

those in other nations. We can read about, or see on our televisions, maybe about children in Africa or Indonesia, who are going to school for the first time; or a village in Africa that has been taught how to dig a large pond to collect the rain water in the rainy season so that, in the dry season, they still have water; or someone from a poor family, who has become very skilled in some way that is going to benefit their country. All people are the family of mankind, all over the world, and it is right for us to delight in the beauties of each other's geographical scenery and wild-life, the progress of different peoples and the richness of the different cultures. It is right to delight in music and art, literature and dancing, drama and sport.

But, sadly, partly because of television, we also have before our eyes, things that are not delightful. There are horror movies and ugliness, bad language and bad actions, violence and lack of respect. Sometimes, these undelightful things are presented as amusing (funny) and sophisticated and modern, fashionable and attractive. In England, when I asked classes of school children, of every age-group, "Have you ever seen on television, something that you wish you had not seen?" nearly all the hands go up. When your parents try to limit your viewing to what is suitable for young people, they are not being fussy or foolish, they are being responsible parents. They do not want you to see things that are not delightful.

Every day, if we are really looking, we have the opportunity to see things that are delightful and we should notice them and express our appreciation and our thanks. Year 6 gave me some very useful suggestions of what they could say to people in their lives who did their work well and kindly, reliably and responsibly – servants and drivers as well as those in higher jobs. We have to be looking out, every day, for things to delight us. Let us delight in the good. God bless you.



THE MILLENIUM RESOLUTION – LET THERE BE - 5

Assembly 60 – Thursday April 10th 2003

I need to remind some of you of the routine that you should follow if you spill some water. What you do NOT do is to pretend it has not happened and allow people to step in the water and then put muddy footprints all over the floor of the classroom and corridor. You do not deal with mistakes by pretending they have not happened. What you would have to do in most developed countries is to get a floor-cloth or mop and bucket and clean it up yourself! Here, you will probably be lucky and find one of our cleaners who will do it for you but, actually, they are responsible for cleaning at the end of the day and should not need to clean up after you all day.

The next part of the Millennium Resolution is – 'Let there be forgiveness for past wrongs.' We are all human. We do wrong things. Sometimes we do wrong things by accident or through ignorance or because we are mistaken. But sometimes people do wrong things intentionally. They are doing something nasty because they want to hurt someone. Should we forgive them?

We all do wrong things and we all need the mercy, the forgiveness, of God and so we should show mercy to one another and forgive one another. People can hurt you and me – sometimes very much – and we can say, "I will never forgive you" – but we must think whether that is right. Jesus told a funny story – and I am sure you have a similar story in your own religious writings – of a very rich man who discovered that one of his servants had been cheating him for a long time and now owed him *millions* of taka. He was very angry with him and said, "I will put you in prison until you pay me." The man fell on his knees and begged

the king for mercy – and time to repay – and the king forgave him the whole debt. How very generous! This same servant went away, very pleased, and found one of his fellow servants who owed him *twenty* taka and said, “Where is my money?” and the poor man fell on his knees and begged him for mercy and time to repay - but he said, “No, I want every taka now!” The king heard what the ungrateful servant had done, called for him and said to him, “Because you would not forgive your fellow servant the little money he owed you, I will throw you in prison until you pay every taka of the huge debt that you owe me!” This story helps us to understand how important it is to forgive others, if we expect God to forgive us. We usually think our own wrongdoing to others is very small – and that other people’s wrongdoing to us is very great – but think! Maybe God sees it as the other way round.

“I am sorry” (*dukito*) is a very important thing to say. Never marry anyone who cannot say sorry! It is the key to unlocking forgiveness. After the last World War, everyone was very shocked at the evidence of how the German people had treated the Jewish people – killing 6 ½ million of them, of which ½ million were children. The German Chancellor, Willi Brand, visited one of the worst killing camps, called Auschwitz, and at the memorial there commemorating those who died, he fell on his knees. In this, and other ways, the German people said sorry for this and other terrible things that had happened when Hitler was their dictator. That helped the countries of Europe a great deal - and now Germany is friends with those who were her enemies - and Japan also. I have seen this happen in my life-time. It has not been easy – but one side saying sorry and the other side saying, “We forgive you,” has helped so much.

A lot of crime here is because of family and other enmity. In every country, people can be very cruel to one another. I ask you to think very seriously about learning how to be a forgiving person as you grow up. It is not easy - but carrying hatred around with you is much harder and your life will suffer because of it.

Hatred is like acid – and it will damage your life. Let there be forgiveness for past wrongs.

God bless you.



PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS

Assembly 61 – Sunday April 13th 2003

I am very surprised to hear that many of you, especially in the Senior School, think so little of your teachers, that you consider that, before examinations, your time is better spent at home trying to revise for your examinations than at school. I am very surprised because some of you find it difficult to organise half an hour’s homework at home, never name several days’ worth of available hours! May I ask you please to consider that your teachers this week will be helping you with your revision by going over your work, answering questions, giving you sample questions, reminding you of the format of the questions in their particular subject and generally being extremely helpful to you. You will have a whole day free tomorrow which is a government holiday for the Bengali New Year and a whole day free for home study on Wednesday and, in the opinion of most of us here, that is quite enough. We expect to see all of you on Tuesday.

Just reading and memorising is not good revision. You need to practice questions and answers. You need to look at old question papers. You need to look at your exercise books and learn from the mistakes that you have made. You need to look at the notes you have taken and remember that lesson and, if you still have the question paper, try to write out the answers again or cover up the answers and test yourself. You have probably forgotten that exercise anyway.