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CARITAS
SRI LANKA
SEDEC

Social and Economic Development Centre

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
1ST JANUARY – 30TH APRIL 2024



CSL NEWSLETTER

Welcome Note from the National Director



As we enter the beginning of 2024's first quarter, I'm delighted to reconnect with you through our latest quarterly newsletter. This period has seen significant progress and achievements, thanks to your consistent support and our team's dedication.

In recent months, we completed the CIMS onsite assessment, which is a big step in improving our standards and practices. Additionally, our Lenten spiritual program brought inspiration during the sacred season, along with valuable partner visits. Through teamwork, we reached our project goals, demonstrating our commitment to collaboration and determination.

Looking ahead, let's face challenges together with optimism and determination. Your ongoing support is vital as we navigate toward growth and success.

I sincerely thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your involvement is essential to our shared accomplishments.

With warm regards,

Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson
National Director



CSL NEWSLETTER



CSL Embraces Unity and Tradition: 2024 Thaipongal Celebration

On January 19, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka joyously celebrated Thaipongal at the SEDEC premises, embodying unity amidst cultural diversity. Rev. Fr. ManoKumar led a bilingual Mass, honoring both Sinhala and Tamil languages, highlighting the organization's commitment to inclusivity. Staff, dressed in traditional attire, respectfully embraced Tamil customs by sitting on the floor during the ceremony. The SEDEC premises were decorated with Tamil decorations, creating a visually immersive experience. Following Mass, attendees shared delicious Pongal rice and diverse Sri Lankan cuisine, promoting unity and cultural exchange. Caritas Sri Lanka's celebration exemplified the strength in respecting and embracing diverse traditions, reinforcing its dedication to unity and harmony.



Celebrating Culture and Unity: Caritas Sri Lanka's Awrudu Festival 2024

On April 29, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka celebrated its annual Awrudu Festival, uniting staff members with a day full of cultural richness and community spirit. The event kicked off with a holy Mass led by Rev Fr Luke Nelson and continued with a spread of traditional Sinhala and Tamil sweets. Highlighting the festivities, Mrs. Prasangi performed, adding a heartwarming note of resilience and joy. Staff participated in traditional games, promoting teamwork and unity while dressed in cultural attire. This celebration not only honoured Sri Lanka's diverse traditions but also strengthened the bonds within the Caritas community.



Caritas Norway Inspires Sustainable Transformation in Sri Lanka



From January 24th to 30th, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka welcomed Mr. Tobias Wilbers and Ms. Maria Langås from Caritas Norway on a transformative journey across Sri Lanka's Food Security program field locations in Kandy, Anuradhapura, and Vanni. Guided by National Director Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson Perera, the visit showcased the impactful partnership between Caritas Norway, the Government of Norway (NORAD), and Caritas Sri Lanka. Since 2018, the island-wide Food Security program has empowered over 7,800 farmer families, benefiting 6,800 school children, 690 unemployed youth, and 3,000 mothers. During insightful field visits, the advisors witnessed firsthand the program's profound effects, fostering gratitude and hope in communities nationwide. This collaborative effort exemplifies sustainable development and compassionate outreach, showing the way for positive change.

On January 30, 2024, Caritas Norway delegates Tobias Wilbers and Maria Langås met with Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Antony Perera to discuss collaborative efforts with Caritas Sri Lanka, focusing on sustainable agriculture and religious harmony.

Caritas Norway has been dedicated since January 2018 to reducing hunger and poverty across Sri Lanka's 25 districts. The meeting demonstrated an ongoing commitment to positive change and collaboration.



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CSL Welcomes Caritas Asia President Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario

On February 6, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka (CSL) had the privilege of hosting Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario, President of Caritas Asia. The visit began with a significant meeting attended by CSL's National Director, managers, and unit heads. Dr. Alo's engaging narrative highlighted the collective impact of Caritas, inspiring all present. Interactive discussions and presentations illuminated CSL's diverse contributions. Dr. Alo emphasized continuous learning, leaving a lasting impression on CSL staff. His visit strengthened organizational bonds and guided CSL's future endeavours. Dr Alo's wisdom will fuel CSL's commitment to positive change and collective purpose.

CSL Honors Misereor's Partners in Collaborative Visit

On February 13, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka (CSL) welcomed Ms. Broeckmann Corinna and Ms. Ulrike Weinspach from Misereor, marking a significant moment of collaboration. Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson and CSL staff expressed gratitude for the enduring partnership's impact. Presentations from CSL units highlighted Misereor-funded projects' progress, emphasizing transparency and shared goals. Financial discussions ensured efficient resource management while safeguarding policies were addressed. The day showcased the strong bond between Misereor and CSL, affirming the power of partnerships in driving positive change. Such visits highlight Misereor's significant role in CSL's ongoing success and community impact.





Celebrating Women's Strength: International Women's Day 2024 at CSL

On March 7, 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka (CSL) hosted a remarkable celebration for International Women's Day at the auditorium. Women from diverse backgrounds, including plantation communities, the North and East regions, activists, and social workers, gathered to commemorate their achievements. National Director Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson lit the oil lamp, symbolizing women's empowerment.

The event, structured in two sessions, featured personal narratives, expert insights, and cultural performances. Dr Ajantha and Ms Achala discussed women's rights, while heartfelt performances honoured women's resilience. Plantation workers and others shared their stories, emphasizing solidarity. A closing movie clip, "The Voice of Women," echoed women's collective strength. CSL's celebration affirmed its dedication to gender equality and social justice, amplifying women's voices and stories of triumph.





CSL NEWSLETTER

Celebrating Progress: CSL Advances with CI MS

In a significant step towards organizational excellence, Caritas Sri Lanka achieved a milestone by undergoing an onsite assessment of the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards (CIMS) from April 2nd to 5th, 2024. Dr John Arokiaraj conducted the assessment, engaging in various meetings and field visits to the Rathnapura and Mannar Dioceses communities.

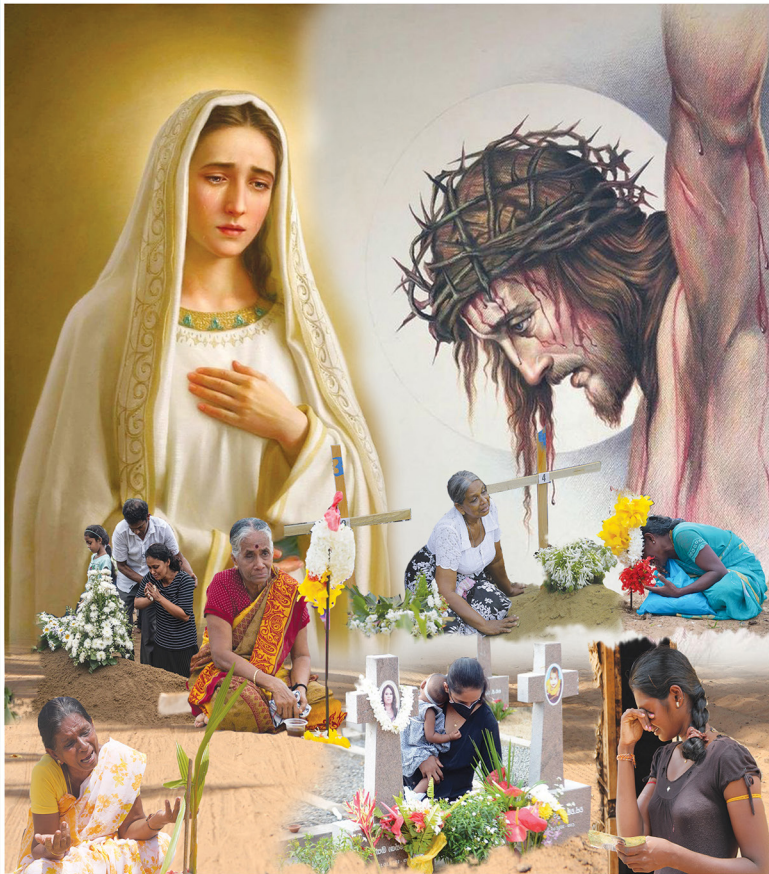
Dr. John's expertise and constructive approach were important in guiding CSL towards further enhancements in operations and standards. This assessment underscores CSL's dedication to growth and development, with gratitude extended to all stakeholders for their support. Caritas Sri Lanka remains committed to its mission, poised for continued impactful humanitarian efforts.





CSL Enriches Lenten Season with Spiritual Program and Publications

Lent with the Oppressed - Seeking Justice



Caritas Sri Lanka, in its commitment to fostering spiritual growth and social justice, organized a compelling Lenten program for the 2024 Lenten season. At the heart of this initiative was the publication of a book titled "Lent with the Oppressed - Seeking Justice." This comprehensive guide offers 40 days of profound reflections, meticulously crafted to deepen spiritual introspection and inspire action towards social equality. What sets this publication apart is its accessibility, being available in three languages, and ensuring its reach across diverse communities.

Complementing this literary offering, Caritas Sri Lanka also unveiled a thematic poster for Lent, echoing the sentiment of "Lent with the Oppressed - Seeking Justice." This visual representation serves as a reminder of the Lenten journey towards solidarity with the marginalized and the pursuit of justice.

Furthermore, the organization demonstrated its dedication to grassroots engagement by distributing these resources through all diocesan centres across Sri Lanka, ensuring widespread access and participation. In a profound display of devotion and solidarity, Caritas Sri Lanka staff engaged in the Way of the Cross at Karuwalagaswewa Church, aligning their spiritual practices with the essence of the Lenten program.

Through these initiatives, Caritas Sri Lanka continues to embody its mission of compassion and empowerment, enriching the Lenten season with profound spiritual insights and a call to action for justice and solidarity.



Lenten Spiritual Programme 2024

Catholic National Commission for Justice, Peace and Human Development
Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC



<https://www.caritaslk.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/LEP-2024-English-Book-1.pdf>



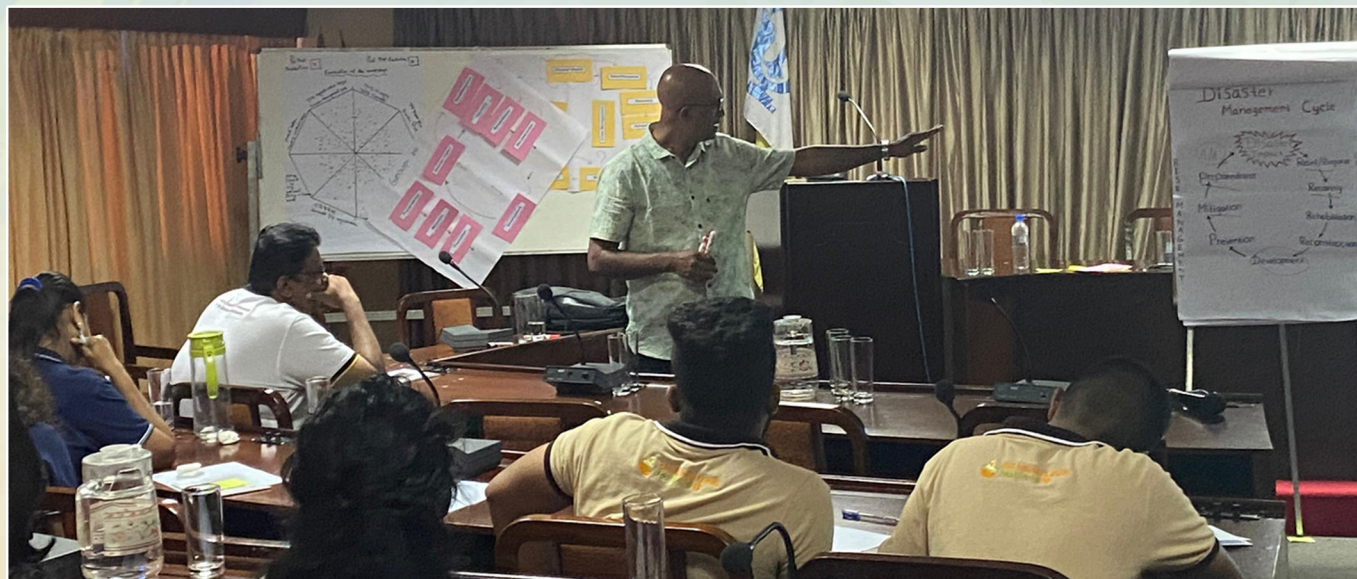
CSL Enhances Disaster Preparedness Through Capacity Building Training Program

Caritas Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation (DRRM) unit, recently concluded a two-day training program on March 20th and 21st, 2024. Funded by Caritas Asia, the initiative aimed to bolster staff skills in disaster preparedness and mitigation. Held at the Caritas Sri Lanka Auditorium in Sinhala Medium, the training delved into DRRM intricacies, policy exploration, and community-based disaster preparedness planning.

Participants utilized the Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (HVCA) approach, engaging in practical exercises and group activities.

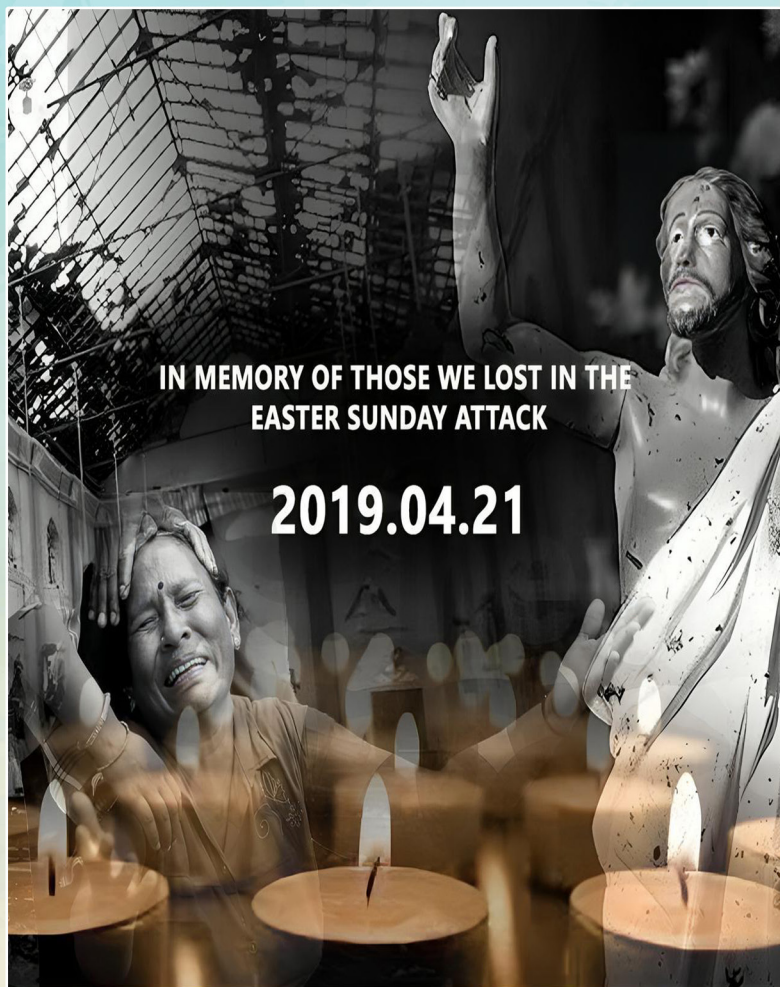
Distinguished resource persons facilitated sessions, fostering a culture of shared learning. The same workshop in Tamil Medium was held at Vavuniya from 16th - 19th of April 2024.

This initiative underscores Caritas Sri Lanka's commitment to staff empowerment and community resilience.





CSL Marks 5th Anniversary of Easter Sunday Bomb Attack



IN MEMORY OF THOSE WE LOST IN THE
EASTER SUNDAY ATTACK

2019.04.21

On the 21st of April 2024, Caritas Sri Lanka memorializes the fifth anniversary of the tragic Easter Sunday bombings at Katuwapitiya Church, with the National Director Rev. Fr. Luke Nelson in attendance.

This day remembers the profound loss and continued grief of those affected by the violence that shook our nation's core values of tolerance, peace, and communal living.

As we honour the memory of the victims, Caritas Sri Lanka repeats its commitment to supporting the affected families and calls for decisive action to bring the perpetrators to justice.

On that anniversary, we reaffirmed our dedication to a future where peace prevails, advocating for justice and reconciliation in a society striving to heal.



Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC



Get Involved: Join Hands with Caritas Sri Lanka

Are you passionate about making a difference in the lives of those in need?

Caritas Sri Lanka invites you to be a part of our mission to serve communities and uphold humanitarian values across the nation.

Here are some ways you can get involved:

- 1. Volunteer:** Become a volunteer and directly contribute to our projects and programs aimed at uplifting the underprivileged.
- 2. Donate:** Your generous donations enable us to reach more individuals and families in need. Every contribution, big or small, makes a significant impact.
- 3. Spread Awareness:** Help us raise awareness about our initiatives and campaigns by sharing our stories on social media platforms or organising awareness events in your community.
- 4. Join Events:** Participate in our events and fundraisers to support our ongoing projects and connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for serving others.
- 5. Partner with Us:** If you represent an organization or business interested in collaborating with Caritas Sri Lanka, reach out to explore partnership opportunities.

**Together, let's create a more compassionate and equitable society.
Join hands with Caritas Sri Lanka today and be a part of positive change!**



To all our supporters, volunteers, donors, and partners,
thank you for your unwavering commitment
to Caritas Sri Lanka's mission.

Together, we make a difference.



Caritas Sri Lanka



www.caritaslk.org



Caritas Sri Lanka - SEDEC



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