



## EDITORIAL

### Noise pollution continues

The new Acting Commissioner of Police is responsible for a number of highly commendable initiatives and advances made by the police since he took office.

We are keen to see whether he will roll out a plan for dealing with an issue which seems to become worse with each passing day, namely the intense noise pollution adversely affecting so many.

Hardly a week goes by without there being at least one letter in the press from some part of the country complaining about blaring, often vulgar music usually affecting people in their homes. There have also been several reports of violent incidents stemming from disputes over decibel levels.

We are aware that the police force is not the only agency that is responsible for dealing with this scourge. However there is already quite a body of legislation in place which is not being enforced.

In Georgetown large music sets some with as much as a dozen speakers regularly keep entire neighborhoods awake for most of the night. The owners of music carts and an increasing number of private motor cars blare their 'music' as they move around, which can be heard for several corners at all hours of the day and night, from Sunday to Sunday.

When there is a session at the National Park, the patients at the Georgetown Hospital including those in the intensive care units as well as residents in the area have to endure the noise until the early hours of the morning.

All around the city and country, beer gardens, discos and night spots are springing up and with them come the music systems to blast the immediate environs.

Many have experienced this and sometimes even a block away it is impossible to carry on a normal conversation in a home.

High powered motor cyclists apparently with exhaust silencers missing often help to shatter what is left of the silence as they rev up their machines and roar around the city.

The law is clear. To create a public nuisance by use of a noisy instrument is illegal. The enforcement of the law seems to be the problem.

One householder told us that a case brought against a beer garden operating in a residential area has been pending for years. In the mean time the shop continues to blast its music.

This is not just a legal matter. It involves the human rights of all citizens to enjoy undisturbed peace and rest especially at nights.



### Catholic, Standard – A challenging task

Dear Editor,

The name of our paper "Catholic Standard" is a reminder to us that we hold up to the nation a STANDARD and that it is viewed through a CATHOLIC lens. Balancing this ethos that underpins the paper as "CATHOLIC" AND "STANDARD" is a challenging task. You as the Editor and also the Board that vets the contents need to insure that there is indeed balance and that one dimension does not fill up the limited pages available in the weekly paper to the detriment of the other.

Pope Paul the VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (34) calls to our attention that the Church is not willing to restrict its mission only to the religious field - to worship, piety and doctrine and dissociate itself from humankind's temporal problems.

The Conference of South American Bishops at *Puebla* stated this even more bluntly, "Christianity evangelizes the whole of human life, including the political dimension. So the Church criticizes those who would restrict the scope of faith to personal or family life; who would exclude the professional, economic, social and political orders as if sin, love, prayer and pardon had no relevance in them"(Puebla 515).

The Catholic Standard of 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014 got the balance right.

The Gospel meditation on the back page of the paper, written by Bishop Glangy of Belize, reminds us of the trying times faced by Archbishop Oscar Romero. He related to us that the priests and sisters were caught in the middle trying to protect the rights of the poor and the oppressed. While Archbishop Romero did not incite or encourage violence he called for Justice. His calls for justice led to his being killed.

Your Editorial told of the beheading of the journalist James Foley and the fact that his killers choose to post on the internet a very graphic, sickening video of that act. My thoughts immediately flashed back to that tragic picture of Fr. Bernard Darke SJ fleeing from the thug with a bayonet in hand, which was used to stab Bernard, several times, and so murdering him.

Fr. Joseph Dias SJ, in the letter columns tells of action taken by concerned persons in Mumbai India to condemn the horrifying atrocities committed by ISIS. Muslim Leaders and other activists came together at a public meeting to denounce this monster.

There is moral outrage here in Guyana as to what is going on in the Middle East. There is need now for the outrage to find expression. Where are our Christian Churches, Justice and peace groups, Church and Civic leaders, etc? Are we totally lacking in strategies to bring together our communities, to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Middle East and what is being done to them?

One senior priest in our diocese has taken on the task of collecting signatures from our Guyanese people petitioning the present Government to support, at the UN, in the condemnation of Israel for its brutal attacks on the families living in the Gaza strip.

Your editorial mentions that the late James Foley wrote after being released from another period in captivity, in Libya, that prayer, especially the rosary, got him through that captivity. Prayer is a powerful; inviting the Holy Spirit to give us the courage and wisdom needed for this time.

Like *A Voice crying in the Wilderness* – of the Rainforest **MEDINO ABRAHAM SJ**, has given us a courageous call. His piece the "*Global Garden*" is written with passion and tenderness. It comes from a person who is in love. Only a lover would feel the continued rape of his beloved land. As Pope Francis says.. "This is our sin exploiting the Earth and not allowing her to give us what she has within her".

As we are told by Albert Einstein "The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them and not doing anything"

If we have no love or we fail to stand for justice by acting justly, then we separate ourselves from our God and our worship is nothing but idolatry.

**Fr.Keith Hardless**

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It is also well known that just as contaminated water and polluted air can be harmful to human health, so too excessive noise can cause mental and physical harm.

We strongly urge the authorities – the police, judiciary, Central Planning Authority, City Council, Liquor Licensing Authority and others to take urgent action to deal with noise pollution. ❖