

DOCUMENTATION

Permission from Maurilius Stabilini, the Vicar Apostolic, to Start a Religious House at Mannanam

This letter of permission was given in response to a written request of the founding fathers of the CMI Congregation. This is the first document that reveals the original spirit and charism of the Congregation. The original text in Malayalam has been translated into English by the Department of Research and Documentation, Chavara Hills, Kochi, under the supervision of Thomas Panthaplackal CMI.

We, Maurilius of St. Teresa, of the Discalced Carmelite Order, by God's grace and by the authority of the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop of Dolica and Interim Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Malabar and of the Vicariate of Kochi, benediction, grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ, to all those who see, read and hear this Our letter, sent and published with great desire through the hands of the reverend priests and on behalf of those who seek the holy face of Our Lord.

In the territory committed to our jurisdiction by the Apostolic See, we are ever on the alert to carry out all those things which are necessary for the welfare of the faithful and conducive to God's greater glory and the good of the Church and of those engaged in prayer and spiritual works. In other countries which were evangelised much later than Malabar, and even in those which are not as extensive as Malabar, there are many ashrams for both men and women. You, who are ancient Christians, requested the Holy Church to establish for you also similar religious houses. Yet, so far, no steps have been taken for the establishment of an ashram. There are no men and women here who have benefited by this example and the teaching about the choice of a religious life. It is not known among our spiritual brethren, lay men and women; and even among the priests. Hence, the absence of vocation to religious life. Therefore, in order to open a door for such, the priests who are entrusted with this letter, desire to establish a church and a *darsanaveedu* (ashram) for those priests who are willing to embrace religious life, and to raise the necessary funds for their maintenance. If they are left to their own resources only, they will not be able to accomplish the noble project. Contributions from many people will make it possible and easy to accomplish. He who makes a donation is happier than he who accepts it. Contributions for the

present purpose will entitle the donors to innumerable Divine favours and blessings. Those who help this project and all others who will undoubtedly share in all the benefits resulting from their work for the education of the uneducated, help to those who desire to enter the Catholic fold, work for the reunion of separated brethren, action to safeguard the wellbeing of the countries and the world at large, their work for the renewal of the Church and society and their attempt to do all that are seen good before the eyes as they are called for the kingdom of heaven, wanted to free themselves to spiritual things only.

We know that your zeal is such that it impels you to make donations for their cause of action with your available means and even beyond your capacity with a generous heart and extended hands. Be generous to help them as the poor widow of the temple or the rich of their abundance. By this you may reap a spiritual harvest.

May the grace of the Almighty God and my own blessing and benedictions be upon you!

This is issued on 1 November 1829, after the birth of Christ.

(Sd)

Fr. Maurilius, Bishop of Dolica

Interim Vicar Apostolic of the territory of Malabar and Kochi