owe the British so much.

The tutors here are poorly paid, but come for a couple of years just to get the College name behind them. To say you have been educated, or taught at St. Thomas' College, Gurutalawa, means something big time, so Staff come for a couple of years on poor pay and then move onto government Schools which pay much more.

It is usually the younger tutors who come who have just left educational training, and take the advantage of been a tutor at St. Thomas' and at the same time get free accommodation and food, whilst in their early days.

I am looked after very much and cared for by the bishop and College, but financially I am poor. It is hard work, but it is by God's will I have been sent here, and if it was not by God's will, I would not be here, especially after what I have gone through in the last couple of years.

I am just praying and hoping so much that my financial situation will keep me going, I did not quite get all the financial support I expected to get so fell short of financial support.

You must also remember the standard of living here, I mean it is very poor in living standards in many ways. Poor accommodation and travel and everything else.

I do hope that some of my family or friends come and visit me and see

what a completely different way of life it is over here, especially when you live here.

For example I am lucky if I get to the internet once a week, then it is so slow, dial up and keeps cutting off after spending about half hour trying to get signed in.

The power cuts and the lack of lighting here and the telephone going down often are such a problem, at night you always walk around with a torch.

Monday 5th January 2009

I went into the village to have my hair cut, it seems to be a really trendy cut, spiked it up a bit. Had the whole treatment, shampoo, hand cut, and not by shaving machine. Including neck massage, all the extras, it took 45 minutes, and cost only RS 150 (75p) very cheap. I then went across to get some vegetable rottis, these are big pastries a bit like Cornish pasties, but slightly different in pastry, a bit like a pancake mix in bread crumbs filled with vegetables, got two, they were large, they only cost 9p each, I did not have time to go to the canteen on site at College for breakfast.

After I returned to the College site I had a meeting with the headmaster.

The headmaster is returning to Colombo to day for a few days, so I was given my instruction for the next few days, The Kids come back tomorrow so College life will be back to normal, lots of services, teaching, and other pastoral work.

I have ordered a new notice board for the Chapel, the old one is about 20 years old and is half hanging of the wall.

The swimming pool is still been filled up after it was drained. It is a full size pool and 10ft deep at one end. I have some photos which I will try and send. The internet and access to computer is not easy. Here we are in the wilds, with little good service in electric, phone lines and everything else. Since moving back to College from Colombo, I feel a lot healthier and better, but my legs seem to be swelling a little, I have been told to have them checked, it could be the affect of mosquito bites which I have had pity bad, they even seem to be able to get up your cassack, and I always wear my shorts under my cassack. (Shhhh not meant to know that - meant to be trousers)

Tomorrow will be interesting when all the kids start returning for the new term which starts on Wednesday morning.

It is so much cooler here and easier to sleep.

Tuesday 6th January 2009.

Up early, had to go to the main office to collect any post. After that went by bus to the nearest town about 4 miles away called Welimada. A frightening experience, I mean travelling on the bus, as the bus went by people just jumped on and either found their way on to the bus or just hung on to the windows on the outside. The windows have bars across them for that purpose. The bus does not go fast because of the hills and narrow roads, but it is a very nervous feeling seeing all these people just jumping on and off while the bus is moving, about 20 people were hanging on for their life, especially when the bus took sharp corners with this long drops over the side, and then other cars coming the other way just missing those hanging on for dear life. But this is just natural for them. There were that many people hanging onto one side, the bus was well tilted over well out of balance. The bus must have been at least 40 years old, the gear box rattling away every time the gears were changed, just sounded like it was just going to give in. I was glad to complete the journey but again had to face it all coming back which was just as bad.

On the way back there were quite a few of the younger students on the bus with their parents and bags returning back to College for tomorrow.

Wednesday 7th January 2009.

Started off by getting up at 4.30am, you can not usually sleep after that because of the students up and around, even at that time they are energetic and noisy. You can also here the Muslim Temple calling out for prayer from the village.

Yesterday afternoon and during the night it really poured down with rain, and which I have already explained when it rains it rains, but here in Gurutalawa you hardly get thunder or lightening like you do in Colombo. At 6.00am I went across to Keble College (the lower College and girls department) and had breakfast. I entered the canteen and about a dozen of the younger girls were already there, not eating breakfast but going through their prep and discussing and working together toward their first lessons before they have breakfast.

When they saw me walk in they all came across proudly showing me their English books. The 9 - 12 year olds are good progress with their English and their English is very good. They love my accent and keep telling me how to say things like 'Bus' and 'tractor' properly, O dear they seem to

think it is my accent which is wrong. After half an hour the junior boys came in and the older girls felt so proud of going over to them and looking after them. (6.30am) they had already had a lesson before (6-630am) The girls so proudly sat the young boys down and gave them the small metal plate of white rice and one piece of freshly baked bread (no butter) a glass of water ready for breakfast, that will last them till 1pm dinner time, you feel so sorry for them, but that is what they are used to. The girls so proudly made sure that the boys were sat neatly in rows and each dish was the same distance away from the next dish all the way up the table and the girls making sure that each bit of bread was at the same side of the dish of rice.

What made me laugh so much was that some of the 4-5 year old boys still had their pyjamas on, looking so innocent and alert of what was going on. They all sat staring at their meals until matron came in and gave them stern instructions for the day and condemned any who were not wide awake or seemed to be on another planet. The girls by then already neatly dressed in their spotless uniforms sat in their own places after making sure the boys were put right.

Matron rang the small 'ping' bell on our table at the top, all the students in silence at once stood up. There was silence for a few seconds while matron looked around then nodded at me to say prayers. Afterwards the bell rang again the pupils sat and ate in complete silence. What discipline this College shows, and among these pupils so early in the morning eating such simple food in such simplicity and manners were 5-6 year olds. But what also fascinates me, are the girls already early in the canteen before breakfast going through prep work and making sure that all the younger boys were neatly dressed and preparing their breakfast for them, even straightening their ties for them and brushing dust of their uniforms and putting their hair straight before matron walked in, they were just like mothers to them.

Such care and trust they all have in each other, and the younger boys the oldest been only 10 in this department so willingly let the girls dress them, do their hair and make them tidy before matron came down for breakfast. The 5-6 year olds looking like that they had only come out of their push chairs because they looked so young seemed to be excused for still having their pyjamas on.

After breakfast I conducted Morning Prayer in the Chapel 730am, all the Christian Students turn up about 100 plus and they all sit neatly and in pure silence while I conduct the 15 minute service before they go to next

lesson at 745am.

After lessons I went for a coffee at about 11am, then I had a free gap. I am well up in front with prep seeing that I did a lot of prep over Christmas, so spent some time with the younger kids 5-10 year olds at Keble College. They were all washing their clothes in the stone troughs outside the canteen first they rinsed them, then they washed them in soap suds before ringing them out and rinsing them again, they then scrubbed them on granite blocks before rinsing them out and putting them on the washing lines to dry. They did this all on their own, the teachers would not help, they have to learn themselves, and they show such pride in their washing because they want their College shirts and socks as white as white. They show so much pride in everything they do. It was just like been back in the Victorian times, watching all the young lads even as young as 5 years olds, scrubbing and washing their clothes trying to get them as white as possible, but the thing that fascinates me is that they are taught how to do it all by hand with pride, no machine.

Our kids in England would just watch and not have a clue or not be bothered, they are just used of throwing them into the washing machine, or rather let their mother throw them into the washing machine and think nothing of it.

The biggest surprise was later when I saw them all iron their clothes in the play ground on wooden tables, not iron boards and with the old heated steamed irons not electric.

We have so much to learn, our kids would just laugh at us if we expected to live and work like these kids do.

Here they are taught to live in simplicity, honour, with manners and be able to look after themselves and care for themselves, they do not seem to worry about who looks after them they learn to do everything themselves, I was gob smacked watching all this, they knew exactly what they were doing, and here I am talking about 7+ year olds.

I ended the night with supper at Keble College with the kids and some staff.

Thursday 8th January 2009.

Again started the day at Keble College, at 6am going through the English homework in the canteen with the girls. I then went to Chapel after

breakfast. After first lesson I then went to the office to fill in some medical forms and update my medical prescription.

During the morning in my free time I played basket ball with the younger boys for an hour, not too bad, I felt pity fit and healthy afterwards. After lessons and lunch, which I ate hardly anything, I felt a bit tired.

In the afternoon I was invited by the elder boys to play for the blue side at basketball in a match, I did quite well and scored a few points, the crowds watched in disbelieve as I ran a round the court playing basket ball, with them cheering me on and feeling good with energy and sweat, I got carried away. An hour after the match I felt bad chest pains and sat down when I got up I lost my breath and keeled over out of balance, I was ok after a while.

With the excitement of sport again and feeling good when I was cheered on, I forgot my age and heart condition and got carried away. At the time I felt good.

Even in general I still have health problems, even so I must admit I feel healthier on the whole.

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. I go down to the College bake house for a fresh loaf of bread. If you go down at 11am it comes straight out of the oven, smells absolutely delicious, you have to wrap it up in at least 4 sheets of paper to carry it because it is that hot. I get it for nothing, the bread is baked in a wood burning oven the original way.

Hot bread with butter and soup is a dream. I only usually get two a week which last me, unless I have guests for lunch then I get three.

Friday 9th January 2009.

Went for breakfast around 615 am to the Keble College this morning before conducting Morning Prayer in the College Chapel at 730 am. This service is only for 15 minutes because the pupils must be in class by 750 am for the latest.

But as usual like all third world countries time keeping is terrible, which really I can not tolerate, I am very keen on time keeping, but here you have to grit your teeth and bare it. To be honest they are normally not too bad for time keeping for Chapel, because they know I get pity upset with bad time keeping, but still you get some lads slipping in quietly late hoping not

to be noticed. It is interesting to point out the girls are never late for nothing.

They complain that I should have waited for them if I comment on them been late (cheeky sods). But then I just remind them if we spend all our time turning up late or having to wait we get nowhere in life. This is the problem a lot why these countries are so poor, because they have no organisation for time keeping, respect of time and commitment in turning up, business is so poor because of this.

The children here respect me very much so they try and please me by turning up on time, but it is their way of life so it is hard for them to change, but they try. In the end it will benefit them, especially that most of them want to continue education and other professional training later in life in England.

It is not always their fault as such. They may be late because the lesson or breakfast was late due to problems, but then when one part of the day is late, it builds up and makes everything else late for the day, you can not win, but only try.

The Headmaster is impressed that I am strict and succeeding in time keeping, but also reminds me it is the culture and way of life here which will be impossible to change altogether and again it is not always ones fault for been late all the time so I must bare that in mind, even so I have improved their time keeping quite well.

I suppose if they do decide to go to England they will learn the hard way and may loose out if they are not careful in many ways.

Today it just poured down all day with rain non stop, I spent the morning helping with the Keble College students and toured the class rooms.

The class rooms are so poor, they need attension, the desks are about 50 years old nailed together, and rain is coming in through most of the class rooms.

After the rain, the paths and roads around the College are very muddy and unsafe.

The more it rains the more you wash your clothes, especially my white cassacks which gets so muddy. But that is third world living. But what surprises me, is that that the students always seem to keep their white uniform always clean.

At home in Bishopthorpe I feel I am like millionaire and do not know what I am missing, even the poorer of the families in our village at Bishopthorpe would look rich in the view of these people here.

Today I went into the village which starts at the College gates and went to

the what you could call a tailors to have my cassock shortened. It needed turning up 3 inches all round the bottom to help keep it more of the ground in the wet weather. It cost me 37p in English money.

The rest of the day was just spent doing not a lot because of the bad weather. The students just stayed inside because everywhere was just wet. Some of the classrooms were very bad because of the leaking roofs. The toilets are blocked so the students have to walk to the other end of the College if they want to go to the toilet.

[Saturday 10th January 2009.](#)

Rained all day again. Went for breakfast a little late. There is no Morning Prayer on Saturday mornings in the Chapel. The students had breakfast with me at 745am before their morning lessons. They were still in their pyjamas as they do not have to wear College uniforms on Saturday, so they do not have to have inspections for uniforms for breakfast.

A couple of boys were late for breakfast so for punishment they had to stand at the table and recite the Lord's Prayer in English before they could sit down and eat.

As always the students had said their prayers before eating and were now eating breakfast in silence.

After breakfast they went to lessons, I went back to my office to prepare some work and set out some lesson work.

In the evening at choir practice, when I say choir practice it is not as you may think it sounds. The children spend an hour in Chapel looking through the hymn tunes for the following day, for Mass we have 4 servers for ordinary Communion we have 3 servers.

Tomorrow is ordinary Communion, the headmaster is still away so either Fr. Goodchild an 87 year old retired chaplain who still lives at the College will take the Communion or I will have to conduct the communion by extension. We always have reserved sacraments which are kept behind the alter in the Tabernacle.

Because it is ordinary Communion the Gospel will have to be read in both English and Sinhala, and if possible in Tamil also.

Here in Sri Lanka, only Priest, licensed Lay Ministers, or other Ministers from some order such as the Franciscans who are Professed members of that order can read the Gospel or distribute the Sacrament, no ordinary lay member is given permission to read the Gospel unless given permission to do so or distribute the Sacrament unless he as been either licensed as a lay

Minister by the bishop or Professed into some religious order by the bishop.

When we conduct High Mass on the first Sunday of the month the headmaster insists that the whole service is conducted in English only, and that we have the whole works, example, incense, bells, the Hail Mary and all the candles etc if possible. There is already a full size statue of the Virgin Mary next to the altar.

We do not have a Sanctuary Lamp for the Tabernacle at the moment due to lack of funds.

So (hint, hint, hint) if anyone would like to donate a Sanctuary Lamp, either to hang from the ceiling or fix to the wall, this would be much appreciated, perhaps you may like to donate the following gift in memory of someone or some organisation. We are also looking for pulpit falls in all four seasonal colours, gold, red, purple and green.

Perhaps someone would like to make or embroider a pulpit fall in either green, red, purple or Gold and white, with some appropriate theme in the design. Such gifts would cost so little but would mean so much for our Chapel dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, and it could even be dedicated in memory of someone or some organisation of your choice.

We are also in the process of finding new altar frontals but I am not sure of the facts of this at the moment, whether this is going ahead or not. But I do know that pulpit falls lectern falls and a sanctuary lamp would be much appreciated, in fact it would mean so much. Perhaps a Church organisation, a Mother's Union or Sanctuary Guild or even an individual who can embroider would be interested in helping out for something so small in cost but meaning so much for our Chapel, and a gift from England would be something so special, which I have mentioned before that the Church in Sri Lanka is so connected with the Church in England.

Sunday 11th January 2009

Mass went well this morning, the students like the way I am so dignified during the service, why I bow here and there, why I move the lection over from left to right for the Gospel. Why I do the sign of the crosses on my forehead, lips then chest.

The headmaster insists that I lead the services in the highest order as possible. The headmaster was away in Colombo on Sunday. I even taught the bell ringer how to ring the Angelus before the service. But in Sri Lanka the Angelus is rung at every Church at 6am, midday, and 6pm, including

St. Thomas' College and all other Anglican Colleges etc.

In the afternoon I played basketball with the senior boys. The senior boys seem to like me more each day.

They are down to earth now that they know that I go down to their level, listen to them, enjoy the interests they have.

Now I am part of them, it even brings them to Chapel more. But you must remember that the College is mixed in religious faiths even so it is an Anglican College, so not all the students come to the Anglican Chapel, but they respect me for my position and naturally I treat them with the same respect in return. On the whole the headmaster is very strict on the religion here, even so not all are Christian, they are Buddhists, Muslims and other faiths. The headmaster allows their own prayer, but they are reminded that it is an Anglican College, supported by the diocese of Colombo.

At College I am instructed to such a degree to use Christian prayers and remind people of the College and its statues, but again have to be careful not to offend the other faiths, but we have agreed to only to use the Lords Prayer and Anglican liturgy in Chapel.

I also have to learn to conduct the services and prayers in Sinhala, not necessary in Tamil, which is difficult. The headmaster reminded me that part of my work is to encourage English so not to use or have conversations as such in Sinhala or Tamil. The Children need to know English, and hear me speaking English as much as possible.

It is already noticed that I am very popular with the students

I go down to the children's level in everything even in the classroom. They respect me dearly because I treat and respect them at my level. But do not get me wrong the students know where they stand with me, I will not tolerate bad manners, laziness or bad time keeping which they are all used to.

The funny thing is, because I respect them as adults they behave as adults and never give me any excuse to be strict. They hate it if they know they upset me, so with me they are always well behaved, they do not like upsetting me because of the way I respect them.

Respect pays off with trust, good behaviour and good manners. The students are good if you treat them as adults, like any child, if they are cornered they will fight back.

The trouble is they can sometimes be a little naughty and show off but they know the limit I will take.

But they do not take advantage they are just cheeky but good with it, they know the game.

Sunday evening was just been quiet reading and relaxing.

Monday 12th January.

Because we started term halfway through the week and like anywhere in the third world everything is slow, we decided to have the College assembly today after Morning Prayer.

With the weather been dry and warm the children line up in rows outside the Main Hall and The headmaster stands on a platform in front of the office facing the children or we have big assembly in the main Hall which lasts longer.

The National Anthem for Sri Lanka is then sung with great pride while the first flag of Sri Lanka is hoisted up the flag pole behind the headmaster and myself with the Children facing the flag. We then sing the College anthem while the College flag is hoisted.

Again all done in great pride with dignity. Just like in America, but what do our kids in England know.

After Assembly while the kids got an extra break we had a staff meeting in the library.

The meeting was quite serious, sadly to say the Children did not do well in last years exams, the headmaster put his foot down with the staff and we are now going to start a new stricter process of teaching. The meeting was held in all three languages.

In the afternoon I was called round to the headmasters study in the main office, to discuss the set out for Compline.

We decided to use the 1664 book of Common Prayer, so during the afternoon I spent some time setting out the service and then copying into to 100 booklets on the photo copy machine after setting it out as a spread sheet on the computer first.

We have very few books in Chapel and the ones we do have are poor, especially Bibles in all three languages we use.

A couple of local Parishes have offered to either give or buy us some new hymn books (Ancient and Modern) and some prayer books (Book of Common Worship) but we are still waiting here everything is so slow and seems to be poor. Even St. Thomas' Gurutalawa is one of the top Colleges in Sri Lanka it is poor.

Tuesday 13th January 2009.

Took Morning Prayer in the Chapel at 730am missed breakfast, just not eating right again. After Morning Prayer I took my rounds in visiting the senior boys and talking to them. They are so easy to talk to and so open in discussing any problems, whether personal or views they may have. The staff see that I am a influence with the children and know how to communicate and work with them, which I have already told you the trick for that. The other staff see that my method works.

But they have also been some problems, I only have to walk past a class room where the children are having a lesson and they either run out of class to see me or call me in, which is embarrassing for the teacher.

Went into Welimada The next town at lunch time due to having some free periods, it takes 20 minutes each way on these crazy old fashioned buses. The buses are so packed with even children hanging on to the windows on the outside.

Going into town the bus just glides down the road into the deep valley where the town is, twisting round all the sharp bends at speed, I watch nervously at the kids hanging on the outside of the bus for dear life, not even the driver cares who is hanging on to the bus for life.

Even in the next town Welimada, the locals are beginning to recognise me and where I am from. Last time I went into Welimada I went with a member of staff who introduced to me to many of the shop keepers and business men in the town, most who were proud to say that they were former 'Guru Lads' as they are known by after attending St. Thomas' The main reason I went to town was to check my emails.

The internet is so poor in Sri Lanka on the whole, Sri Lanka are in the 1970s style and in many ways, it is like living in the 70s as a kid. Life is so poor here and out of date.

Coming back to St. Thomas' from Welimada on the bus was again so much fun to experience, even when people are hanging on to the outside of the bus for life people are still persistent in jumping on and holding on to the shirts of those who are already hanging on for dear life. This time the bus had to struggle climbing up the hills out of town, the gears just cranking up all the time, even the bus was going that slow it even kept stopping, honest someone walking could pass the bus. It took 20 minutes just to climb half a mile. The tyres must have been nearly flat with the weight of the number of people.

At last I got back to St. Thomas' The distance is 3 miles and takes 20 minutes down hill after 20 minutes time struggling up the hills, and costs in English money 9p one way. The headmaster says do not travel so often

to save money, I just look at him in amazement. If you travelled to Welimada and back each day for the week it would only cost you £1.16, if my calculations are correct.

In the afternoon, I had a chat with the headmaster and his wife at the headmasters house. Then I just chilled out for the evening.

Wednesday 14th January 2009

Well you would never guess, yep, yet another Bank Holiday for Sri Lanka. The Chapel morning service is at 9am on bank holidays, The students still have prep work and some lessons, but they start later and finish later. At last I have officially moved into the Chaplains House, It is really nice now after been done up, new carpets furniture etc, In the Sri Lankan standards 'quite trendy' as we would say. But still no phone line or internet.

So today I was really just moving house and settling in. Can not do much really till tomorrow when the College labourers return to help move the big furniture etc, and when College is active again. The boys were asking me if I wanted a hand, but there was very little for them to do, and like I have said even so it is good to work at their level, you still must not get too close to them and let them think you owe them favours for them helping you. They are good students but can be crafty.

The staff get free sim cards for their mobile phones so we do not pay for our calls even so they are cheap anyway, but the diocese pay the phone bills. The students will come and ask if they can use our phones to make calls back to their family, but they do not always tell you the truth and sometimes they end up making phone calls to chat lines, which are naturally recorded on the phone bills which the bishop receives.

The students are actually banned from using mobile phones on site and using memory sticks for computers and I pods which they like to ask you if they can use on your computer.

Recently there as been incidents where the students have been logging into programmes on the computer and mobile phones which they are not supposed to be doing, need I say more, except they have been logging on to programmes for over 18s.

They are good students and educated and taught discipline, manners and

respect which I have explained, but they too can be little sods. There are some stories that I can tell which the headmaster has told me which I will not repeat.

A couple of the lady staff teachers came round later to see how I am getting on and if they could clean the house for me. But the College labourers will be doing all that tomorrow, so they just sat down and had a chat for an hour, I could not really offer them a drink because the house is still a little upside down. Later in the evening Suren came round to see me. His mother is a teacher here and lives on campus.

Thursday 15th January 2009.

Took Morning Prayer in the Chapel this morning at 9pm. It was cancelled at 730am due to College Assembly which in the end had been cancelled on the last minute, typical here.

I usually go for breakfast at 645am first at Keble College, for a change decided to give it a rest because not feeling too good, and I never get breakfast in peace because the girls who use the canteen for prep work and private study before breakfast always surround me when I sit down for breakfast wanting me to check their homework before they hand it in. Do not get me wrong I do not mind, but just for once it is nice to have some peace just now and again. So had a lazy morning cooked for myself and went straight to Chapel for 9pm.

After Chapel, our new choir master came round to listen to my new set of speakers which I had got in the village.

The evening was spent just preparing for tomorrow's lessons.

Had lunch and supper in the Keble College but without peace. At lunch time just sat down when the headmaster wanted to see me immediately. There had been some trouble in the College which he wanted to discuss with me the headmaster and myself share everything that goes on in the College.

Friday 16 January 2009.

Went for breakfast at Keble College for 645am, before Chapel at 730am, but breakfast was late so had to skip it, to get to Chapel in time. After Chapel I had lessons all morning to teach and also the first lesson in the

afternoon.

Because of my position and several over College responsibilities which take up most my time, I only stand in for lessons when a teacher is absent. The students know where they stand in class with me. They know I am down to their level out of class but in class they know I do not take any nonsense. I do not even argue with them, I just say 'if you have a problem go and sort it out with the headmaster' They at first like with all teachers try it on but as soon as they get the message they behave.

They have learnt, as already explained, how to respect me because I respect them, so I never get any problems, student and I know how to respect each other, and yes we still do have fun in class, but to a point where it does not go to far.

After lunch, the headmaster, myself, and a couple of staff went into the nearest big town, Bandarawela. To do some shopping. I got some new bed sheets and other essential things I needed. We went in the College Mini Bus. When we got there Fr Saman who is a teacher at the College in his 30s and I went off together and got the stuff we needed.

After all meeting up together after shopping the Headmaster paid for our lunch at a café before we left. The distance to Bandarawela is only 18 miles away but takes an hour to get there and an hour to get back because of the poor roads and hills. We left College at 3pm and got back for 7pm. Tomorrow, I hoping to get to the next town from St. Thomas' College which I usually go to, Welimada to check my emails, but will have to wait till lunch time just in case I am needed here at College. The College does not finish lessons until 230am on Saturdays, and then I am usually needed in the afternoon by the headmaster for some other matter which may vary. Like any minister we are always on call. I have to have my mobile phone with me at all times.

[Saturday 17th January 2009.](#)

In the Morning caught the bus into Welimada. I never really have breakfast at College on a Saturday morning. Got to town and was disappointed to see half the shops I needed to get to were closed, and this was at 11am in the morning. Both internet café's I know off in this town were closed. Did buy some nice tomatoes and butter to take back and went to this café I know.

Had two nice big egg rolls one Chicken Patta and nice coffee all for 75p. Arrived back to College from Welimada for lunch. The journey there by

bus was the same as usual but coming back for the first time the bus was empty.

In the evening I just spent time preparing for Sunday before Supper at 7pm. Usually I go down to the Keble College canteen for supper at 630pm half hour earlier where the girls and some of the junior boys are there having prep. They are always happy that I turn up early so they can have help in their English work.

This is not on my time table and is an unofficial lesson, but the children always acknowledge the extra help and I feel that I am a great help. In fact when it comes to 7pm I am sat at my table having lunch and still checking some of their work with them whilst eating before they sit down to their lunch.

After I just chilled out but remembered I promised the senior boys I would play basket ball at lunch time with them, but forgot all about them.

Sunday 18th January 2009

Had breakfast at he 7am in the Keble College, the Children have to wear uniform on Sunday mornings and attend Chapel or their own religious organised services if they are not Christians. Not like Saturday mornings where they can wear their own dress. On Saturday mornings the boys like to wear their football Shirts usually Manchester Utd. or Liverpool. The girls like to dress up and look treble their own age like all girls do with perfume and jewellery, which the headmaster lets go to an extend.

On Sunday morning both boys and girls have to wear their uniform in perfect condition for Chapel. If the headmaster is taking the service he is very keen to check their dress as they leave Chapel. No sandals are to be worn during Chapel, all ties have to be fastened properly no top buttons undone.

This morning I was down to the first part of the service up to Communion excluding the sermon while the Headmaster was to take the Communion part and the preach the sermon. But when I arrived there was a note that the headmaster could not turn up till later on in the service, so I ended up taking the sermon (with no preparation or notes) and had to start the first part of the Communion section till the headmaster turned up, and sneaked through the vestry side door into the Chancel. I finished the service after the Communion.

To day after the service it just seemed to be endless phone calls asking to attend emergency or other arranged important meetings. I even missed

lunch, but had time at 3pm to take a quick dip in the pool, a very hot day. I got back to the Chaplains house at 4pm and just sat back in relieve when I noticed that I had arranged a clergy meeting for 5pm at the Chaplains house so had 30 mins sit before preparing for the meeting and getting coffee ready.

The clergy meeting went well, the headmaster was happy. I chaired the meeting.

After the meeting I started to update the changes we had made at the meeting before going to supper - been surrounded by those wanting help with their homework before handing it in first thing in the morning, it is the girls 99% of the time who seem to be interested in asking for help and making sure they get good marks

Monday 19th January 2009.

The Headmaster took Morning Prayer to day which gave me a breather. As I had this and that to do. After breakfast I chilled out a bit and could hear from the Chaplains House the Keble students 6-11 year olds stood outside their class room singing the Sri Lankan National Anthem followed by the College Anthem. They take so much pride in their culture and way of life. The students keep asking me if I am teaching them today. I stand in for lessons if a teacher is not available.

Today the Ceylon Bible Society turned up to see the Headmaster. He referred them to me at the Chaplains House, just when I could have done without them because I had so much to do.

They help in advising and supporting us with literature for Bible Classes services, and Confirmation Groups etc. It was for me to decide what we needed and what to order.

The Headmaster is away this weekend.

Had a relaxed day so was in bed early.

Tuesday 20th January 2009.

Had no morning service to take in the morning so spent some extra time visiting the classrooms. In the morning spent time in preparation, later in the day managed to get the crazy bus ride to Welimada to get a few things I needed and to check my emails.

Got back about 3pm and had to then see the headmaster.

Had supper at Keble College, and then chilled out for the evening. Had a

couple of senior boys come round to print out some music sheets for Chapel use on Sunday.

Compline to night in the Chapel. The pupils have to attend the service or be reported to the headmaster.

Compline is always said in English and the students must follow the service. They are actually very good at responding to the prayers and sentences.

Otherwise today was just catching up on paper work and business matters.

[Wednesday 21st January 2009.](#)

No Chapel this morning because of Assembly at 845am. Everyone in the College including staff must attend without fail, what ever faith/religion you are the assembly is for everyone.

The children line up outside the hall and then led in by files by the prefects to their seats. Then the Headmaster lead the staff in by procession. I start the assembly of with opening prayers. The assembly then goes as need be. We end by singing the National Anthem (Sri Lankan) the we sing the College Anthem.

The Headmaster and I leave the hall, the staff then follow the pupils are led out in files after the staff have left the hall.

But today before the Assembly the Headmaster called a emergency Staff meeting in the Library at 830am. So the Assembly did not start in the hall next door to the library till 915am after the staff meeting. The students had to sit and wait in the hall until after the staff meeting.

I also led the prayers in the staff meeting. The staff meeting again was straight to the point with matters, the headmaster does not blabber on about matters.

The day was just back and forth to the office for meetings or doing this and that.

In the afternoon I felt bad with chest pains and collapsed later on but was OK, I get this problem now and again, but feel fine afterwards.

They insisted I went to hospital but I was OK.

I missed out helping the choirmaster with choir practice in the Chapel at 6pm not feeling strong, but felt OK to take Compline at 8pm.

The boys were bad. They did not turn up to Chapel till 815pm, I read the short version of Compline because of their lateness, and that the rest us waited for them.

After the service when I read out the notices I asked the boys who were

late what their excuse was, as discipline is kept on time keeping here, especially with me, I will not tolerate bad time keeping, there was silence for a moment until one of the students had the nerve to speak for the rest. Sorry they said, but there was a snake in the swimming pool and we fished it out and killed it, (the swimming pool is next to the Chapel) I said, I do not care if there is a crocodile in the pool, Compline starts at 8pm as you are aware, no more excuses any more. In future Compline is 8pm not a minute later or you will not have your name on the attendance list. Compline is compulsory here for everyone from year 7 upwards, they have to sign their names for attending so that the headmaster knows who has been and who does not turn up.

I am so strict that anyone who is more than 3 minutes late does not put their name on the list. The headmaster is impressed but warned me Sri Lankans are slow and bad at keeping time, I replied, not with me, I am English so they will go by English standards with me, and to the headmaster's surprise it works, but like I have said, they respect me because I respect them, so they do not like to upset me, respect to each other rather than just giving orders one way always works in return, other staff now see that.

Thursday 22nd January 2009

Started the day with breakfast and helping the girls with their home work before eating. We then had Morning Prayer in the Chapel at 730am.

After Morning Prayer I returned to Keble College where all the young 5-9 year olds line up outside their classrooms on the court and do ten minute exercise with music in the back ground. After the exercise they stand to attention for the Sri Lankan National Anthem which they also sing.

During the day I did a lot of prep for the weekend knowing that I had lessons all day on Friday, also had a lot of paper work and business that the headmaster threw at me to do, I feel the pressure of work is building up and I am getting very tired and get lots of pain if I do too much. We have two students from Scotland, lads in their 20s who have come to stay for a couple of weeks, they are on tour. They will be helping with the sport activities and will stop with me at the Chaplains House.

The boys from Keble College, next to the Chaplains House, keep climbing the fruit trees in the Chaplains garden which they are forbidden to do, I had to keep shouting at them to get down, but 10 minutes later another group was in the trees, the head of Keble punished them by making them

miss supper, he had caught them himself. The Head of Keble College told me I should not have shouted but thrown stones at them or whacked them out of the tree with sticks. Abuse is not an issue here in Sri Lanka by law yet. Teachers can even hit pupils black and blue and they would not get into trouble.

The students were all on time for Compline to night after last night's performance, I will teach them discipline and time keeping whether it is Sri Lankan culture and way of living or not.

The headmaster is proud and impressed that they listen and take note.

[Friday 23 January 2009.](#)

Today was very busy. Had breakfast at the Keble College at 630am. Today was the College Cross Country the Houses taking part, in all about 60 students attempting the challenge. Before the race a very short Morning Prayer Service in the Chapel. The race started at 10am. All the College students and staff gathered outside the Main Hall and all the runners lined up to start. I gave a short prayer over the microphone then the headmaster waved the flag to start.

A mini bus of staff with first aid and police escort led the race. There were many tears from some of the runners afterwards who failed to finish or lost their best time from previous years. They show great pride and show emotion when they fail.

Afterward there was a special arranged meal. The race is only 5 mile. Some of the staff was absent today, so I was dragged in to take extra lessons of Divinity and Theology between 1130am - 3pm Fr. Saman was away, so I stood in for him. I had three different lessons to take at all different grade levels.

I lost time in other work I had to do.

In the afternoon with a couple of other staff I went to Welimada to do some shopping to get things I could not get in Gurutalawa village, again we took what I call the 'Crazy Bus' we left after my last lesson and returned about 6pm. We also checked our emails.

During the evening I invited a couple of staff back for English supper, proper English Chips and sausages.

The last few days have been cold as such for this area, but still warm enough to wear our shorts.

[Saturday 24th January. 2009.](#)

Very poorly today with bad chest pains and breathing difficulties. Could not get my balance, even felt bad after taking my medication. Thank God I had no rota or services to take today until 6pm. Stayed in bed till 330pm because I was bad. The Headmaster came to see me, and it got round the College I was ill, and the students kept continually coming round to visit me to see if I was well.

Even so a notice was left on the door not to disturb. I did get some rest and peace, and was better to go to Chapel for Sunday Choir rehearsals, which Fr. Goodchild always conducts. Fr. Goodchild is now nearly 90 and before his retirement many years ago was Chaplain to the College, he is now Chaplain emeritus and still lives at the College. His pride is taking the Saturday night Chapel Choir rehearsals which include practicing the hymns for the next days service etc. So we let him happily continue doing that, I turn up just help and show my face.

He is very strict and always sees the Chapel as first priority.

The students usually have film night in the hall on Friday evenings organised by one off the staff. But this week it was cancelled on the Friday, and foolishly the staff member in charge changed it to Saturday night, so no one turned up to Chapel for Hymn practice. Fr. Goodchild let fire, it was like bonfire nights fireworks were off, he was fuming. 'Saturday night is Hymn practice, it always as been, how dare they go to film, they have all day free to see film, how dare staff disrupt my practice, and what right have the students to go, when Chapel comes first'

He went to the Hall, gave the tutor a roasting and took each student back to the Chapel, they dare not argue or disagree.

It must be pointed out that there are two choir practices. The Wednesday Choir practice is for the Chapel choir and the choir practice for all year round services and lead the worship in services in singing.

The Saturday night practices are for everyone just to go through the hymns for Sunday morning and what the readings are, remember most services are in English so they need to be able to know and sing the hymns right.

[Sunday 25th January 2009.](#)

Did not have breakfast, it looked awful, red rice with currents. I miss my shreddies etc. Here they only have Cornflakes, Rice Crispies, Coco Pops and Frosties, but then they taste different, and the milk you buy is not the same unless you can get fresh milk which is not easy, it is all processed

milk in the shops.

I still have yet to arrange dates for the visits of the Ceylon Bible Society and the Gideon Bible Society.

I helped conduct Communion Service to day and preached on today's Gospel which in the Ceylon Lectionary was Mark 1: 14-20 our lectionary varies a little in some cases. I also decided not to celebrate 'The Conversion of Paul' which is on 26 January, and sometimes transferred to the nearest Sunday instead, but I will celebrate the festival tomorrow at Morning Prayer, the rightful day, seeing that we have Chapel everyday. Tomorrow here in Sri Lanka we also celebrate the founding of the Salvation Army in Sri Lanka. 1883, and it is also the anniversary of the inaugurated of the Presbytery of Lanka in 1954.

The rest of the day for me was just staying at the Chaplains House in case I was needed, I had a few matters to deal with, including one young boy who had just started was home sick and turned up in tears wanting to go home.

I must admit I too feel homesick and so far away it is not like that you can just pop home for a weekend. But I also love it here, and this is where God wants me.

My health is beginning to fail me again, and I struggle a lot on some days, but my work is hard, in taking up all my time and with the responsibilities I have, which I am not used to and it is very hard. I have never felt so responsible or been in such a position of authority as this before. My way of life, my attitude, my skills and responsibilities have had to change so much, I am completely a different person. Even my movements and conversations I make have to be with dignity and respect, because of my position and the College and people I have to work within and with. In return I am given great respect and trust.

Every student either stands, slightly bows or removes their cap when they see me even other staff respect me.

But again the students here give great respect and act with dignity.

Even today I feel weak and tired, the work is very demanding with what I have, I even now stand in with teaching more, which takes up valuable time in my other duties and work.

Tomorrow the headmaster is taking Morning Prayer, and with not feeling to good I will skip breakfast which means I will not have to get up until 8pm.

Today I had dinner but could not eat it. It just was not what I felt like eating. So had no dinner.

Made some Proper English Chips for supper, but even them I could not eat them, perhaps now I can not eat English food because of trying to eat Sri Lanka food, which means in food I am just in limbo, can not now eat English or Sri Lankan food, or perhaps it is that I am not feeling well.

Monday 26th January 2009

Had no breakfast, and had a bad night with terrible dreams, which I will not go into. The headmaster took morning prayer this morning at 730am in Chapel. Just rain, rain and rain all day. Had a meeting with the headmaster today to discuss College matters and other issues in confidence, so can not go into any discussion here. He will be away for the last part of the week. At the moment I am over loaded which does not help. When I write these reports to you I am having to do them in the early hours of the morning when I have free time.

Went into the village today to post some letters to England. One normal 3 page letter by airmail to England only cost 7p from Sri Lanka.

When I wanted to send some books (5kg) from Sri Lanka to England it cost £90. To send a parcel by post to England from Sri Lanka (15Kg) not 5 but 15kg it only costs £29 so from Sri Lanka to send a 15kg parcel it would cost £270, what a difference. £241 difference, for sending the same weight parcel. Just shows.

The Headmaster is actually showing a little concern over my health.

Monday 26th - Thursday 29th January no report due to been in hospital.

Thursday 29th January 2009.

Monday collapsed with chest pains and was taken to Base General Hospital, Diyathalawa with heart problems, discovered I had a minor stroke but not serious. They kept me in until Wednesday night, for checks and progress. The Headmaster was actually in a meeting with the bishop in Colombo, Both the Bishop and Headmaster were really worried. Since coming back to College after been in hospital for three days, the bishop as instructed me to return to Colombo for further treatment.

Had a difficult time in hospital. The hospital was like the 1930s including all the instruments of the 1930s, even the beds even the old hand pumped blood pressure equipment. It was a nightmare and unbelievable conditions. I will not go into details of the condition of the hospital, etc, etc, I could

write a full book on the subject, where every word would have your mouth wide open in disbelief. I will let your imagination wonder, and it would not be far of what you are thinking, if you can picture Florence Nightingale. All I will say is that the toilets are just not describable and stray dogs were aloud to roam the wards. Even the nurses uniforms were like Victorian uniforms. This will give you a little imagination of what you should be thinking of now.

I was glad to get out. Just before I left I collapsed and had a fit again, but this time the College staff who came to pick me up just whipped me out of the hospital and back to the College sick bay, where further treatment was given.

Whilst I was in hospital, staff. were continually visiting me. The College is 20 miles away from Diyathalawa, but they were aloud to come by College Mini Bus to see me. Everyone in the College were so concerned.

Back to College now but told to rest until the bishop instructs me to go to Colombo for further treatment which will not be for a few days.

Fr. Saman took charge of pastoral care and services while I was away, but the students took advantage again by lacking in laziness and slacking in time keeping again.

[Friday 30th January 2007.](#)

Sports Day. This is held on the College Sports field which is about half a mile away from the College at the other side of the College farm.

It consists of a massive pavilion with track and pitches of all kinds. There are 4 College Houses which complete against each other. On the day they were lots of refreshment tents, tents for the students, teachers, etc. When mean tents they were like those medieval square tents like they had when they had carnivals. All the College governors and other big dignitaries turned up, all the students, staff, and families turned up to watch the events, over 2000 people at least. The Headmaster, myself and other dignitaries sat in a row on the pavilion, prayers were said, opening words, I had to judge the best fancy dress and cups and trophies were handed out. To start a representative from each house ran together each with a torch and together lit a big torch in the middle of the field we then sang the national anthem. The games were opened.

I was not well and did not turn up, but with the occasion and dignitaries there it was important I was there with the headmaster, so I got sent for. I am still very weak and the bishop insists that I return to Colombo for

some more serious tests and treatment. But I have so much to do and prepare for.

I judged the infant fancy dress. And took part in many things. The Guest speaker was an old Guru Boy (St. Thomas' student) who was now a very rich man in the USA. He was so proud to be an ex pupil and reminded everyone in his speech that St. Thomas' College was a very highly respected, important and special College in Sri Lanka and that all pupils should be honoured to have been accepted and should take full advantage of their education at the College, when they look back in the future and realise the College they went to they will then see how lucky they had been but will always say that they should have done this and that while they were there, and did not, so he reminded them to look at the College and its gifts now and use them before it is too late.

The event was a bit like a Gala as well as an Sports Day, again a little disorganised in some parts and behind.

All the guests and dignitaries were invited back to the headmasters for lunch afterwards.

In the evening when I was finally excused by the headmaster I just went back to my place and chilled out with an ice cold lager which I felt I rightly deserved. Shhhh, you are not meant to know that, about the lager I mean.

I work hard so deserve at least one treat, even so it is not recommended for ministers here to drink it looks bad, completely different in England. The bishop understands I am an English man and jokes about me missing my beer, but he knows I sneak a quiet beer in now and again, and turns a blind because he knows, I drink in private on my own and know my limit and do not abuse the situation, our headmaster also spent 5 years in England doing Theology, so too knows the English man likes of a pub and a drink.

[Saturday 31st January 2009.](#)

Well do these boys ever give up. Cross Country Running, Sports day and now today a 10 mile hill hike, all in a week. They are all very athletic and sporty and fit. - Ok girls, calm down - Sport is compulsory every day for every pupil here, and they love it especially football, badminton, Cricket, basketball and football. We even have our own full size swimming pool, but half the time spent at the pool is fishing out snakes.

Because of my heart condition the bishop officially will not let me play sport much, he does let me play a little but worries, he is always checking

up on me.

The Bishop asked me the other month what sport I enjoyed, I said football, swimming and cricket. He said he did not mind me swimming a little and may be a little basket ball. He then went on to say at least do not try rugby, I replied with a grin 'No way, it's a woman's game anyway' I thought he was going to have a fit, then he smiled what was that you said. I did not realise he was a fanatic rugby player, even a professional who played for Sri Lanka, so I have been told.

Even now every night he goes jogging round the Cathedral. He is about 6ft+ but heavy build on the shoulders.

But what a gentleman he is, cares for everyone alike what ever rank, position or class they belong to.

Anyway will close here, so here endeth the 6th chapter.