

# Fr. Balasuriya reconciles with Rome

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (CNS) — The excommunication of Sri Lankan Oblate Father Tissa Balasuriya was lifted in a ceremony in the private chapel of the archbishop's house in Colombo.

"I consider it a satisfactory solution," Father Balasuriya said after the rite, reported UCA News, an Asian church news agency based in Thailand. "I thank all those who prayed and interceded (on my behalf)."

Authorized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Archbishop Nicholas M. Fernando of Colombo lifted the excommunication at the Jan. 15 ceremony.

During the ceremony, Father Balasuriya signed a long profession of faith written by Pope Paul VI in 1968, the Vatican said Jan. 17.

Before he was excommunicated in January 1997, Father Balasuriya had been asked to sign an oath written specifically for him by the doctrinal congregation. He objected and later told reporters part of the reason was because it included a sentence saying the Catholic Church has no authority to ordain women priests.

Initially, instead of signing the congregation's oath, Father Balasuriya signed a copy of Pope Paul's profession after adding a phrase explaining he upheld what was in the 1968 formula "in the context of theological development and church practice since Vatican II and the freedom and responsibility of Chris-

tians and theological searchers under canon law."

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the doctrinal congregation, told reporters in January 1997 that "we would have accepted his signing the great, rich, beautiful profession of faith of Paul VI if he had not added the clause."

"In the end, the clause places the whole content in question and renders his signature invalid," Cardinal Ratzinger said at the time.

Father Balasuriya appealed his excommunication to the Apostolic Signatura, the church's supreme court. His appeal was rejected Feb. 10, 1997.

According to the information published by the Vatican on the lifting of the Oblate's excommunication, Father Balasuriya also signed a "statement of reconciliation" affirming his Catholic faith and his recognition of "the authority of the magisterium exercised at both the local and universal levels in regard to his writings."

"Concerning the future, Father Balasuriya agrees to submit his writing regarding faith and morals to the imprimatur of both the diocesan and religious ordinaries," that is, he agreed to seek permission to publish his work from his local bishop and his Oblate superior.

The Vatican provided journalists in Rome with a copy of the "Decree of Reconciliation" signed by Archbishop Fernando.

In addition to explaining the process used, Archbishop Fernando's decree said, "In view of this renewed communion with the church, we rejoice in the Lord and with our brother Tissa Balasuriya; we look forward to a fruitful ministry in the service of the people of God."

In Colombo, the reconciliation ceremony was attended by more than 20 people, including Archbishop Osvaldo Padilla, apostolic nuncio to Sri Lanka, and Bishop Joseph V. Fernando of Kandy, president of the Sri Lankan bishops' conference.

Among those present were Father Marcello Zago, superior general of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who dialogued with Father Balasuriya for six days immediately preceding his official reconciliation with the Catholic Church.

Also present were three councilors from the Oblate headquarters in Rome; the Oblate Sri Lankan provincial, Father Bernard Quintus; and delegates from the Center for Society and Religion, founded by Father Balasuriya.

Father Balasuriya incurred excommunication for statements he made in his book, *Mary and Human Liberation*, published in 1990.

The Vatican's doctrinal congregation stated that the book contained heretical statements regarding Mary, original sin, Christ's redemptive role and papal infallibility.



CNS/Reuters

## Cuba readies

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As Cubans readied for Pope John Paul II's Jan. 21-25 visit to Cuba, the pope asked for prayers for his trip and joked that, with God's help, he would not only travel to the Caribbean island but return safely to Rome.

At a Sunday blessing in St. Peter's Square Jan. 18 the pope said, "I ask you to accompany me with prayers during my upcoming visit to Cuba." As a group held aloft a sign that read, "Have a good trip," he added: "With God's blessing, I'll not only have a good trip to Cuba but also be able to come back."

# CALENDAR

## All Dioceses

### Workshops

■ FEB. 6-8 — Marriage Preparation Program: "Engaged Encounter"; Borromeo Prayer Center, 3011 Dewey Ave., Rochester; call 716/421-0756.

## Livingston County

### Religious Activities

■ TUE, JAN. 27 — Presentation: "Small Christian Community Group Renewal"; with Deacon Claude Lester; St. Mary's Church, 13 North St., Geneseo; 7-9 p.m.; registration required; call Elaine, 800/388-7177, ext. 328 or 716/328-3210, ext. 328.

■ THU, JAN. 29 — Musical performance: "St. Elizabeth of Hungary"; Interfaith Center, Franklin St., near SUNY Geneseo Campus, Geneseo; 6:45 p.m.; 7:30 p.m. discussion; free; Elissa Quinn with Glenn McClure and Christopher Mannelli; sponsored by Newman Catholic Community of SUNY Geneseo; call McClure Productions, 716/243-0324 or the Newman Community, 716/243-1460.

## Monroe County

### Education

■ THU, JAN. 29 — Open

house: for 5th and 6th grade children and parents; Northeastern Junior High School, 125 Kings Highway S., Irondequoit; 7 p.m.; call 716/544-0560.

### Fundraisers

■ JAN. 24, 25 — Antique sale: to benefit Our Lady of Mercy High School, 1437 Blossom Rd., Rochester; Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; \$3; professional appraiser available both days 1-3 p.m.

### Meetings

■ MON, JAN. 26 — Informational meeting: Irish Children's Program of Rochester; Our Mother of Sorrows Church, 5000 Mt. Read Blvd., Greece; 7 p.m.

### Religious Activities

■ SAT, JAN. 24 — Concert: Christian rock; featuring Tocsin; The Church of the Resurrection, 63 Mason Rd., Fairport; 7:30 p.m.; \$3; call 716/223-5503.

■ MON, JAN. 26 — Registration deadline: for Feb. 2 and 9 program "Go and Be Reconciled"; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; 7:30-9 p.m.; \$10 per session; call 716/336-4370.

■ SUN, JAN. 25 — Christian Unity: ecumenical worship service; Trinity Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, 9 Shelter St., Rochester; 3 p.m.; sponsored by the Greater Rochester Community of Churches; call 716/254-2570.

■ MON, JAN. 26 — Registration deadline: for Feb. 2 Book of the Month Club meeting; *Spiritual Surrender* by James Krisher; Mercy Prayer

Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; 1st session noon-1:30 p.m., 2nd session 7:30-9 p.m.; Sr. Margaret Deegan, RSM, leader; 716/473-6893.

■ TUE, JAN. 27 — Registration deadline: for Tues. evening workshop "7 Habits of Highly Spiritual People"; Mercy Prayer Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; Feb. 3, 10; 7-9 p.m.; \$20 for both sessions; 716/473-6893.

■ WED, JAN. 28 — Discussion: "Our Moral Values"; with Deacon Thomas Driscoll; Assumption School of Religion, 10 Baumer Pl., Fairport; 7-9 p.m.; call 716/223-0525.

■ THU, JAN. 29 — Registration deadline: for Thurs. evening program "Still Moving"; yoga stretches and breathing techniques taught in a spiritual context; Mercy Prayer Center, 65 Highland Ave., Rochester; Feb. 12, 19, 26, Mar. 5, 12; 6-7 p.m.; \$5 per session; call 716/473-6893.

■ THU, JAN. 29 — Presentation: "Small Christian Community Group Renewal"; with Deacon Claude Lester; St. Pius the Tenth Church, 3032 Chili Ave., Rochester; 7-9 p.m.; registration required; call Elaine, 800/388-7177, ext. 328 or 716/328-3210, ext. 328.

■ JAN. 30-FEB. 1 — Enneagram II: "Mini-Retreat/Workshop: Wholeness and Holiness"; Sisters of St. Joseph Spirituality Center, 402 Rogers Pky., Rochester; \$65; 716/336-4370 or 716/473-6893.

### Social Activities

■ FRI, JAN. 23 — TGIF Drop-In: sponsored by the St. Louis Single Adult Ministry; Crystal Barn, 2851 Clover Rd.,

Pittsford; 5-7 p.m.; call John, 716/225-6169 or just stop by.

■ FRI, JAN. 23 — Concert: with opera singer Yvette McDaniel; Nazareth College's Wilmot Hall of Music, 4245 East Ave., Rochester; 7 p.m.; free.

■ SAT, JAN. 24 — "Winter Guard 98": hosted by Bishop Kearney Performance Ensemble; Bishop Kearney High School, 125 Kings Hwy. S., Irondequoit; 6:30 p.m.; \$5; call Ann O'Connell, 716/342-4000.

■ SAT, JAN. 24 — Performance: "The Complete History of America (abridged)"; with the Reduced Shakespeare Company; Nazareth College Arts Center, 4245 East Ave., Rochester; 8 p.m.; tickets available at the box office or by calling 716/389-2170.

■ SUN, JAN. 25 — Superbowl party: sponsored by St. Louis Single Adult Ministry; with members from Assumption Church and Renaissance group; 5 p.m.-?; giant TV screen; \$5 and dish to pass; call George, 716/425-2279.

■ TUE, JAN. 27 — Drop-in dinner: sponsored by St. Louis Single Adult Ministry; The Brighton Restaurant, 1881 East Ave., Rochester; no reservation necessary; prices \$6-\$15.

■ TUE, JAN. 27 — Seniors dance: West Ridge Community Center, 300 Chesterton Rd., Greece; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Gene Harold's Orchestra; \$2; call 716/663-0200.

■ JAN. 29, 30 — Preview performance: "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?"; presented by the Theatre Arts Playhouse, 2106 Five Mile Line Rd., Penfield; 8 p.m.; for

reservations call 716/383-9060.

## Tompkin Tioga

### Religious Activities

■ SAT, JAN. 24 — Concert: in celebration of Christian Unity Week; Park Terrace Church, Glann Rd., Apalachin; 7:30 p.m.; with music ministries from St. Margaret Mary and three local Methodist churches.

## Yates Ontario Wayne

### Meetings

■ SAT, JAN. 24 — Breakfast meeting: of the Divorced/Separated/Bereaved Support Group of Macedon; Log Cabin Restaurant, Rt. 31F, Macedon Center; 9 a.m.; call Eleanor, 315/597-9558.

■ THU, JAN. 29 — Presentation: "Christian Moral Sexual Values"; with Sheila Cody; St. Januarius Parish Center, 180 N. Main St., Naples; 7-9 p.m.; 716/374-2414.

■ FRI, JAN. 30 — Workshop: sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes; to teach facilitators an anger management program for parents; Holiday Inn, Rt. 414, Seneca Falls/Waterloo; 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; to register call 315/252-0018.