

CMission

magazine '21

Encounter, Experience, Evangelize

Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole Creation.

Mk 16: 15

Reaching out Peripheries



January- May



A man performed at least one charitable act on a daily basis as he was convinced that God the Creator has decreed it obligatory to render others some good every day. One day, while at supper, recalling that he had not rendered any good to anyone else on that day, he first attended to the matter at hand before having his supper.

St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara (1805-1871)
Founder of CMI-CMC Congregations



Heartfelt Tribute
to Stan Swamy S.J.

Christian Life is Charity



"We too might consecrate ourselves to God's service,
and make ourselves available to one another in charity."

Pope Francis
on Marathon of prayer May 30, '21



Francis, who said he was praying for "wounded humanity," will conclude the series at a Vatican Gardens chapel on May 31. (AFP)

Pope Francis asked all Catholics throughout the world to pray throughout the month of May – traditionally dedicated to devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary – for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic and for a resumption of everyday work and social activities. Vatican News

According to the UN's children's fund, 228,000 children under 5 and 11,000 mothers died due to disruptions to essential health care services in South Asia in 2020 due to the pandemic. The current surge in infections could be even more devastating unless addressed adequately. Vatican News



A health worker inoculates a woman with anti-Covid vaccine in Kathmandu, Nepal. (AFP or licensors)



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A worker digs a grave for a Covid-19 victim in Guwahati on April 25. Anupam Nath/AP

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we Encounter

Mission of God is ever moving, transforming and converting the hearts of many. It is an opportune time to think about our mission dynamically and creatively for the kingdom of God and His works. CMISSION is a publication from the Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry engaging in transmitting the views and the visions on CMI missions around the globe.

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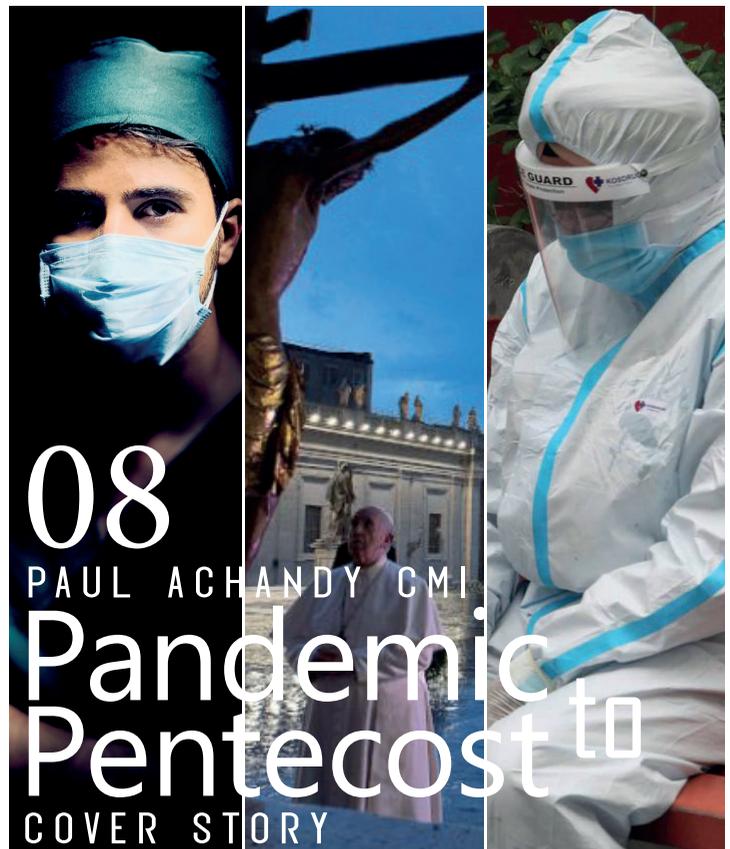
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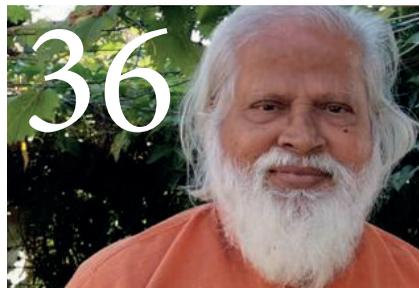
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Vishaka Tirkey



Josey Thamarassery CMI
Vicar General, Chief Editor

Coronavirus has accelerated a change of era that was already underway. The categories and assumptions that we used before to navigate our world are no longer effective. It is almost an illusion to think that we can go back to where we were, rather we need to think of a 'new normal'. What we call "reading the signs of the times" allows us to make a sense of change that we are confronting at present.

In every age people experience "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Mt 5:6), a cry goes up from the margins of society. If we can discern in such yearning a movement of God's spirit, it allows us to open to that movement and to create a new future in spite of the changes that we experience. The CMission of the present issue reaches to you with the theme of Covid 19 pandemic which has shaken the entire universe and challenges us for a change. This pandemic forms the main content of the present issue of CMission.

- **In Encounter** we try to expose different aspects of this pandemic Covid 19. It analyses through the perspective of various writers the challenge this pandemic has posed to a humanity which was gaining power and dominance at every level. The theological, moral and practical aspects of this pandemic are dealt in encounter to show that the world will never be the same, but grasping the signs of the times, we can define a new normal for the coming days. The church has made a lot of interventions during this pandemic and the health workers exhibited in a magnanimous way their commitment and dedication.
- **Experience** in this issue of CMission presents veteran missionaries like Fr Prasannabhai who offered his entire life for witnessing the Gospel in Chanda mission and has become a champion of inculturation. We are also privileged to participate in the missionary journey of Fr Paulson Muthipeedika who enumerates how he won the hearts of the poor and marginalised people of Usri. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Bijnor, Jagdalpur and Rajkot missions. This issue presents the story of Bijnor mission written by Fr George Kulangara describing how the Word of God can win the hearts of the people if we sincerely witness the Gospel values wherever we are.
- **In Evangelize** we have beautiful presentations of a missionary village Barilech in Sudan where Holy Family sisters are taking care of the pastoral needs of the poor and marginalised people of the place. Bible gram is an initiative of Jerusalem retreat centre giving orientation and creating love in the hearts of the children for the Word of God. Similarly, Asvas is a great initiative in Dharmaram Campus which feeds at least 300 needy people daily and presents a glowing picture of taking care of the poor and marginalised in the society. Jesus youth is a movement which has captured the hearts of a lot of young people for Jesus. Fr Anil Mathew of Bhopal province speaks of his interaction and involvement with this movement narrating the activities and initiatives of this movement. As this issue of CMission reaches, we hope and pray that the articles and news presented in it help us to commit ourselves to bring new hope and life in the world which has been darkened through the pandemic of Covid 19.



Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General

We are passing through one of the toughest crisis situations of our times. The pandemic Covid 19 which began its cruel sojourn in our midst since over a year has shown to us through the first and second wave our own vulnerability and helplessness in spite of the advancement we have achieved in science and technology. Whether it is man-made or not man-made, has proven to be potential enough to take the lives of many of the innocent human beings and bring down all our strivings and efforts to be at the heights of growth. This pandemic situation has taught a lot of lessons for our contemporary way we live.

One of the most important messages it has imparted is that no one is saved alone. If we are to get out of this crisis better, we have to be aware of the fact that as a human family we have a shared destination. What binds us together is the sense of solidarity. Solidarity which is more than acts of generosity, calls us to a reality that we are bound by bonds of reciprocity. Unfortunately, the sense of solidarity was fading out from the face of the earth as individualism and liberty were thriving high with the impetus of progress and advancement. For Pope Francis presents very beautifully the good samaritan as the exemplar of the solidarity in Fratelli Tutti. The Pope writes in the encyclical's second chapter that the Good Samaritan's love is not bound by his cultural differences with the Judean man to whom he ministers. Nor does he use inconvenience as an excuse not to provide aid, or to expect some kind of reward for his generosity. The Samaritan stops, pulls up, acts, enters into the world of the wounded man, throws himself into the situation, into the others' suffering, and so creates a new future. "Jesus' parable summons us to rediscover our vocation as citizens of our respective nations and of the entire world, builders of a new social bond," writes Pope Francis in Fratelli Tutti.

This is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities-what we value, what we want, what we seek-and to commit to act in our daily life on what we dream together of a new humanity. This crisis is perhaps a God-given time with a mission to create something new, dreaming big and rethinking of our priorities. We can no longer find ourselves safe and secure in false securities of the political and economic systems we had before the crisis. We need a politic that binds the entire human family together in a bond of love and respect. We need a politic to dialogue and celebrate our differences that exists in the human family on the basis of caste, creed and culture. We need a politic of dialogue and integration of the poor and the vulnerable in the society. We need to slow down, take stock, and design better ways of living together on this earth.

We need a movement of people who know we need one another, who have a sense of responsibility to others and to the world. We need a determination to focus on fraternity and tenacity to face the challenges of the future. We need to proclaim that being kind, having faith, and working together for the common good are great life goals that need to be pursued. It is a task for all of us, to which each one of us is invited. This is the mission that we need to embrace during the Covid and Post-Covid period in our society.
May the good Lord bless us all!

“



Love is our true destiny.
We do not find the meaning
of life by ourselves alone
- we find it with another.

Thomas Merton
An American Trappist monk

Let's face God in context and text

ENCOUNTER



Cover Story



Pandemic entecost



Paul Achandy CMI
Dharmaram

"Today the human being stands on the verge of becoming a god, poised to acquire not only eternal youth, but also the divine abilities of creation and destruction. Human beings are more powerful than ever before, but have very little idea what to do with all that power". (Yuval Noah Harari, in Sapiens) But a tiny corona virus has made the mighty kneel and brought the world to a halt and has made the lives of people upside down. The scientists and doctors secretly resort to prayer for a miracle and the priest submits to the science for a solution. The all-powerful sapiens have become weak and struggle on their way forward.

We are almost coming out of the second wave of the pandemic Covid 19. The first and second wave took away our dear ones and we could not give them even due farewell. We never want to remember the tragic scenes of death and funerals. Despite the learning from the first wave and strict protocols, the second wave was more deadly than the first and we were in a state of helplessness without access to the hospitals, shortage of oxygen supply and ICU beds. And now the experts predict a third wave, not at a long distance.

Individuals, families and communities are in real crisis – socio, economic and even spiritual. After the frustrating life within the home premises, with lockdown, isolation and quarantine, we too ask the Lord along with the Psalmist: "How long, Lord?" How long must I bear pain (in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day long?) (Psalm 13: 1-2) Along with Mary Magdalene and other women we too ask, "Who will roll away this stone for us?"

The very incarnation event began with a question of Mother Mary to Angel Gabriel, "How can this happen?" Here our beloved mother represents any ordinary human being confronted with the existential challenges of life. To this question of Mary, Angel Gabriel had an answer for all generations and seasons, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35). "Nothing is impossible with God" (Lk 1:37).

When apostles confronted the forthcoming reality of the death of Jesus, Jesus had only one answer, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever". (John 14: 16).

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. (John 16:7) He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (John 20:22) Even after the best formation and promise of the Lord, apostles failed the test of hope as revealed in their behaviour and conversations. They became diffident and directionless and succumbed to despair and loss of hope. On the way to Emmaus, they said, "But we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done." (Luke 24:21). Their dreams and expectations were shattered and some of them went back to fishing, the old normal. "They stood still, with sadness on their faces." (Luke 24:17) When the men were in crisis, the lady takes the leadership. When men got confused and directionless and woman shows the way. Mother Mary whose fiat was eternal, brought the apostles to the Upper Room and they devoted themselves to prayer (Acts 1:14) "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 4).

"Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next." (Arundhati Roy). Crisis invites for a new discernment. The old is dying and the new is yet to be born. It is the time to go to the Upper Room, to be in silence and contemplation to make the discernment for a breakthrough. Panic pandemic shall give way to the enlightenment of the Pentecost and a purpose-driven missionary life. Crisis in organizational life leads to strategic visioning and new awakening in organizational mission, direction and action. "Our minds are still racing back and forth, longing for a return to "normality", trying to stitch our future to our past and refusing to acknowledge the rupture. But the rupture exists. And in the midst of this terrible despair, it offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves. Nothing could be worse than a return to normality." (Arundhati Roy) Moving to Canaan, the land of honey and milk involves long struggles of life in the desert. Experiencing the Pentecost and going to the ends of the earth demands a training of the passion and cross. There may be temptations to return to the fleshpots of Egypt and to pour new wine in old wineskins.

The crisis time led the apostles to the Upper Room and to the Pentecost and the Spirit gave them new ability. (Acts 2:4) The challenges and the learnings of the pandemic shall equip us with new abilities operating and being in a new way to face the post Covid world. The worriers and the fearful were transformed into courageous and mission driven apostles of the gospel and scripted new stories of evangelization. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. (Mark 16:20) "And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47) Mother Mary, after the annunciation went in haste to Elizabeth as a missionary and Elizabeth experienced a Pentecost, being filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:41) and the child in her womb leaped for joy (Luke 1:44). St. Joseph submitted to the voice of the angel and fled to Bethlehem, Egypt and Nazareth and became a new life for Mother Mary and Jesus. St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara who lost his parents, brother and dear ones gave shape to a new family of religious in CMI, and gave a new Pentecost to the panic stricken Church in Malabar. The story of every saint and authentic spirituality is, in fact, the process of turning a crisis into a blessing and the Covid 19 offers us great lessons for a breakthrough mission ahead. During the first wave, most of us were so worried about Corona virus. But during the second wave worriers became warriors and apostles of good news to the Covid infected patients and their families. In Dharmaram, when the community was infected with Covid, our medical director, brothers in the department and a group of volunteers came forward and initiated a Covid Task Force, risking their lives. Rev. Fathers took timely pastoral initiative to reach out to the Covid infected patients in ICUs and wards of hospitals.

The worriers and the fearful were transformed into courageous and mission driven apostles of the gospel and scripted new stories of evangelization.

All the staff and students joined hands to prepare, pack and distribute food and kit of essentials. Some resorted to online prayer and counselling and members made special adoration to make intercession for the patients and their families. This is the way of pandemic turning out to be a Pentecost. In Dharmaram many members in the community were in quarantine from January 13 to March 13 and finally the community celebrated a thanksgiving day, honoured the Covid apostles who transformed a crisis into a blessing. The community learnt the new language of love and fellowship and the panic of pandemic gave way to tears of joy and gratitude.

The pandemic taught us new way of being in the new normal, new way of our operation of teaching and learning process, new way of connecting and relating with people with high tech without losing personal touch. Pandemic taught us the value of silence and meditation, the joy of reading and writing and the beauty of living for the Other and others. Pandemic has taught us to take the initiative to reach out to the poor and their needs. We are called to be good news to the poor and healing to the sick and to be the architects of a Pentecostal community even in the midst of human tragedies, crises and pandemic. Covid 19 and the agonies of people have taught us to count the blessings and thank the Lord for the great gift of life. Shakespeare once said, "I cried when I had no shoes, but I stopped crying when I saw a man without legs...!" Life is full of blessings, sometime we don't value it. Covid 19 is still an enigma, but God has His own ways of doing things in history "and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28). Along with St Paul we shall also say "that everything that has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel" (Philippians 1:12).

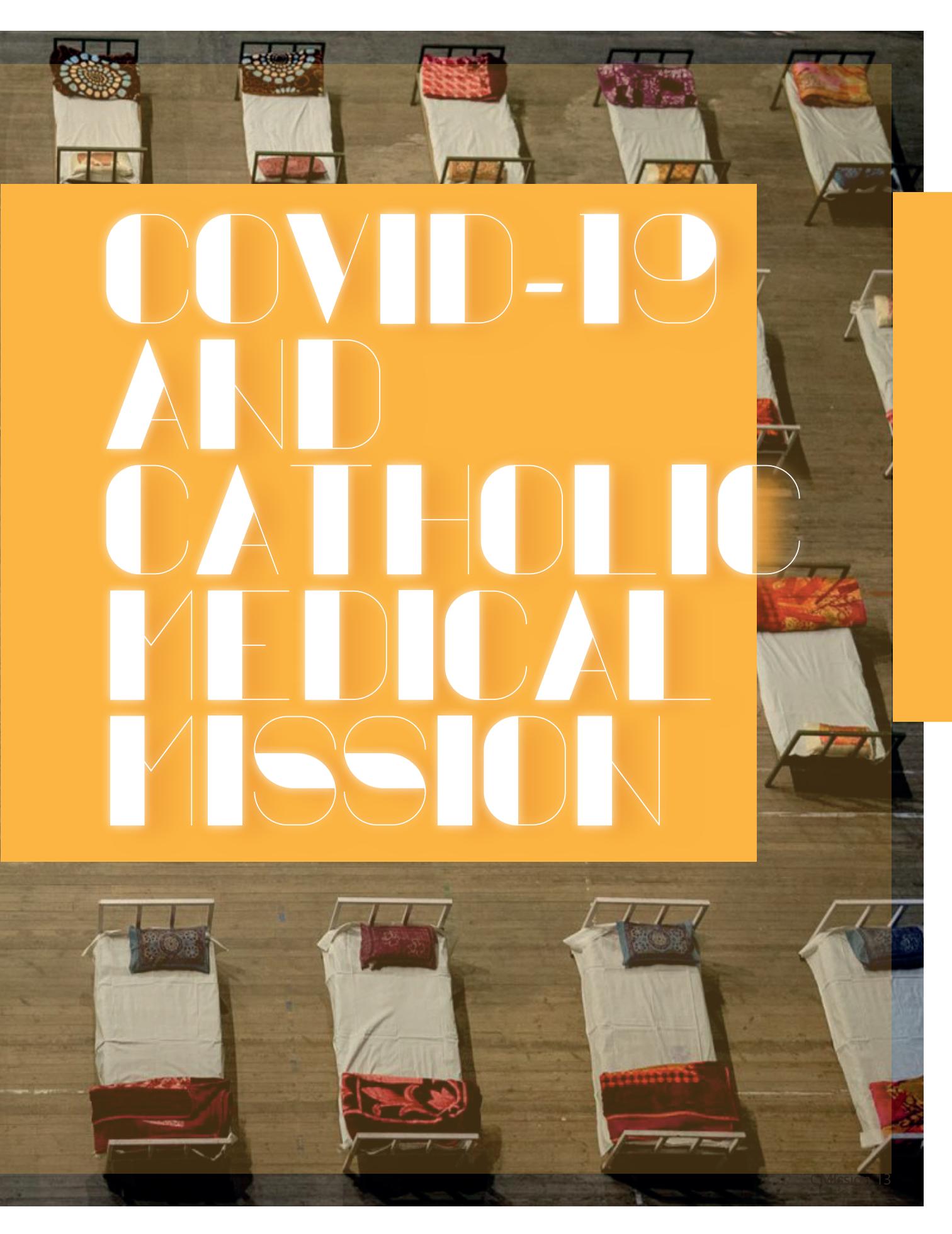


The world will never be the same again. But it is precisely within this calamity that we must grasp those signs that can prove to be the cornerstones of reconstruction,”

Pope Francis prays in front of the “Miraculous Crucifix” from the Church of St. Marcellus in Rome during a prayer service in an empty St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican March 27, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)



I am
happy and
proud to say that
the Church and its
health **Mission** has
not shied away from
their responsibilities
during this
pandemic.



COVID-19 AND CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSION



Julius Arakkal CMI
CBCI Health Secretary

The other day, as I was walking along the corridor of our hospital, I came across this brilliant junior doctor. Drenched with sweat coming out of the Covid ward duty after 6 long hours in PPE, her face captured my attention. I could not stop noticing that something was different. The beautiful smile which used to brighten her face was missing. Instead I could sense an expression of fear, anguish and desperation, all at the same time. My curiosity made me probe for a reason to which she replied "father, it's very difficult to see many people suffering and some dying. I really feel helpless and sad, even after all those years in the medical school. At times I fear if I would suffer the same fate". Her words send a chill down my spine. My experience has taught me that junior doctors are the ones at the peak of their confidence, always ready to take the plunge. But if the pandemic could invoke such feelings in a brilliant doctor like her, how would the common man be feeling?

Never before has the world stood so perplexed not knowing what to do. The pandemic has been taking the world economy for a ride. Jobs have been lost, markets have been crashing and daily budgets have been affected. I feel the most affected ones are the ones who belong to the middle and lower strata of the society. But it is not just the pockets that the virus has touched. Personal relationships too have taken a hit, with even the biggest friend being looked upon with suspicion. The sight of even the most loved ones in the family is no longer cherished, out of fear of transmission of the disease. Handshakes and hugs considered as the best symbols of love have almost vanished. Get togethers are looked upon as super spreader events. Fear of falling sick has become the most common emotion. The negative news and fake campaigns have made it worse. Churches have been closed, holy masses have been cancelled. And many feel disheartened as they are deprived of the holy communion which to many, was the greatest strength. So what can the church do to make this better?

I am happy and proud to say that the church and its health Mission has not shied away from their responsibilities during this pandemic. All over India under the leadership of CBCI and various church run organisations has opened its facilities for the service of the needy at very affordable rates. I am proud to say that Amala Institute of medical sciences has set an example by keeping apart maximum proportion of ICU beds and ventilators. As true disciples of our lord Jesus Christ, we feel it is our duty to lend a helping hand in these unfortunate times irrespective of its financial outcome.

The services rendered by the doctors, nurses and other supporting staff in this regard is highly commendable and widely appreciated. The hard work and dedication of the whole team saved the lives of many, some of which were thought to be lives already lost. I remember the happy story of a religious sister who was referred in a hopeless state to our hospital. Surviving many days of roller coaster period of illness, which included many days on ventilator and tracheostomy, the team could successfully bring her back to normal life with the grace of the almighty. Everywhere you could hear voices ready to help. At a time when even the family members were reluctant to enter the ward to take care of their kin, CMI fathers and holy family sisters set a role model by serving in the Covid ward unconditionally, catering to the spiritual, emotional, social and physical needs of the unfortunate ones. Their selfless service garnered widespread attention and motivated many to come forward shedding their fears.

**All
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affordable rates.**

The caring hand of the Catholic Church didn't just touch people in hospitals alone. CBCI health commission with the help of parish priests, made sure that the patients on home quarantine had adequate medical attention by providing medical kits for essential monitoring. Many churches and institutions set apart their farm produce for the ones suffering irrespective of religion or caste.

However, I should say that the path we treaded so far had more thorns than roses in it. Fear and uncertainty about the invisible enemy, hitherto unknown to human beings, were the predominant emotion in the beginning, preventing many from taking the plunge. With more and more volunteers coming out braving their fears to work in the Covid Wards, this obstacle was overcome. It is in this regard that I consider with high respect the efforts of the CMI fathers, Holy family sisters and medical students. The economic burden that followed affected individuals, families and hospitals alike. The cost of treatment, the loss of jobs, the demise of breadwinners made a huge impact on everyone. The need to procure more and more equipments, the need to deploy more staff to cater to the patient needs and additional money sent on personal protection equipments all imposed a huge economic burden on the hospital. However more than external restrictions, the plight of the unfortunate patients made the Christian hospitals open up and provide the best care at the most affordable rates. After all the message of Lord Jesus is the message of love.

The fear never left the minds of the healthcare workers. It was worsened when some of their own colleagues were infected. The fake news and social media messages added to their worries.

The Catholic Church of India has made available some 60,000 beds of its healthcare facilities in the country's battle against the devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. More than 50,000 nuns normally work at these facilities, a thousand of whom are qualified doctors, The Church's extensive works of mercy are largely carried out throughout the country through its social and development arm, Caritas India, and the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI), a network of over 3,500 healthcare and social service centres



But their motivation and dedication kept them going. The fact that they got vaccinated and that vaccination reduced the risk of severe complications was a huge consolation. But I should say, what demoralised them most were the instances where despite doing their best, they had to be the victims of mob fury and false accusations of being the greediest. The hard work and sincerity was unrecognised, The unintentional mistakes though rare were blown out of proportion by a section of the media and public for higher TRPs. It is time the community recognise their valour and hardships. What hurts them even more is seeing many patients suffering and some dying despite working their heart out. After all the major motivation in any profession is seeing their efforts bear fruit.

So far, so good. BUT is this going to be enough?. I fear the worst challenge is yet to surface. We are in the midst of a calamity now, but there are hands all around always ready to help. But once the hype and media attention wanes off, there will be many left to live their own unfortunate life. It will be for this phase that we have to plan in advance. We have to reinvent ourselves to be the true messengers of our Savior. We will have to cater to the physical, social, emotional and psychological needs of many. Let us trust in his power and gather our weapons. "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds". This is a fight we will win and we must.



MORAL ISSUES SURROUNDING COVID-19

A COVID STORY



A poignant video making its rounds recently in the social media highlights the disruptions that covid-19 has caused to the life of individuals, families and nations. In the video, a traveller with his baggage beside him stands looking at a large house through the grills of a tall gate which dwarfs him. He is calling out to his wife and children inside the house repeatedly to open the gate and let him in. The commentator's voice in the video informs the viewer that the man was working in America and has just returned home and has been waiting outside for several hours to be let in. Because those in the house are afraid that he might be affected by the corona virus, they refuse to let him in. The neighbours telephone the wife and persuade the woman to let her husband in but to no avail. Eventually they break the gate open and help him get away from the place in his uncle's car.

That is just a tiny sample of the huge disruptions the pandemic has wrecked in every sphere of human life. The moral life too is not unchallenged by the unfolding tragedy.

**Henry Angel SAC
Chhattisgarh**

The pandemic has killed nearly four million people worldwide and there seems to be no end to the death count. So 'what started this incalculable tragedy' is an unavoidable question. The official theory suggests that this is a case of a virus jumping from one species to another although the manner in which the jump took place in this case is not yet fully explained. In the social media we have umpteen theories doing their rounds ranging from viral research gone awry, to biological warfare by a country to sabotage other countries' economies and population. Moralists have always warned us about maintaining respect for nature. There are certain givens in our existence which must be accepted as inviolable gifts and always held as gifts and not as objects to be manipulated, exploited and discarded when their use is over. When we disregard this general norm of existence we might time and time again find ourselves

facing nature's wrath, like a child who has broken his toy and does not know how to put it back together. The sheer enormity of the human tragedy unfolding before us should give a clear warning to all those who are involved in researches in frontier fields that because a technology is available it is not reason enough to use it and that before a research is begun and a technology used there should be the moral certainty that this research and that the use of this technology will indeed promote the overall good of the individual human person, that of humanity and of the earth community as a whole. There should be even greater certainty that any research or use of technology will not wreck the overall good of the individual and of creation as a whole. The cost in terms of the millions of innocent and unsuspecting people who died in the pandemic should morally judge how despicable and depraved they have become who if at all had in any way voluntarily and deliberately contributed to causing this human tragedy.



That itself is an admission that the care that healthcare personnel alone were able to offer, especially under the pressure of the flood of patients, was woefully inadequate to nurse the patients back to health. In those early days there was ominous secrecy about admission into a Covid ward. Once the patient went into a Covid ward, after the period of treatment he/she came out well or his/her dead body was handed over sealed to be buried. After admission the relatives ran from pillar to post trying to ascertain the condition of their loved one, the type of treatment being given and whether or not the patient had adequate food and nourishment. This situation became even more acute when the patient was no more able to use the telephone to communicate with the relatives. The relatives just had to pay the hospital bills without having much of a say in the type of treatment that was being given to their patient. They could not even know whether it was the patient or the medical team that made the decisions that had to be made immediately. There were stories of exemplary successes and gross failures in this area.

Uncertainty is the most certain matter happening in the lives of people. They just not see their family members, relatives and friends next day forever.

A relative of a Covid-19 victim breaks down during a cremation. CCN image

Self-protection versus Care for Others

Another area of moral conflict is sharply highlighted by the highly infectious nature of the pandemic. The fear that one can contract the infection from those who are sick makes people avoid offering help to those who are already sick. There is no way of knowing how many people might have died in hospitals and in homes uncared for because of the fear of infection freezing those who were obliged to care for them. Especially in the beginning stages of the pandemic the sheer number of the infected put immense pressure on medical facilities and personnel, and relatives of Covid patients could not visit the Covid wards or ICU units, there was no way of knowing how many hapless victims may have died due to lack of care and neglect rather than due to the disease. More recently, healthcare institutions and hospitals have permitted relatives of patients to attend to them provided the latter followed the protective protocols the institutions prescribed.

There were reports of heroic work by medical personnel who died caring for their patients and there were reports of death resulting from negligence by healthcare institutions. The variety of concrete situations the pandemic created in patient care were new to all involved. The healthcare personnel, the patients and their relatives had to learn to deal with these new and different situations. So many healthcare institutions now permit the presence of volunteers and relatives to offer personal care to Covid patients in addition to the specialised services of healthcare personnel. The principle of informed consent, which went for a toss in many a healthcare institution in those early days of the outbreak of the pandemic has now been given another chance to assert itself. At a more personal and interpersonal level, people have had to face sharply the moral conflict of protecting oneself from infection and at the same time offering care to another even a loved one in the family. The video in the social media describing which the article began portrays sharply this conflict. Probably the posh house with its secure gate was built with the earnings of the husband working in America. Yet fear of contracting the infection makes the wife and children turn their back on the man who had eagerly come back home, despite his long and repeated plea.

One dreads to think about the long-term effect of that inhuman moment on that family and on its fabric of relationships. We do have a right and obligation to protect ourselves from all dangers including falling prey to corona viral infection. However, like all rights there are limits to the exercise of this right. My right to protect myself is to be balanced by my obligation to take care of another. Health-care personnel constantly expose themselves to possible infection as they have a moral obligation to take care of patients entrusted to them as part of their duty. Their sense of duty must overcome their fear for themselves and their families. Parents and children, husbands and wives, family relatives, neighbours and human beings among themselves have moral obligations to care for one another in varying degrees. The Samaritan in Jesus' Good Samaritan story stands as an ideal figure who manifested the goodness of heart that a human person was capable of generating within himself. Although he had no obligation to care for the afflicted man lying on the roadside, although he had all the reasons to turn his back on the injured Jew who had little else than scorn for the Samaritans as a people, allowed that spontaneous compassion welling up in his human heart in the face of the suffering of a fellow human being, to overrule all other considerations and emotions, so that he could do what was the right thing to do in that situation despite much personal cost. On the one end of the spectrum are good Samaritans who feel that wearing a protective equipment while caring for an infected person is in some sense a barrier to express their love and care for the sick person and so do away with all protective protocols that their raw love and care get expressed. On the other end of the spectrum are people who allow the fear of infection freeze their hearts so that they stand far away and watch the afflicted person as they watch a star or risk infection to those under their command by charging them to do the needful for the sick person. Somewhere between these two extreme courses of action is the right path that we ought to choose. We need to do what we can to protect ourselves but after having done that we need to overcome fear so that we can reach out and help those in need.

Fortitude Need of the Hour

Fortitude is both a cardinal virtue and a gift of the Holy Spirit. As a natural virtue developed by us through repeated practice, fortitude is not the absence of fear but the affirmation of our humanity in situations of fear. It resides in our emotions and helps us to face hardships of life and take risks where we ought to. As a supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit, it enables a person to take risks in order to stand up for what is right in the sight of God even if it means physical harm and death. The tragic death of many a dear one and acquaintance, the lockdowns imposed by the governments and 24/7 input from the media about the dangers of Covid-19 and how to protect ourselves have left many of us benumbed by fear and bereft of all other emotions than the single minded cautious resolve to ensure by all means self-preservation. Remember the Lord Jesus' caution in this regard: "For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mt. 16:25). The Lord is not simply speaking about an external and public show of courage but an inward transformation

which changes our fears into moments of love and care for the self and others. Fear freezes us within ourselves, isolates us from others and introduces caution and suspicion into relationships. Fear is a good gift from God, however, when we allow it to dominate our lives, its overall impact on our life is negative. Fear breeds prejudice, suspicion and discrimination. Therefore, we need to affirm our humanity whenever the emotion of fear unduly overtakes us. We can wear a mask because of fear of infection, we can be afraid of other persons as possible sources of Corona virus and so maintain a safe distance from them. This type of fearful approach to life's moments will in the long run breed unhealthy attitudes and will have very serious ill effects on the life and health of a person. We can also wear a mask as an act of self-care and care of others. We can maintain social distance from others as an act of charity and protection. It all depends on the motivational flow that a person chooses to adopt in the depth of one's heart. One must on a daily basis and at the level of the motivational flow make a deliberate shift from fear to care and that is fortitude.

Critical Decisions

There is a whole set of moral issues made acute by the pandemic around hospital admissions, allotment of scarce ICU beds, oxygen ports, ventilators, etc. In normal circumstances certain moral criteria are used to admit persons in critical care units: that is, that the treatment will be effective and the risks do not outweigh the expected benefits. Futile interventions are morally never permissible. This decision must be based not only on the patients' current status, but also on their history of concomitant diseases (comorbidities), prior functional status, and their likelihood of recovery. Age is obviously a consideration on this prognosis or study of therapeutic proportionality, and is one of the factors used to define the patient's condition and prognosis. However, in a pandemic situation where the desperate needs of many just to stay alive competes with available facilities and services, we need to take into consideration additional factors like fair distribution of scarce resources so that we can bring about the best benefit for the entire community.

There is a whole set of moral issues made acute by the pandemic around hospital admissions, allotment of scarce ICU beds, oxygen ports, ventilators, etc

For example, Keeping alive an eighty-five year old cancer patient in an ICU bed might be using ordinary means and therefore is a moral obligation in normal circumstances. However, in a pandemic situation where the availability of ICU beds is scarce and required by younger patients with better prognosis, it might become extraordinary and therefore not mandatory. Human life at every age is equally precious and inviolable. Such choices in favour of the younger and of those with better prognosis is a humble recognition that there are limits to our ability to cure although there are no limits to our ability to care. Even in this case, when the eighty-five-year-old is transferred from the ICU bed, proper palliative care should be given till the end. All the same we need to strike a balance between saving lives and saving life-years.

The general principle, “first come, first served” used in normal circumstances may become unfair during a pandemic situation in so far as patients, with less urgent requirements or patients with a poor prognosis are given priority over other cases – patients who have adhered strictly to national health guidelines or who live further away from the hospital, who have difficulty getting to the hospital, or who have a good prognosis, can find themselves marginalised due to their order of arrival.

This criterion of real benefit ensuing from the allocation of resources must be taken into account. This will help to distinguish between patients who will not survive, even with aggressive treatment, and those who will survive even without any treatment. Therefore, those who are ill and can benefit from treatment will be prioritised over those who cannot benefit or who can recover without treatment. Age is one of several factors included in these criteria. For example, patient characteristics such as comorbidities, functional status, and age must be carefully evaluated without needing to set an exact age limit for eligibility for allocation of scarce resources.



We need also to employ the equity criterion. This refers to the fair distribution of benefits and burdens in a human community, i.e., providing resources to those who need them most and placing burdens on those who have caused it or those with the greatest ability and resources to bear the burden. Equality could be achieved by random selection or by the maxim “first come, first served”; but this would not ensure equity. Equity involves:

===== Equal treatment to all and avoiding discrimination and exploitation (using any criterion other than a person’s being human and his clinical status in order to offer or deny treatment or care). For example, during the first wave of the pandemic the elderly were the most vulnerable and therefore the age factor was a consideration to prioritise them for treatment and vaccination; but using age as consideration for exclusion of treatment would be discriminatory).

===== Being sensitive to people who are especially vulnerable to harm or injustice. Clinical status of the patient and their objective likelihood of survival is a good criterion for equitable decisions.

===== Medical personnel receiving priority for vaccination and treatment is ethically very much in order because it is an expression of the Society’s gratitude for the risky service medical personnel daily render as frontline workers against the pandemic.

“First come, first served” used in normal circumstances may become unfair during a pandemic situation in so far as patients, with less urgent requirements or patients with a poor prognosis are given priority over other cases-

A woman waits to receive a Covid-19 vaccine in Mumbai on April 18 CNN image

Equity involves therefore, more than equality. Sometimes it may involve preferential option for a person or a group of persons so that they do receive some goods and services due to them which might be inaccessible to them without that preferential option. Equity also insures that some benefit due to one is never denied to him or her because of some discriminatory criterion. Furthermore, equity involves balancing individual good with the common good in such a way that the individual good is achieved without in anyway infringing into the common good. When common good is achieved by trampling on the individual good equity would be violated. The principle of equity is paramount in decision making during this difficult pandemic times.

I conclude, Covid-19 pandemic has tested the limits of humanity's capacity to organise its life on the basis of science and technology. Although the pandemic surprised us in the beginning, human beings have found ways to contain and limit the spread of the disease. It is a matter of time before we will leave behind the pandemic as a tragic part of our memory. One lesson Covid-19 has impressed on humanity is that while science and technology are necessary, real solutions to problems created by the pandemic lies in the human person who uses science and technology. Some people have used the pandemic situation to exploit human pain in order to make some quick money; while others have risked their lives and those of their dear ones to help human beings in their weakest moments. Individually we have all been challenged both by fear as well as by the call to care. Some of us have felt our inadequacy while others have proved to be heroic. I know a doctor who lost two of her patients one night and spent the next afternoon grieving over the uncertainty if she could have done more to save those two lives. Gold is tested by fire. Covid-19 has tested humanity's moral mettle.



Individually we have all been challenged both by fear as well as by the call to care. Some of us have felt our inadequacy while others have proved to be heroic.

People line up for vaccines at an indoor stadium in Guwahati on April 22. CNN image



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tals for the patients.



NURSING = LOVING



Selcy Joby MSN, FNP
Nephrology Nurse/USA

Being a health care professional during the pandemic significantly affects all aspects of our life. I am a nephrology nurse practitioner (NP) work with dialysis patients in a government hospital in Dallas. In the US, the peak of COVID 19 began in March however, in Texas the spike started in June. We realized that it is a pandemic; a new virus with widespread emergence, people do not have immunity, & there is simultaneous transmission worldwide. Situations became worst, decisions must be made, choosing which patients to ventilate, later elicited feelings such as guilt, & disgust among us.

We witnessed patients die with strangers. The worst part is watching the patients dying, no loved ones around. We dressed from head to toe, there is no skin-to-skin touch for them; We became the loved ones all the time inside the hospitals for the patients. Remembering the day I called the wife of a 45 yrs. a man on vent support with 4 children; to obtain consent for continuous renal replacement therapy, In fact the patient was dying in front of me; the wife only speaks Spanish; by the help of a translator via phone, I explained the deadly situation to her; without interpreting the situation, she told me in tears " My husband is a construction worker with no health issues; I want to get him back to life, I cannot live without him". Couple of days later patient passed away. This reminded me the day I sat beside my dying father at the age of 10. I prayed in tears for his wife to see the hands of the Almighty God's providence in their life.

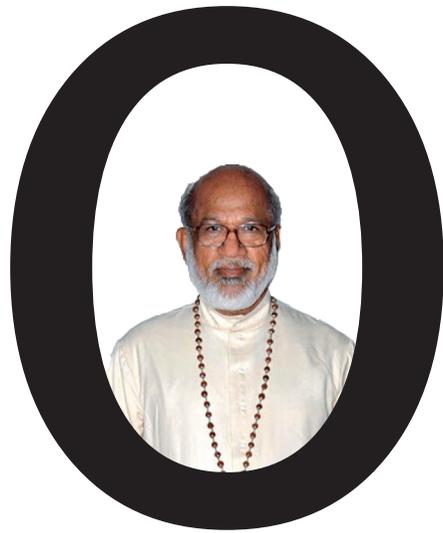
Long hours caring for patients, fears about contracting the virus, & separation from loved ones – the pressure on us were unrelenting since March last year. Working in the high-stakes environment of COVID-19 has a huge impact on mental health & well-being of us. Numerous strategies available for coping with stress at hospitals despite the spiritual support & guidance among the peers strengthened us during this tough time.

Last November, my whole family got COVID 19 infection from me. We had pregnant doctors and nurses infected with the deadly virus; but all the survived without any complications. Looking back to the peak time of virus in the US, the deep faith in the Almighty God was the greatest power encouraging me to provide a compassionate & empathetic care to the COVID 19 patients. Choosing medicine / nursing as a career is a great vocation; a vocation to save the human life with passionate love; praying to have a brave mind to all of us to be in the front line to fight during the difficulties in our world.



Cardinal Oswald Gracias

We usually speak of food, clothing and shelter as the basic human needs that a government should provide for its people. Now, in the wake of Covid-19, people's lives are in extreme danger and there is a clamour for medical oxygen to survive. It is the bounden duty of the government to make available medical oxygen in all hospitals and health care centers across India.



Cardinal George Alencherry

Focusing on rural areas, Christian health institutions have always been at the forefront, fighting various disease like tuberculosis, leprosy, AIDS and helping people with disabilities. More than 50,000 women religious, including a thousand doctors, work in these hospitals and all this is made available to save our people. The Church will continue to be at the forefront, offering our services.



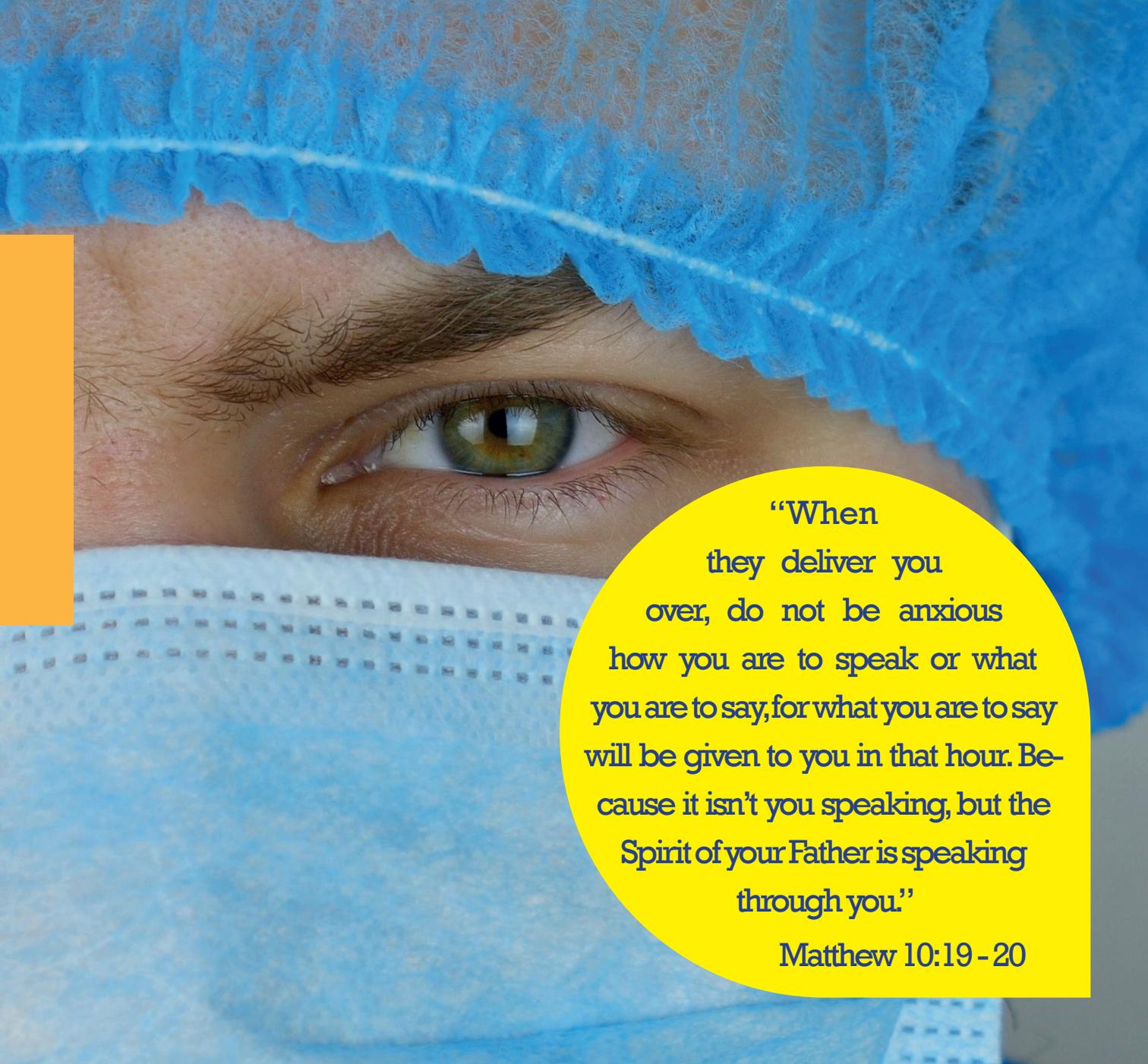
Sr Archana CMC

It was very sad and heart melting seen, the attendances of the admitted patients queue in the OPD medicine doctors chamber; to enquire about the condition of the beloveds admitted in the covid ward. After getting information from the doctors, some shed tears, some move with hope and confidence, some moves with lots of questions and query in their minds. But everyone's eyes are wandering to get the best result of their expectations of their beloveds comes to the normal streams of life.



Ushapriya CMC

During my working hours in general ward most of the patients frequently asked me the same question repeatedly " Sister, will I be alright ?" " Sister, will I go back home ?". This made me to think and do something for them, then I took a decision to boost the patient with positive stalks, while giving medicines and other free time I made sure to encourage them with positiveness. Their fear of death, insecurity and negative feelings was reduced. And they started to show improvement in their health condition too. Most of them were discharged after two weeks with good health. The patients expressed their gratitude and went home happily and wished us to visit their home town for a party too.



“When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. Because it isn't you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father is speaking through you.”

Matthew 10:19 - 20

Future will be always challenging with no complete vaccination and dangerous mutants of the SARS-CoV-2 viral strain keeps on emerging with time. Currently, we are expecting much more health emergencies associated with post covid syndrome along with economic insecurities as well as sociocultural issues as the consequence of the pandemic. Our savior, Jesus Christ has already commissioned the apostolate and their communities as his instruments of healing mission. Lives of apostolate and the new generation saints have been motivating us for this upcoming healing ministry.

Every mission happens as an answer for the hardships. Every idea to initiate a mission happens when somebody feels the strengths of the holy cross. The future of every mission is to serve mankind and create more missionaries. Healthcare mission-oriented hospitals following the footsteps of this commitment, with a clear vision are good indicators for a hopeful future of CMI health mission in the middle of this pandemic.

Mary Queen Mission Hospital Being located in a junction of the districts of Idukki, Pathanamthitta, and the hilly



The Future of CMI Health Mission in the background of Pandemic

Martin Mannanal CMI
Kottayam

regions of Kottayam, Mary Queen's Mission Hospital, 250 bedded center established under the aegis of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI), has been extending a rare healing touch to all those who are destined to be on the periphery of life, for the last six decades.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has drastically affected the dreams and future projects of Mary Queen's and had left us amid a huge dilemma. The second wave of COVID-19 had given us confidence - confidence to walk above the sea, confidence to accept the crown of thorns, and immense con

fidence to heal. The Sea here depicts our increasing Covid IP and their deep health-related troubles. The Crown of thorns is that negative, targeted criticisms from social media.

At the beginning of the second wave, we had no idea how we could utilize our limited resources to tackle increasing covid admissions and insidious oxygen saturation drop emergencies. Following His footsteps, even with the five loaves and two fishes, we managed to satisfy the patient's needs.

Pandemic Evolved Missionaries

The mission spirit of our hospital has influenced every staff from their thought process to the health care delivery methods. The evolution of a hospital into a mission-oriented service can create more missionaries of various disciplines.

Missionary is not always a monk who wears a shabby dress with a long beard and wandering around to evangelize with words. Anyone who decides to travel an "extra mile" without expecting any sort of appreciation can become a modern missionary. Covid-19 workloads have renunciated many of our staff into missionaries. We are all blessed to live and to work with these real-world missionaries. A nurse who stays away from home and her toddler, a doctor who is ready to attend the call anytime or every time, a pharmacist who is ready for an overtime duty, a housekeeping staff happy to clean the basin of severe nausea multiple times, an Administrator who is always awake to answer the public and a management who is generous to give concessions and reductions in the bill.

The success of our mission is the result of selfless teamwork by our 50 doctors and around 200 nurses with other allied staff. Hospital is thankful to the almighty who extended his blessings upon our covid-19 vaccination Centre, Covid IP, Covid testing center, and fever clinics. Leading under the patronage of St. Charara, we are fully committed to employee welfare and have never delayed the salary of the staff. Along with this, we have supported the Asha workers of our panchayath with the Covid safety kit and the housekeeping, laundry, and maintenance staff with a monthly food kit.

Novel Approaches in Mission

Sudden infection outbreaks and strict restrictions of the pandemic made our regular Hospital service troublesome. This situation necessitated and motivated us to bring a few more virtual Healthcare delivery tools like telemedicine and WhatsApp drug information center. Telemedicine services are available to consult for our doctor missionaries. WhatsApp drug information Centre uses the WhatsApp platform for clearing all the medicine-related doubts of the public through 8281162626. A home care service team is always for the outreach to the Needy.

Our mission is not just limited to the hospital walls and 26th Mile, we do have extended our hands as satellite clinics at various peripheries like Vechoochira, Erattupetta, and Chunkappara. This rural mission aims to recreate the strategies adopted by our Jesus Christ in reaching out the sick at their premises. These real-world missionaries inculcate the idea that "mission is easier but not impossible". All these missionaries are the confidence that encourages us to be a Mission Hospital. The upcoming waves and death toll predictions cannot frighten us as we do have a Mission Hospital.

CMI MEDICAL MISSION







Dr Sunny P Orathel
Kochi



Mission & Profession

The last two years have been tough for the whole world. Since the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, it has suspended day to day lives across the globe. But when everything stood still due to Covid and human life was at stake, doctors kept marching ahead as brave soldiers leading us from the front. Without health care workers, humanity would not have existed, and words are never enough to express how much they need to be admired and appreciated.

Having grown up with an ardent desire for mission, I have always dreamt of serving the people. After joining the medical profession that interest gained full strength and a whole new world of opportunities for mission opened in front of me. When I became a doctor the whole concept of mission took a new shape in me. But now, the Covid - 19 pandemic has helped me understand the varied dimensions of service and widen the frontiers of my knowledge in the opportunity to experience so many new insights into professional human service.

After reading Dr. Martin L Alpert's commentary, we suspect art inspires life but consistently with historical fact. Duty to serve, a hallmark of professional medicine, is not always exhibited during pandemics. The perception is that physicians provide care to others without personal regard in pandemic.

Since 1980, medical historians have accepted the fact that doctors are rendering care in epidemics because of a sense of professional responsibility. Most doctors treated patients who sought help often at great cost and personal risk. During Yellow fever and cholera outbreaks doctors refused to visit patients who were acutely ill. These were incidents where physicians acted based on monetary or contractual agreements. Debate on physicians' duty occurred during the century of old flu wherein hundreds of doctors died worldwide. Physicians fled in time of plague.

The recent concerns about duty have occurred during HIV, SARS, Ebola and the current Covid 19 pandemic where thousands of health workers succumbed and hence the role of doctors were to be redefined. Physicians all over the world faced many challenges due to Covid 19 depending on the country's status, availability of medical facilities, strength and support of the state, quarantine facilities, funding etc. But the stress that the doctors faced is almost the same everywhere. Many studies among physicians showed that the odds of adverse mental health outcomes were much higher among those who rated themselves at high risk of developing Covid 19 or dying, if infected.

The medical profession has been considered a noble profession and usually enjoys a high level of trust and respect from the public. With the advent of Covid -19, doctors are finding themselves in an unusual situation of being hailed as soldiers and heroes in the war against the virus. With the accolades, there has been a demand and an expectation that doctors should live up to this tag. Being a hero involves going beyond the expected duties at a personal risk to oneself with a desire to help others and with no expectations of any advantage in return.

This is not entirely the role of a doctor even in the course of a pandemic. We can be expected to take care of patients but cannot be expected to put our own lives at risk in the care of patients.

The duty of care of a healthcare professional can best be desired as a 'social contract' between the professional and society at large. By this contract, healthcare workers get a certain privilege in society and in return they have a duty to treat patients even at a degree of risk to their personal wellbeing. The privileges bestowed by this social contract are accompanied by certain social responsibilities. One of them being that doctors are held to a greater accountability and higher threshold of conduct compared to other professions. In return for the doctors' duty to treat, society is expected to treat them with respect and to do their own part, including adherence to social laws. But, at least in few situations, unholy language and rude behavior from the society takes away the reciprocal nature of this social contract and health care workers feel that they are left alone in fulfilling their side of mutual obligation.

Different role of doctors

The primary duty of a doctor is to take care of his patients. Besides that, he has to act as a team leader to lead an array of teammates, doctors in his unit, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, etc. He has to organize many things while managing a case or cases. Logistics need to be prepared and medical items have to be procured without short falls. The most difficult thing one doctor must perform in this pandemic is dissemination of information. Whenever a doctor sees a patient or when patient demands he has to convey the clinical details to a conscious patient. Doctor is always obliged to inform the correct news or realities to close relative whom he has never seen or met in person. Most often this conversation is through mobile phone or videos, sometimes to one or more persons at different times. At least on a few occasions doctor is pressurized to answer the condition of patient to his friends, public figures and to a doctor colleague. The most distressing thing is breaking the bad news – death or imminent death – to near relatives.

Uncertainties

The Covid 19 pandemic, however, is changing or has already changed- our collective calculus of uncertainty. Though there had been many flu pandemics as mentioned earlier, the Covid 19 pandemic is more global in scope, more profoundly impactful and far reaching, and more complex than any other crisis that today's doctors have experienced or contemplated.

When a physician is asked to work at the limits of competencies, he has to encounter with potential, legal and professional risk. The main problem is that there is no single medicine or uniform treatment protocols to combat Covid pandemic. One may have to depend on many studies or literature from abroad or India for Covid management. He may have to share personal experience of other doctors or hospitals.

At least in few instances non availability of one or more medications cause problems. Non availability of oxygen beds, ventilators, ECMO machines, shifting of patients in and out of ICUs, prioritization of ventilators and ICU beds to patients are a few threats in front of treating doctors actively managing Covid cases. Moreover, shortage of staff and burnout of staff are problems encountered in most of the hospitals.

Special circumstances

Long duration of work, that too wearing masks and PPE creates frustration in health care workers. Staying away from family members and friends, seeing only anxious patients, and empathizing with them is very depressing for them. Working for long hours deprived of day light and natural air all the more make them worn out. Many other problems that shake the minds of the physicians when talking from a personal side include; news about colleagues becoming positive for Covid and entering into quarantine, devastating news about parents, partners and kids at home, the news about the non Covid deaths of relatives, missing of family functions etc. All these shatters the mental health of physicians while at work. Queries from health authorities and many other influential personalities about availability of beds in ICU and ventilators for patients and close relatives from far off places always worries the physician because of his helplessness.

Most
doctors
treated patients
who sought help
often at great cost
and personal
risk.

Mission and profession

The Covid 19 pandemic reminds how easy it is to infect one another, especially those we love, how devastating isolation can be, and yet how the sick die miserably and alone. But I would say this pandemic always reminds us how much the sick people depend on the medical professionals for their lives. This is where we, the doctors, turn out to be missionaries. Many a times during the last eighteen months, a doctor must have encountered an interrogation in his mind like "Am I the care taker or servant of my fellow beings?", but then an answer that always comes up in his mind would be the biblical saying 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'. Unforeseen events and circumstances pushed most treating doctors to another world, a world of doctor's dilemma. While stuck in this dilemma the famous quote by Albert Camus may come as help to doctors, "No, we should go forward, groping our way through the darkness, stumbling perhaps at times, and try to do what good lay in our power." Doctors most often become spiritual as and when he cannot do anything by his own and find nothing in front of him to salvage precious lives. In other words, the medical profession becomes a mission only when the meaningful thought "Work is worship" is taken to oneself. And this act becomes divine when a doctor coins his knowledge, love and sympathy to save the lives of the patients in full faith and belief expecting a miracle from above.





Unforeseen
events and
circumstances
pushed
most treating
doctors to an-
other world, a
world of doc-
tor's dilemma.



Our actions should proceed naturally
from us but enlightened,
empowered and guided by
the Divine Consciousness which is
the Holy Spirit abiding within us. We
have to place all our actions in God
who is abiding within us.

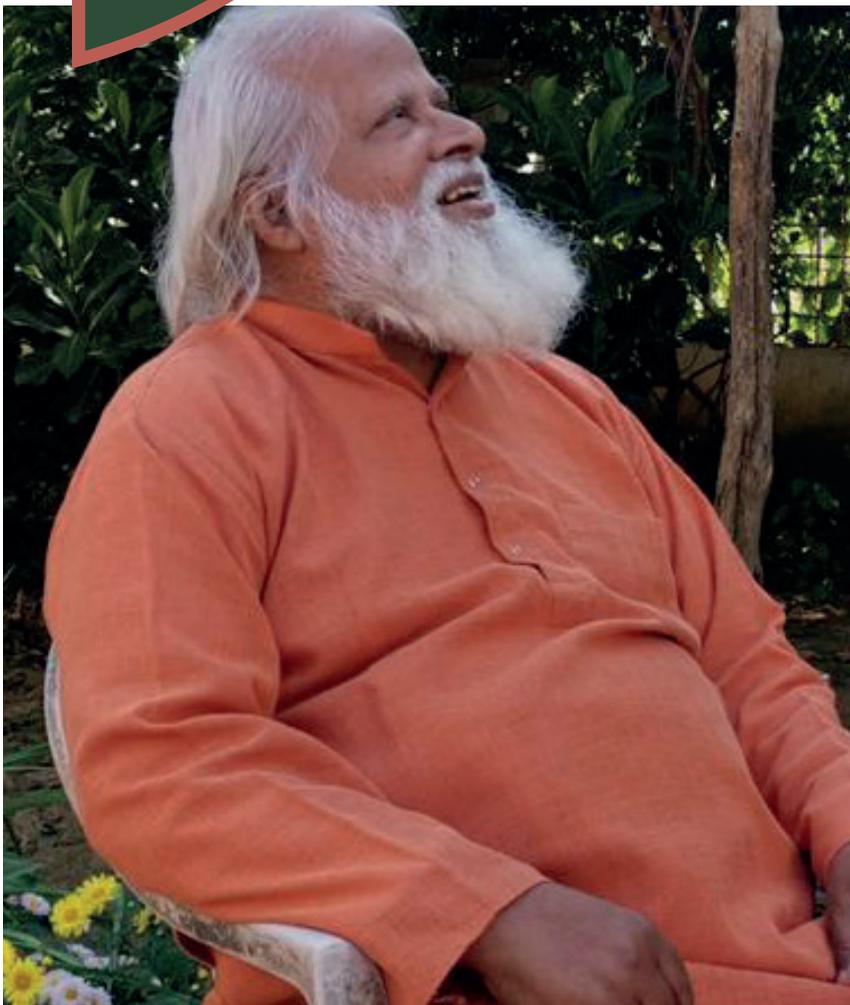
Late Fr Vineeth Vadakkethala
Indian Philosopher
The Founder of Vidhyavanam Ashram
for Indian Christian Spirituality

Experience is shared
and transmitted to
the next generation in Mission.

EXPERIENCE

A man who clothed in indigenous colour

Rev. Fr. Jacob Martin Kapiarmala CMI popularly known as Prasanna Bhai was born on February 11, 1940. He joined the CMI Congregation in 1957 and made his first profession on May 16, 1960 at Karukutty and after completing the philosophical and theological training in Dharmaram College, Bangalore, he was ordained as a priest on May 17, 1968 at Sacred Heart Provincial house Kalamssery. When he was in high school, late Fr. Ligouri Mundackal CMI who later joined the Chanda mission, was his headmaster in Vazhakulam. He even twice punished Prasanna Bhai with cane. After the studies, Fr. Prasanna Bhai went to the same Fr. Logouri and expressed his desire to join the CMI Congregation. Fr. Ligouri and Fr. Arsenius, the then prior of Vazhakulam monastery, after consulting with his father Mr. Martin, promoted him in CMI Congregation. At that time, the candidates joining the congregation had to pay the amount of Rs. 500 but Mr. Martin was out of cash as he spent his entire savings for the vestition of his daughter and for the expense of his elder son Mr. Lukachan. Fr. Arsenius was kind enough to receive only the half amount i.e. Rs 250. Eventhough he opted for Chanda when he was the student of first year theology in Dharmaram, he actually landed in the mission as a deacon in year 1967. After the ordination he was sent to Ambikapur to learn Hindi and to Pavnar Ashram Wardha to learn Sanskrit.



Prasanna Bhai



Anil Murfmade CMI
Chanda

When asked about the inspiration behind his saffron clothing and long hair, he said that, it was the inner voice when he was in the Jain Ashram near Pune, that made him opt for that style of life and sought for the permission of Fr. Maurus Valiaparampil, the then Prior General.

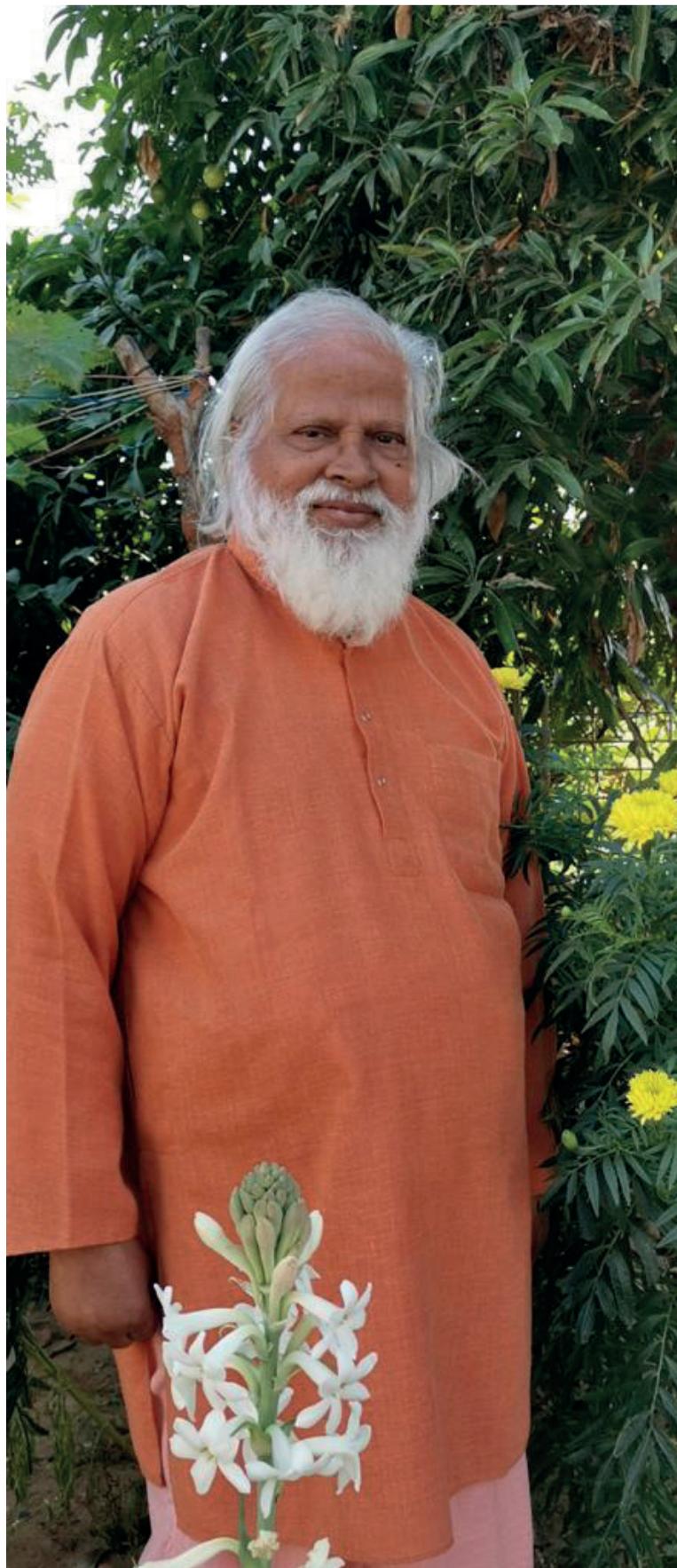


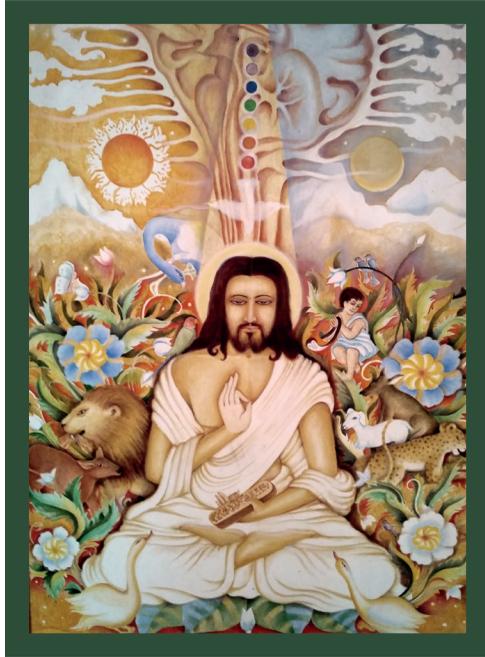
He served the mission land of Chanda as the assistant parish priest in Wardha and Babupeth and parish priest in Balharshah, Wasa, Wirur and Warur. He also rendered his service for the province as the prior in Tarsa and as the provincial counsellor for Pastoral Ministry and Evangelization during which he took initiative to distribute the Bible to all the priests in the mission. He led the CLC department of the diocese of Chanda during which he published 20 books of many translated prayers and hymns in both Hindi and Marathi which he translated during his days in Wardha and Babupeth. Fr. PrasannaBhai learned Marathi language and preached many retreats for the people and was part of the committee to translate the revised text of the Syro Malabar Qurbana.

He took up the task of training the catechists in Chanda for long 25 years and conducted many faith formation programmes in various villages coming under the mission stations of Hinganghat, Ghugus, Brahmapuri, Kautha, Wirur, Warur, Wasa, Lakkadkot, Kopreli, Gomni, Ghot, Ettapalli and Tarsa. He penned down many heart touching hymns such as 'O Masih Vishwa ki Jyoti', 'Shri Charanome', 'Koti Pranam', and 'Santwana ka Mantr' which still echo in the hearts and minds of the people. After completing theological studies in Philippines, he served the Samanvaya Mission Theologate for nine years at Rishikesh and Bhopal as the teacher, master and rector where his saffron clothing and simple life style attracted many.

According to him the missionaries should understand the situations of the people and arrange the Church activities accordingly, learn the local languages and dialects to feel one with them, participate in the local feasts and celebration adding Biblical significance and be always of the people. According to him, as leaders of the people, one must be ready to adjust with the people of any age group, people of any land, people of any religion and people of any language. He adds, "We cannot approach God unless we are approachable to the people". When asked about the inspiration behind his saffron clothing and long hair, he said that, it was the inner voice when he was in the Jain Ashram near Pune, that made him opt for that style of life and sought for the permission of Fr. Maurus Valiapampil, the then Prior General of CMI Congregation.

When he was in Akola for the Sanskrit studies, his teacher Dada Saheb Pandit, a pious and kind hearted personality who remained a bachelor till death, asked him the meaning of his name 'Jacob', to which he replied 'Ishwar ki prasannata'. Since then his teacher and others began to call him 'Prasanna Bhai'. When he was in Akola for the Sanskrit studies, he used to visit the nearby protestant Church and developed a cordial relation with them. And when in Ballarshah he was a frequent visitor in St. Luke's protestant Church. Fr. Prasanna Bhai never faced any challenges because he maintained hearty relationships, dealt with the issues and appeared with 'prasanna mudra', i.e. ever smiling face. At present he is leading a retired life along with medical issues at CMI Mar Thoma Provincialhouse, Bamni.

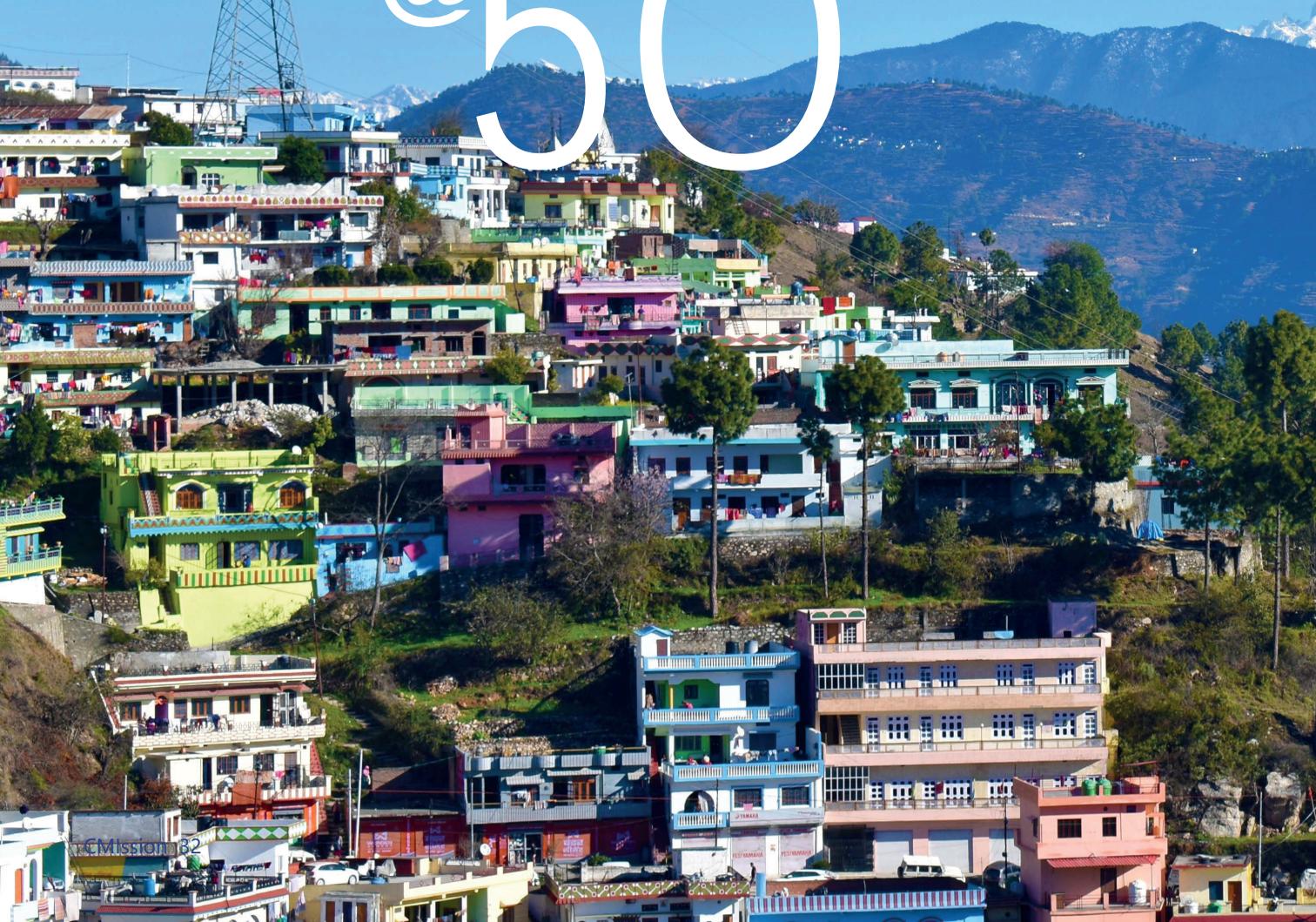




Incarnation is the love and care of God for us in a capsule, contextualized. It is a divine gesture of graciousness. God values and appreciates what we have in our culture. That becomes the body, the blood, the bones and marrows and sinews of the Word incarnate, that unique event is Jesus Christ, God and Man. **T K John S J, Indian Jesuit Theologian**

Image of a contemplating Jesus amidst the creation, Samanvaya Rishikesk

MISSION BIJNOR @50



BIJNOR-GARHWAL AN IMPOSSIBLE MISSION MADE POSSIBLE



George Kulangara CMI
Wardha

Though part of Tibet-Hindustan Vicariate created in 1820, which later became Agra Vicariate, known as the Mother Diocese of entire North India and later of the diocese of Meerut, Bijnor-Garhwal mission was still largely a virgin land with no missionary presence in 1972. "You gain nothing, and we lose nothing," said Archbishop Joseph Bartholomew Evangelisti OFM Cap. of Meerut at the formal handing over of the new mission of Bijnor-Garhwal to the CMIs of S.H. Province. This cryptic statement epitomized the nature of the new mission in its entirety. The challenge had been so daunting that no one until then had dared to face it; the challenge was so torturous that it offered no realistic space for expectations of sweet success. Bijnor-Garhwal looked an impossible mission!

It was not difficult to fathom what prompted the Italy-born Archbishop to make the statement. No missionary initiatives, either from Agra or Meerut, had targeted the area until then. No material or human resources were considered worth investing in this impossible region. So much so that the pioneer CMI missionary-trio – Msgr Gratian Mundadan, Frs. Cassius Chamakkala and Gerald Padinjarepedika, had to hire a room in the town of Bijnor to unburden their shoulders of their luggage and lay their heads. The mission looked impossible because it was unappealing from multiple angles. Geographically, among the then entrusted five civil districts, except Bijnor, all others were in the daunting Himalayan terrain. It is whispered that the members of the commission from CMI Provincial secretariat in Kalamassery sent to “feel” the area, took a taxi from Delhi, rode about 150 kilometers towards Bijnor town and returned with the impression that the mission to be entrusted by the Holy See was a fertile land in the Gangetic plains, flowing with honey and milk! Syrians from the Malabar that they were, they fell to the charm of the richly productive green land!! Economically, it was a region God-forsaken. The Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS) in its 1972 report (the year Bijnor mission was launched) classified four of the five districts in the mission among the most underdeveloped in the whole of India. In terms of evangelization, possibilities looked bleak since Garhwal was the Devbhoomi (land of gods) with the best known Hindu pilgrim centers, like Haridwar, Rishikesh, Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Yamnotri, etc.



The Church had long shelved the Bijnor-Garhwal region along the impossibles. That would however not kill the spirit and enthusiasm of the pioneer-trio. In terms of the visible and tangible, they looked ill-equipped. Three tiny Davids before the gigantic Goliath! Msgr. Gratian had just a few hundreds of Indian Rupees in his wallet and a second hand typewriter, a gift from Bp Sebastian Mankuzhikary, the Auxilliary Bishop of Ernakulam, in his bag. But their enthusiasm was growing to Himalayan proportions. For, from what Yahweh told and did to Gideon (Judges 7), they knew that more is a liability and less is strength.

If someone were to count, there were challenges galore. Not a square foot of land to pitch their tent, unfamiliarity with the language and culture of the land, and the general perception all around that the region was so sterile that it will yield no missionary gain.

Himalayas called for a new mission strategy. To those who had their hearts and eyes off the material gains, Himalayas were enchanting. It beckoned them to its caves made warm by the rishis and seers. The pioneer missionaries turned to the cave their hearts and gripped firmly their sense of being SENT BY THE LORD. Hence challenges outside only added fuel to their enthusiasm inside. They carried no alternate plans. In case, their lead plan failed ... When checkmated, Msgr Gratian would retreat to the Lord, who had employed him. The Lord did not fail them. More and more zeal-gripped missionaries kept joining the Bijnor-Garhwal bandwagon. Friends of Msgr Gratian now became friends of Bijnor. Each one put in his or her mite. They invested their prayers, dreams, plans, money, labor, etc. Dream of Bijnor went far beyond the territorial boundaries of the mission and was celebrated by people in Kerala and even across the oceans. Sangam at Allahabad brings the blessings of three holy rivers together. They trace the origin of Ganga and Yamuna to the sacred land of Himalayas (Gangotri and Yamnotri). The third, Sarasvati, is a mythical river, so the claim. Like Moses who struck the rock at the Lord’s command and brought waters gushing out, pioneering missionaries of Christ struck, along the rivers of Ganga and Yamuna, on rock of the mountainous challenges before them; streams of faith gushed out. Another river was born, not mythical, but mystical.

The beginning was obviously very difficult. To start from the scratch in altogether a new place where the missionaries were totally strangers, was indeed a challenge. Staying in one of the parishes of the diocese of Meerut, they had to commute every day to Bijnor to find a place on rent to start with.

Bp Gratian Mundadan CMI First Bishop of Bijnor

The provincial house of Bijnor mission

Fifty years later, "You gain nothing and we lose nothing" sounds a hard-to-miss-irony. The nay-sayers and skeptics of the past cannot stop counting the gains of the Himalayan mission. The statistics of what can be measured and estimated – the sheer number of missionaries, institutions, programs and initiatives with reach to the nooks and corners of the entire region moves everyone to admiration and dismay. But that in itself is less significant. More significant is that the faith, vision and passion of the pioneers of the Himalayan mission became a light set on the hill. Himalayan challenges ceased to be intimidating; they began to invite, attract and cajole. Hundreds trooped in, men and women, old and young. Today, the Himalayan soil stands drenched in the sweat, tears, dreams, prayers and even blood of the zealous flagbearers of Christ. That has become the new mythical river watering the seeds of hope for a robust Church of tomorrow.

CMI mission charism, inherited from Saint Kuria-kose Chavara, has been to be trendsetters, going to the unknown, experimenting the unknown and hoping for outcomes unknown. This flows from the contemplative dimension of their Carmelite heritage. Over such a foundation laid by the vision of Bishop Gratian CMI and fortified by the passion of Bishop John Vadakkal CMI, a Church awaiting its spring stands. With the assured dynamic animation of youthful Bishop Vincent Nellaiparambil at the helm now, the prospects have only brightened. The mythical river of Bijnor-Garhwal flows side by side with Ganga and Yamuna, drawing into it rivulets of faith, prayers, sweat and dreams of the missionaries, who troop in eager to be part of the saga of Himalayan mission. At sweet FIFTY, the mission is chasing a Golden Dream on the strength of the Golden Limbs of the faith-soaked warriors of the Lord.



Jaiharikhal Ashram



Members of Bijnor Province

Sacred Heart College Sitapur



Friends
of Msgr Gratian
now became friends of
Bijnor. Each one put in his or
her mite. They invested their
prayers, dreams, plans,
money, labor, etc.

When

Good

Called



2

Paulson Muthipeedika CMI
Bhopal On His Usri mission

Mr. Kanaiyyalal of Gorchapper village had married off his daughter. But after some time, she lost her mental balance and came back to her house. They treated her but there was no stable relief for her. So Mr. Kanaiyyalal came to me and told me about his daughter. I suggested him to bring her to our church for Friday Adoration. But he said that she was not in such a condition that she could remain calm if they brought her to the church. Then I suggested that we would go to his house and pray for his daughter. He was very happy about it. Along with 8-10 parishioners including the Sisters, we went to Gorchapper village to pray for Mr. Kanaiyyalal's daughter. As usual we invited the entire village for prayer. Some 30 people joined us for prayer service. We prayed for the daughter of Mr. Kanaiyyalal especially besides others. After a while his daughter got up went away to a

neighbouring house. She was asked to remain for the prayer but she did not listen and went away. After finishing the prayer service, we went to the house where she was and prayed over her. She was shouting and trying to run away. But

her father and brothers helped us to hold her still and I prayed over her. After a few days Mr. Kanaiyyalal came and told us that his daughter was alright she had gone back to her husband's house. Though we had been working in this village for more than 20 years it was the first time that we had a prayer meeting openly in this village. We were happy that the Lord gave us one more village to proclaim his message and pray in his name.

Sushant was a student in class VI in our school from Gokhpur village eight kms away from Usri. His father was a shopkeeper. This family was staunch supporters of RSS. This boy had swelling on his left leg from the toe to the knee. It was difficult for him to walk. They consulted many doctors and hospitals but the swelling remained intact. Since this village was heterogeneous and big and by the main road and the Sangh Parivar was very active there, we were reluctant to invite them to our church for prayer. But when I had visited his house as part of my visit to the families of our students, I had a detailed discussion about his sickness and then I was bold to invite them to our church for prayer. Next Friday his father brought him for prayer to our church along with his grandmother who had some trouble in her throat and her sister who also had some ailments. We prayed for them and after the prayer the ladies told that they felt better, but the condition of Sushant was the same.

We asked them to come the next Friday as well which they did. Then we offered to go to their house and pray which they welcomed whole heartedly. We had 10-12 of our parishioners including the Sisters to go to Sushant's house for prayer. His house was very much close to the main road. Here we did not invite other people but we only had the family members for prayer. They had diya of ghee and had really well prepared the room for prayer with some decorations. We had singing, bhajan, proclamation of the Gospel, reflection, intercessory prayers and I prayed over Sushant and others who were sick. After the prayer service all except Sushant said that they felt better. We continued our prayers for Sushant and there was some relief for him though, the swelling had not left fully.

We were really very sacred about the prospect of praying at Gorkhpur village. It was the village where we first wanted to open our mission centre in 1992. Fr. Jose Pariyadan CMI of our province had contacted a family and they had agreed to rent two rooms for Fr. Jose to stay and start the mission. He came in a jeep on the appointed day with his luggage to occupy the rooms. But on reaching there, the house owner said that he did not want to give his rooms for rent. Some of the Sangh Parivar members had prevailed over him to change his mind and they had compelled him not to give the room for Christian missionaries as they feared that the latter might convert all the villagers to their faith. So, Fr. Jose Pariyadan, the pioneer missionary of Usri Mission Centre, had to come back disappointed and find a good man in Usri village eight kms away from Gorkhpur village. This man in Usri village gave a room adjacent to his cowshed for Fr. Jose to live. His wife gave him food. Fr. Jose stayed in this room for one and half years before he could purchase the present plot of land and construct a house there for his stay. Since Gorkhpur village had not welcomed us in the beginning we could not start many activities there for long.

In 2002 we had some SHGs in this village and we could establish rapport with many villagers. We conducted the Balmela and the student in this big village participated in it very actively. When we wanted to start a school, we wanted to start it in Gorkhpur village as it was the central village in the area. We searched for a plot of land but though, many people offered us land none of them was suitable for the proposed school. After searching for about one year and more we gave up this village for starting a school there and instead found a very suitable land at Usri village itself not very far from our existing mission centre. Now the people of Gokhpur were sad that we had not started the school at Gorkhpur but did it at Usri. They felt that their first rejection of the missionaries cost them dearly now. But we tried to explain to them it was not because of it but somehow, we could not find a suitable plot of land to start the school after searching for it over a year. Now when we were warmly welcomed for prayer in one of the family in this village, we were very happy that the Lord had given us a change to pray even in this village which in fact had rejected us in the beginning.

There are about 75 students from this village in our school and I used to visit all their families. They all eagerly welcomed me and I used to conclude my visit invariably with a prayer. Though they were staunch supporters of Sangh Parivar, none of them had any problem in praying for them. One of the teachers in the govt. high school belonged to our parish, who stayed at a rented house in this village. We used to visit her home and have prayer and rosary there often in which even the house owner used to attend.

Earlier in 2002 we wanted to send our regent Br. Limson, now Fr. Limson Puthur to teach English in the govt. high school where there was no teacher for English. The govt. high school principal welcomed the idea but some of Sangh Parivar members in the village objected to it, saying that the missionaries should not teach in the govt. school. I found out from the people who was opposing it. When I got the name of the man who was opposing it, I went to meet him personally to find out why he had objected. When I met him, he was very homely and welcomed us well. He said that he had no problem and there was no objection to Brother teaching English in the Govt. school. So, from the next day on wards Br. Limson started teaching English in the Govt. school which was well appreciated by the staff, students and the parents. Later when Br.

Limson had completed his regency and went for theology, we appointed a man who had done MA from Usri village to teach the students in stead of Br. Limson. It was continued till a teacher was available in the govt. school for teaching English.

There was a young priest offering pooja in one of the village temples in Gorkhpur. This man had two daughters who were studying our school. I used to visit his house. Though he was himself a Hindu priest in one of the temples in this village, he and his family always welcomed me to pray in his house. Another priest offering prayers in another temple in this village and who was going around for offering pooja in the families of the villagers, whenever they invited him, was living in a joint family. Five children from this family were attending our school. So, I got a chance to visit this family and every time I offered to conclude my visit with a prayer, they welcomed it well. I found that even when the people were strong in their faith, they had no problem in welcoming us to pray in their homes, for them. Though they may not become Christians, we get a chance to introduce Jesus Christ and his message to them and pray for them in the name of Jesus Christ. Our mandate is to proclaim the Gospel, it is for the Spirit of the Lord to convert their heart and then we may become the worthy instruments to lead them to Jesus and his message of love, mercy and compassion.

Mr. Ganesh Yadav from Usri village was working with the Sisters in their field. Slowly with the help he had received from the Sisters he put up a bicycle repair show, still continued to work for the Sisters. The Sisters also helped him to build a proper house for him. Later his shop developed well and he could no longer work for the Sisters as he was

too busy in his shop. He was the only son of his mother whom his father had abandoned and had married another woman from the village itself. Mr. Ganesh and his mother were staying alone. They were not cared for by or in touch with father and his family. Now the second wife of Ganesh's father became sick with cancer. His father also grew poor, though early he was very wealthy but never supported his first wife and son. His father came to us asking for our prayer for his second wife. We invited them to church for the Friday Adoration. He brought her and we prayed for her very specially. She had some relief.

After the prayer I met his father and told him that he had to reconcile with his son. By this time Mr. Ganesh's mother, the first wife of the man had died. He agreed to and said he was ready to reconcile if Mr. Ganesh was ready to accept him. I met Mr. Ganesh at his home and told him that his father had come and had brought his wife for prayer. I also asked Mr. Ganesh to reconcile with his father and his family as they were suffering very much due to the sickness of his stepmother. Mr. Ganesh readily agreed to it and said he had no ill feelings toward his father. On a day I asked both Mr. Ganesh and his father to come to our church for prayer and for reconciliation. His father came alone but Mr. Ganesh brought his wife and children with him to the church that day. We prayed for them and they both got reconciled. The son touched the feet of his father and the father embraced his son after so many years. When the stepmother of Mr. Ganesh was hospitalized at Jabalpur, Mr. Ganesh went to the hospital to take care of her. He also sent food for her and the bystanders in the hospital from his house when he could not be in the hospital. Initially the step mother had some relief but the sickness relapsed again and she died eventually but a happy and peaceful person.

Though I had visited most of the families in Usri village and had prayed for the sick in some of their homes, we had not invited the neighbours or entire village for prayer as we used to do when having the prayer service in interior villages in this area. Usri was also a heterogeneous village and on the main road. There were many active members of the Sangh Parivar in this village to observe our activities and programmes and make sure that we did not do anything meant for spreading the message of Jesus Christ. But people in this village knew that we prayed for the sick and many asked us to pray for them. The Sisters who run a small health centre had a hand bill stuck on their centre informing people that we were ready to come and pray for them if they had any special need for prayer. In our school on the main notice board, a notice informing the timings of the holy mass and Friday Adoration in the church and inviting the sick and needy for these prayers and our availability to pray in their homes, was displayed permanently.

Once a young woman who was married to this village was severely sick. They had taken her to doctors and medical college at Jabalpur, but her condition remained serious. One of the relatives of this lady went to the Sisters asking them to come to her house to pray for her as her condition was very serious.

At that time Sister Alice, a lay woman from Thrissur, along with her husband Mr. Francis had come to our house as their Son Br. Kelvin Alookaran CMI was regent with me. She was active in Charismatic prayer with visions and healing powers. When Sisters invited us to go to Usri village to pray for that lady, I took Sister Alice with us to her house along with the Sisters. On reaching the house, we found that the lady was very restless, unconscious and was saying things which nobody could understand. There were over 20 people gathered from the village and relatives of the family. So, we thought instead of just praying over her we should have a short prayer service, though we did not have evangelisers from our parish group. We prayed, sang some songs and proclaimed the Gospel and I prayed over the lady. We taught the family and the people gathered there to recite a short prayer - Jesus have mercy on her and heal her. We repeated this short prayer many times over with the people and asked them to pray this prayer as many times as possible. After one hour or so we came away from the village. After two three days we got the news that she was alright and started to work in the field. This was the first time we had prayer at Usri village with more than 20 people to attend it. We also took Sister Alice along with our evangelizing team to Jetlapur village to have a prayer service there. On reaching the village we informed the people that there would be a prayer service that day and anybody who was interested could attend it. Over 80 people turned up. We had praise and worship, singing bhajans, songs, proclamation of the Gospel, reflection, intercessory prayers and prayer over the sick by me. There were over 30 people to be prayed for. People participated in the praise and worship and sang bhajans with hands lifted up and clapping. Many people reported feeling better after the prayer. The experiences Sister Alice had at Usri prompted her to invite Fr. Josen and Brother Shajai, another layperson from Thrissur, active in Charismatic prayer, vision and healing, of her team to come again to Usri to pray for the people in need of prayer. They, after a few months, came to Usri. This time we visited a few villages for prayer. We announced our visit early and requested the villagers to gather together in one of the convenient houses. At Jetlapur village there were over 100 people gathered for prayer in the evening. We had the team from the parish along with Fr. Josen Padikkala, Sister Alice and Brother Shaji. The prayer service lasted for about two hours. There were over 60 people to be prayed over individually while the bhajans were sung. Fr. Josen, Brother Shaji and myself prayed over the people. Most of the people reported feeling better though no great healing had taken place. That afternoon we had taken the team from Kerala to Singodi village. There we did not have prayer service as such but prayed in a few families where there were some sick persons. They told us that they felt better and asked us to come again for prayer. The next evening, we went to Jamunjhiriya village with over 25 families. In this village we were having the prayer service for the first time. There were over 60 people gathered for prayer. The prayer service lasted over one and half hours. There were over 30 people to be prayed over by Fr. Josen, Brother Shaji and myself. After the prayer many people reported that they felt very good.

The next day morning we went to another village called Maduwa. We did not have any prayer service as such there but we told the village leaders if anybody was sick, they could come to be prayed for. So, some people with sickness and ailments started coming to be prayed over. We spent over two hours in this village and Fr. Josen, Brother Shaji and myself prayed over for 30 people. On the way back we also went to Pala Mundarai village. We prayed over a man who had some mental disturbances. That evening we went to Alode village. We had a prayer service there with over 50 people which lasted for over one and half hours. There were over 30 people to be prayed over by Fr. Josen, Brother Shaji and myself. Many people reported feeling better after the prayer. We were very happy that Fr. Josen Padikkala, Sister Alice and Brother Shaji had come all the way from Kerala for helping us in having prayer services in different villages. Their presence helped us to tell the people that some special persons with gift of healing have come from Kerala to pray for them. It helped us to have more people for the prayer services. It also energized our small group of Catholics to be more interested in praying for the villagers as these people were coming from Kerala just for praying for the people. We thanked the Lord who had given us chance to proclaim his Gospel in more villages. ... To be continued.

I
prayed over
the lady. We taught the
family and the people gathered
there to recite a short
prayer - Jesus have mercy
on her and heal her.



I am a mission, always;
 you are a mission, always;
 every baptized man
 and woman is a mission.



Dear,

Every baptized is a missionary. We can become a missionary in different ways, in whatever situation you are. St Therese of Child Jesus, Patron of missionaries had never been to a mission yet was a missionary to the core of her heart. She became a missionary by praying for the mission and the missionaries. So CMission offers the forum to become a missionary by praying for the missionary. Those who are interested- parishes families, religious communities, retreat centres, and prayer centres- can adopt missionaries and pray for them.

Those who wish to join,

One Family One Missionary Prayer Programme

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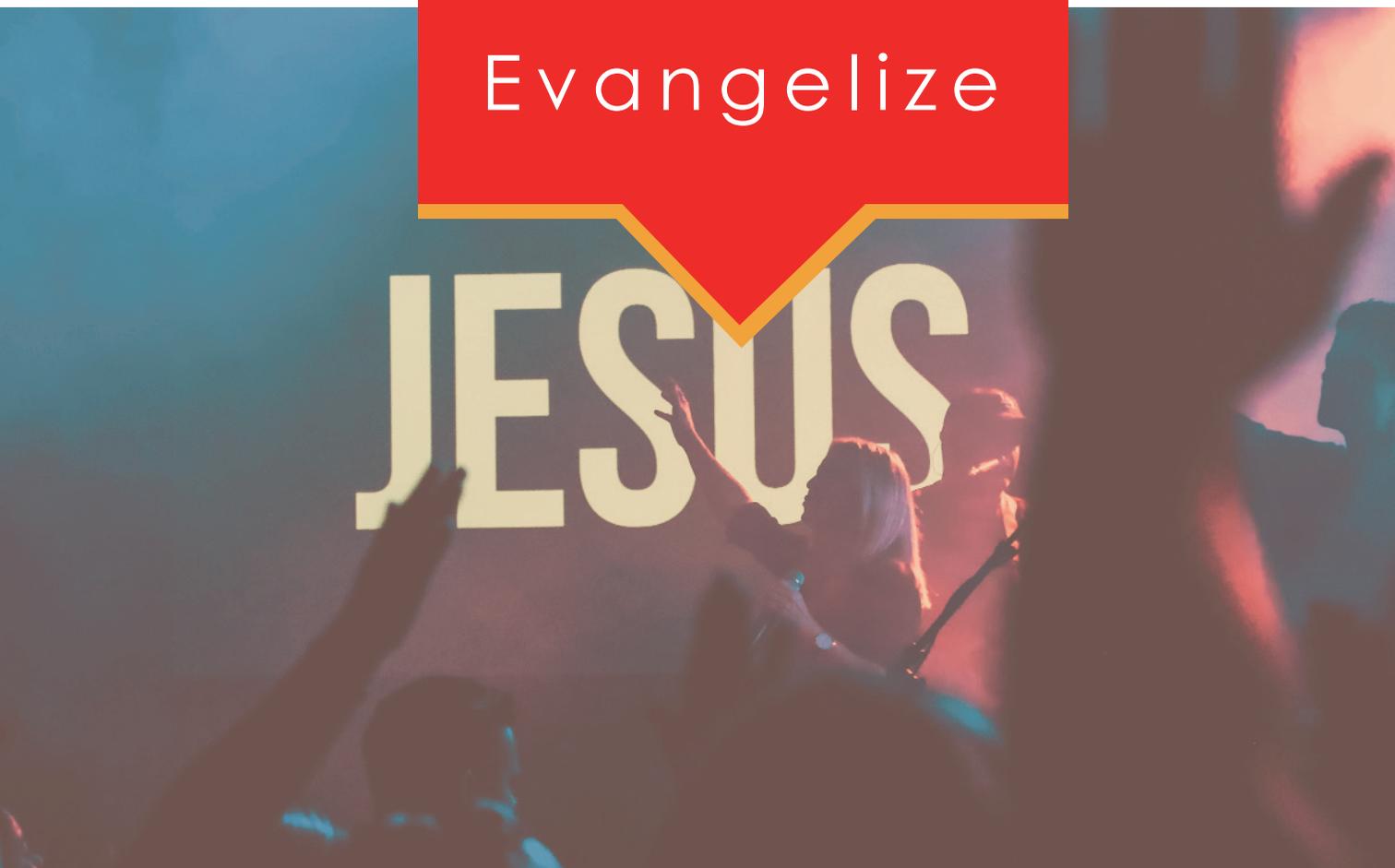
If God created shadows
it was to better
emphasise the light.”

St John XXIII

Chosen ones are ready for it.
Let's always do it together.

Evangelize

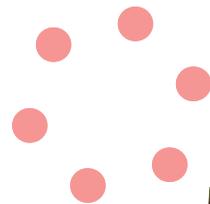
JESUS

A photograph of a church service. In the foreground, several people are silhouetted against a bright background, with their hands raised in prayer or praise. In the background, a large screen displays the word "JESUS" in large, white, capital letters. The overall atmosphere is one of worship and devotion.



HUNGER
for God &
HUNGER
for Bread

I want this hunger for God to remain, but I want the hunger for bread to be satisfied" says Saint John Paul II. Today by God's grace we have a well established Church which seldom faces heresies and schisms. The recent demonstrations like response to the noble agitation by the nurses, construction of high expensive churches etc. depict that the institutionalised Church lacks the humane face which is indeed a problem of today. The scholars make a purposeful division of Jesus Christ as 'Jesus of Nazereth' and 'Christ of faith'. The 'Jesus of Nazerath' is a historical preview which brings to light the humane face of Christ. Through his life he conjoined the two separate fundamental commandments as single and gave a new interpretation to it. Here we see a transition of meaning, from 'and' to 'that means'. It points out that 'loving God' is 'loving your fellow brother'. Being in love with the Divine is being in love with the humans. Today's world expects a humane face of the Church besides the Divine. It means Jesus of Nazereth needs to be exposed than the Christ of faith. People of God become suspicious when there is an imbalance of these two factors which is an inseparable identity of the Church. when we consider these two elements of faith, 'today' needs more of 'Jesus of Nazerath' who is an abode of all humane values, the perfect human ever lived on this earth, than 'Christ of faith'. The humane face of the church helps us to associate and find solidarity with Jesus who taught us to be better and refined humans, which in turn makes us worthy to address God as our Father. Thus the time demands a constant transformation from the attitude of a 'cat' to the attitude of a 'dog'. A cat thinks; "these people feed me, pet me and take care of me every now and then; therefore I must be nothing less than a God". On the contrary a dog thinks "these people feed me, pet me and take care of me every now and then; therefore these people must be Gods". There is a fundamental discrepancy in the conclusions made by these two. Being Christians, our call is to possess the attitude of a dog; it means, I am the keeper of my brother; my duty is to protect and love unconditionally my fellow brothers and sisters. We often get stuck in the attitude of a 'cat' when we are given powers and recognitions. Yes, 'today' demands a paradigm shift; a breakthrough for a change of attitude. This humane face is not only an internal disposition but also an action oriented life. Someone said 'love is leaving' and this 'leaving' is the respect paid to the freedom of the other. Individual freedom to make choices is one of the greatest gifts from God. When this freedom is constrained by various powers in and around us, we the Christians have the moral power to withstand against the evil powers who deny it. When the religious fundamentalists promote the denial of fundamental rights and freedom, we as the followers of Christ have to defend it in a Christian way. These people try to associate Christianity with the foreign invaders who ruled India for several centuries. I would say with hundred percentage conviction that this version of Christianity was not the Christianity which church upheld. There was a vast difference in their words and deeds. Therefore let's set a difference by being true Christians in this holy land of India and strike a balance between 'Jesus of Nazerath' and 'Christ of Faith'.



Mission Meditation



Bibin Baby CMI
Mysore

Nobody knows how great is the reward for those who help the destitute”imbibing the spirit of our Mother Foundress Saint Mariam Thresia , With a mission “To dare to serve the Humanity , we the Holy Family Sisters (CHF) has been delivering its service for the development of the weak and marginalized communities since 2018 in South Sudan.

The thrust areas are Health Care, Education (training of nurses and midwives in Mary Help College) and the work with marginalized villagers.





Barliech a village in Sudan

Mission
Villages



Angelo CHF
South Sudan

South Sudan had been always under War. In the year 2005 a comprehensive peace agreement was made between Sudan and South Sudan. In the year 2011 the Sudan was divided into two countries. Sudan and South Sudan. Thus in the year 2011 South Sudan was declared as an independent country recognized by the united nations. Almost all the countries accepted the independence of South Sudan. Unfortunately in the year 2013 began the conflict between president SalvaKiir and his Dinka dominant group and Riak Machar the Vice president with his Nuer dominant group. In between other rebel groups also were formed creating more than 6 rebel groups within the country. In the year 2019 a peace agreement was signed between the major rebel groups but till now a lasting peace has not yet been established. The smaller rebel groups are yet to join the peace agreement. Sporadic fights always break out without any early warning signals where most of the civilians get affected in those particular areas.



could keep them alive for some time till they find themselves settled with other small livelihood activities. Very often we see the children they bath in muddy water and drink the same water. Sometimes we feel pity when we see them coming with all kinds of skin diseases. They are really who have been chased away, but rather indirect victims of the conflict as they are dependent on begging and suffer tremendously from the skyrocket food prices driven by the conflict, economic crisis and Corona virus pandemic. Some of them lost their caretakers due to the conflict who died or had to escape, but mostly, they and their dependent children are suffering from the fact that the 'normal' citizens (and also not the government) cannot support them due to the severe shortage of food and salaries. We see many street children collecting the waste who are our daily visitors who come and get one day meal sometimes we just do the dressing of their

- Most of the villages we are serving are having similar stories.
- They live among the rebels almost always with fear and trembling. No schools, no proper houses, no markets, no roads and no communications.

CHF Sisters are helping the people of barliech village

It is important to know that many locations in the western Bhar el Ghazal state was known well for different kinds of fights and conflicts in the past years. These conflicts that often took place in those locations forced the people living in and around it run away to interior forests in order to save their own lives and in fact many people could not save their little possessions and belongings but only their lives with which they fled away from those places. Many of them lost their dear and near ones, some of them became physically handicapped, because of the occurring conflicts. In their own places they were like unknown people because they had no food to eat, no shelter to rest and literally nothing else they had to keep them alive there. It is at this crucial juncture, the Holy Family Sisters together with Mary Help Association with the help of Ngos came forward to save their lives by providing them spiritual, mental and physical support that

In the state where we are, western Bahr al Ghazal state has only 3 kilometres of paved road. The state lacks roads, infrastructures, proper educational institutions, Health facilities, and other basic necessities. The country seems to be 50 years lagging behind other developing countries.

By working together with Mary Help Association, in wau, we are reaching out the poor, broken-hearted, threatened, wounded, and disabled people who really need our consolation, help and support. Overcoming all kinds of risk of crossing the forest areas by the paved road we go with our broken language to reach food and the basic things.

We can't express the kind of emotion that arises when we see their faces eagerly awaiting our arrival, It's a kind of heavenly experience I say. Needless to say the poor people are helpless waiting for our food even in the rain.

There will be a commotion inside when we hear gunshots here and there. But when we remember their innocent faces, we just run with a passion, relying on the Almighty.

We do have 11 primary schools and a rural women's development center, emergency food distribution for the conflict affected people. Among the many villages where we work and give our assistance we like to speak the one of those villages in detail. That is Barliech village. Barliech village is situated in the south of Wau, around 42 kilometres from Wau town. There is no road leading to this village. We have to drive sixteen kilometers through the forest to reach there. Most of the people belong to Jur tribe. The language is Jur language. Around 350 families are there in this village. Most of them have migrated from Rocrocdong village when the village was attacked by armed young men from the rebel groups. A long journey was made through the forest in order to reach this safer area. Even here many times they were attacked by different groups. We opened a primary school here to educate the displaced children. 360 children attend the school. The school is under the make shift shed made of plastic sheets. A borehole is made for water. Parents are given two months food during the hunger gaps to survive the most difficult time of the year. Midday meal is provided for all children.

Most of the villages we are serving are having similar stories. They live among the rebels almost always with fear and trembling. No schools, no proper houses, no markets, no roads and no communications. They are in miserable conditions. We are trying to do all what we can to alleviate the suffering. We expanded our activities to support an agriculture project of MHA with the impoverished former pastoralist population north of Wau. At the same time, the congregation started to support the establishment of primary schools for the severely conflict-affected rural population south of Wau and to work intensively together with the Catholic volunteers of St. Mark's Poor's General Purpose Co-operative Society, thereby supporting the most vulnerable people (old-aged/disabled beggars and their dependent minors) within the urban areas of Greater Wau. After decades of war, destruction, and displacement, aggravated by recent natural disasters like flooding / droughts / plagues of locusts in different parts of the country and a general high level of nepotism and corruption on the side of the government, South Sudan was already considered as one of the worst humanitarian crisis on earth. The grave economic impact of the global Corona virus pandemic came recently on top of this. Nowadays, donor agencies are flooded with appeals for help while available financial resources are at the same time shrinking.

Nevertheless, the global humanitarian needs have very much increased. The last war in South Sudan alone caused the death of about 400,000 people and displaced more than every third person (about 4.5 million out of a population of about 11.5 million). According to recent data published by the United Nations, about 8 million (!) people depend in South Sudan on humanitarian assistance. However, due to a lack of resources, the World Food Program can only provide the displaced people some assistance and was recently forced to cut the ratios further (to about half of the normal ratios).



The area of the former Western Bahr el Ghazal State has the highest ethnic diversity in South Sudan. This diversity is also reflected in the member structure of St. Mark's Poor General Purpose Cooperative Society: There are not less than members of 11 different tribes represented. However, in their social work for the most vulnerable (blind, leper, cripple, aged), they address beneficiaries from even more tribes. In the area of the Catholic Diocese of Wau, there are currently high ethnic tensions between members of the smaller farming tribes and the large pastoralist Dinka tribe which is often considered as 'dominant' by members of the other tribes.

Fortunately, among the active members of St. Mark, there is, so far, no Dinka. However, half of the served beneficiaries are in fact Dinkas. This shows impressively the true Christian spirit of these volunteers who sacrifice not only time and energy for this social work but donate even second hand clothes and membership fees for the well-being of their beneficiaries. By the grace of God We continue our mission with much happiness and satisfaction.





Best Practices



THE BIBLE GRAMAM

Jerusalem Retreat Centre



Biston Koola CMI
Thrissur

The word "Gramam" which stands for Village is a place where human society lives together. From the context of Kerala, a Gramam is a clustered human settlement or community, larger than a hamlet but smaller than a town, with a population typically ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand. Now let us have a look into the typical Bible Gramam.

Bible Gramam is the most significant service of Jerusalem Retreat Centre for 22 years. "Train children in the right way and when old, they will not stray" (Prov:22/6). Childhood is a formative stage of life. The Bible Gramam aims to ensure the holistic development of the children physically, mentally, spiritually, and artistically before they fall into the trap of crass materialism. Within 20 years, many children were molded, shaped, and formed to be the promises of the church, the architects of the nation, and the darlings of their parents in the Bible Gramam. The dream of the Rev. Fr. Davis Pattath is to ensure the growth of the Bible Gramams alongside our monasteries, educational institutions, and other entities.



The Bible Gramam came into being on 15th June 2000 in simplified surroundings to cater to the interests of 3-year-old tiny tots under the stewardship of Fr. Davis Pattath CMI and Fr. Davis Panakal CMI. The classes of the Bible Gramam take place on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the week. The training in the Bible Gramam commences in the morning at 9-30 am in front of the sacred statue of Mother Mary and it concludes at 3 pm with the entire expenses borne by it such as the expenditures related to uniform, food and training. Every year, training in the Bible Gramam starts in June and lasts up to the March of the next year in a year's course, twenty batches' students participate with the total number reaching up to 1560. Through this course, the children and their parents are filled with the power of the Word of God.

The children are gifted with uniforms on the same day which marks the birthdays of Mother Mary in the Jerusalem Bible Gramam. These uniforms are clarion calls to the kids to grow in unity with the Church, the Holy Spirit, and the God Almighty. The Bible Gramam gives tacit backing to the promotion of 21 types of manifold activities such as character formation, exams to promote the biblical lessons, convocation, the insertion of respect towards the Infant Jesus and Mother Mary, practice regarding how to perform the sign of the cross, basic catechism, the teaching of alphabets and letters, the recognition of colors, drawing, General Knowledge, the study of the Bible parables, action song, Bible rhymes, psalms, table manners, and sports. Through the above activities, the children attain a hardworking attitude, socializing skills, memory retention, and the ability to be upright human beings. The training in the Bible Village makes the children human beings of love, compassion, mercy, hope, and trust. The parents rate the training in the Bible village through the myriad activities, it engages in the day in and day out. In the 2019-2020 batch, 80 children completed their training in the Bible Gramam.

The Kingdom of God is among you (Luke 17/21). The children who had studied in the Bible Village went on to prove their mettle in various institutions in the areas of arts, sports, studies, and character. These children score splendidly in different fields of life owing to the encouragement, motivation, and inspiration of their parents. The Bible Gramam has gone on to notch up much success due to the determination of Rev Fr Pattath to guide the children through the right path and also to develop their underlying skills and potentials in all earnestness.

The Bible Gramam has contributed to the overall sprucing up of the children's and adult's wholesome activities within the framework of the church, such as children's courage to stand up on the stages of Bible conventions to speak to the audience, the nurturance of prayerful mentality in children, the intercession of the children for their parents in front of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the home mission, the family get-togethers as part of prayer meetings, the project related to the dissemination of biblical words, the get-togethers of Alumni of the Bible Gramam, the summer vocation classes, the rosary processions and the setting up of a YouTube channel to enhance faith in Christ.

The Bible Gramam evokes in the minds of the children an aim regarding what they want to become in life. The Bible Gramam is mantled by many individuals who hail from various Christian backgrounds who give a base for the children to grow in strength and vitality in their life. Many experienced teachers are also part of this endeavor which can be termed as a blessing for the Bible Gramam. The Bible Gramam is at the forefront of forming children who are the true defenders and martyrs of the Church tomorrow. The children worldwide are to be nurtured to be the genuine votaries of the teachings of the Church. The activities connected with the Bible Gramam are inclined towards bringing up children deep in faith and well-versed in the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through the learning, the proclamation, and the practice of our Lord's words, let's become Holy.



Frontier Missionary



ASVAS: A MISSION MODEL

Mrudul Kodiyan CMI
Dharmaram

A Christian is a missionary for all seasons, who flees from his/her nests and reaches out to the sick, the needy, and the marginalized. Christ's message itself makes it clear when he declares, "He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18b-19). St. Paul also reminds us, "proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable" (2 Timothy 4:2). ASVAS is the visible expression of this ongoing mission mandate, that continues to shine from its inception on 20th September 2010 in the city of Bangalore.

ASVAS is a project started under the Dharmaram Association of Social Service (DASS). ASVAS provides food for at least 300 people every day. The lunch consists of rice, sambar, ragi ball, pickle, pappad, and vegetable mix. The increasing number of Cancer patients like children, who lost their eye-sight due to cancer, women suffering from breast cancer, men in pains due to lung cancer, and others, visit ASVAS regularly and fill their empty stomachs with a heart full of gratitude, feeling the true essence of ASVAS, the consolation of Comforter. Christ Special School is another venture started in June 2012, for taking care and offering rehabilitation of mentally challenged children between the ages of seven to fourteen from the vicinity of Bangalore city.

God's Inscrutable Ways

A memory that is ever cherished in the story of ASVAS is its beginning. It was during the Christmas season in 2010. Fr. Marius distributed sweets to the children who came to ASVAS for a Christmas gathering. But to his surprise, they were asking for a meal instead of those sweets. Later he came to know that most of the children who came there did not have the provision even for at least a single meal a day. It was after this incident Fr. Marius took up the mission to provide a one-day meal to the hungry people. Started as once in a week programme, later it was extended as an all day one.

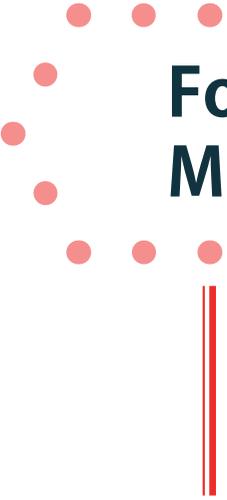
People from all walks of life come voluntarily to serve at ASVAS. Apart from the regular volunteers from St. Thomas Forane Church, there are students from Dharmaram College, Christ University, Christ Schools, DVK, and employees of IT firms, teachers, and government servants from different offices. They come taking turns and join in this house of mercy and return with a mind filled with immense satisfaction, peace, and joy. It is a fact that in a short span of nine years, ASVAS could reach out to almost ten lakhs of needy people with mid-day meals with the help of the voluntary services of great hearts.

Missionary Formation Beyond Borders. As an allied organization of Dharmaram College, the major seminary of the CMI congregation, ASVAS has always been nourished by the active involvement of brothers undergoing formation here. This provides for the brothers, an orientation for their future mission as we meet with people who seek a divine consoling hand in their lives. Sometimes a smile or a consoling word gives these people, a great consolation in their lives. Moreover, for a formee undergoing formation he/she feels Jesus' command of feeding the hungry, helping the sick, all being fulfilled through these activities. All the more Fr. Marius Manickanampampil is a living model to venture out into new frontier missions which we least notice.

ASVAS Today

Like the small mustard seed which grows into a huge tree that gives shade to all, today ASVAS has grown into a living presence of the kingdom of God in the city of Bangalore. The divine consoling hands touch all who come for a day's meal here. In nutshell, ASVAS stands by its name as a house of comfort and consolation to the needy and the marginalized brothers and sisters within the localities of Bangalore; no matter what religion they profess or what strata of society they belong to. A handful of rice filled with a pinch of love has made a difference in the lives of many and ASVAS will continue to do so in the future. ASVAS is a living model of ongoing Christian Mission. This Christian missionary call invites everyone to become a part of this ongoing mission, through your prayers and support. Moreover Jesus calls labourers to his field to proclaim his good news in various mission lands and territories, to go beyond the borders to the people who seek divine consolation.





**For
Mission**

ANGELS OF MERCY

Covid Task Force



Joel Chiramel CMI
Dharmaram

'Angels of Mercy' is a joint venture of the Fathers and brothers of Devamatha Province and Amala Medical College, Thrissur. It was started in the month of May 2021, when the Covid surge and death rate was in its peak in Kerala. More than seven fathers and ten brothers so far actively cooperated with this venture and became the consolation of thousands of Covid patients and their families. On this occasion we express our sincere gratitude to Rev Fr Davis Panakkal CMI our Provincial, Rev Fr Thomas Vazhakkala CMI, the Provincial Councillor for Social Apostolate and Rev Fr Julius Arakkal CMI, the Director of Amala and his team. We spend almost six hours a day in the Covid wards wearing the PPE kit. These moments were unforgettable memories in our lives as well as in the life of those whom we met. There were many unique experiences for each one of us. We would like to share some among them with the hope that many would be benefited out of it.

Rev. Fr Dr Francis Vineeth Vadakkethala

In the afternoon of 31 May 2021, we received a phone call telling us to have an attention on Fr Vineeth CMI of Coimbatore Province who is admitted in the hospital. In the evening after wearing the PPE kit we joined for the duty and visited Fr Vineeth. Unfortunately he had passed away some moments before our arrival.

It was a heart touching experience. We were instrumental to make the last arrangements for him especially in packing the body. It was also an eye opener that our service started aiming at the wellbeing of the public in turn became a blessing for us to pay homage to one of our elder brother.

Serving Food and Medicine

The main mission of our crew was to serve the meals to the patients. It was an instance where we found chances to interact with the patients creatively. Many were complaining about the food, its distribution, its taste, its price.... Actually we found that it emerged from the feeling of isolation and uncertainty. Even though our smile to them was within our face masks, we tried to express it through our words and actions. While serving we listened to them, enquired their needs, sleep, health and family backgrounds. Slowly there was decrease in the complaints, and they were relaxed.

ICU Visits, Religious and Social Customs

None of us will forget the moments in ICU. We had many experiences of giving consolation to the dying. It is a place where people are in the utmost need of someone's presence. Since we are PPE kits, we had access to ICUs. We were instrumental in giving the last sacrament to many and preparing them for a peaceful death. I would like to appreciate the customs of other religions also. One day a patient was discharged from ICU because of the lack of response to the medicines. He was a Muslim. Soon his family members came to the room and prepared him for a happy death through their prayers.

Feedback

On all days our works were being appreciated by many doctors, nurses, hospital workers, patients and their family members. One day we could not go for the night shift since we had a gathering. The next morning, patients were eagerly waiting for us and enquired the reason for our absence. Our presence was a motivation and helping hand to the doctors and nurses of the hospital. We were at their disposal for all kinds of jobs and became a consolation for them too in their hectic work.

Fun of PPE kits

All are equal in the appearance of PPE kits, whether it be a priest, doctor, nurse, volunteer, and helping staff. Often patients are confused to find the proper way to address us. Another interesting fact about PPE kit is the Donning and Doffing. Donning stands for wearing and Doffing removing the PPE kit. Each takes 10 to 15 minutes and it's to be done with serious attention. There was no suffocation in PPE kit. The negligible inconvenience didn't come to our notice when we saw the smile on the faces we met

The Covid Trauma

The Covid 19 badly affected many lives. Many lost their beloved ones, jobs, habits, dreams and the normal life-style.





Mr. Subramanian lost his wife 15 days before when we met him. He is a dialysis patient for the last two years. He has two children of the ages 10 and 8. In the depression, arising from the thought of the future of his children he is not cooperating with the medical staff, and requesting for euthanasia. We tried our maximum with prayers and words of encouragement but he was highly depressed. Majority of the patients go through the pain of isolation. They were enjoying the presence of someone always, now they have no one with them. After being Covid positive, many feel isolated because of the negligence by the neighbors and relatives. In hospital they are unable to cook food for their taste, read newspaper daily, and walk freely. Some take it positively an occasion to unlearn and learn many things. Some in the general ward are not informed about the death of their beloved ones who were in the ICU or ventilators. Covid has not shown partiality on any backgrounds of religion, occupation, age and state of living. All are equal in the hospital, only the difference is whether in the room or general ward. Invariably everyone has to put their complete trust in the hands of those who are looking after them. This reminds of our childhood days. Many patients went through the agony of death seeing the death of those who were in the beds near them. Mrs. Femina, a teacher, was admitted in the ICU for one month and was in the ventilators for more than a couple of weeks. She was fortunate enough to return back with complete health. But none with her came back alive. She told us that every day she was awaiting for her death. In the ICUs day and night is alike, May and June is alike. Many patients are not aware of the dates, days and months.

The Most Holy Sacraments

Our Lord took us as instruments to be the doctors of the souls too. Mrs. Kochuthresia, never missed the daily Holy Qurbana till the beginning of the nationwide lock down. When we met her she first requested us for confession and Holy Communion, telling us that she was eagerly waiting for them for the last one year. We celebrated Holy Qurbana and gave communion to those who requested us. Confession was also made available to those who are in need especially to those who are in critical stage.

Praying Grandmas

Amidst all these situations, we could find praying grandmas, who stretch out their hands in prayers day and night. Mrs. Mary Thampi, has always a rosary in her hands. She talks a lot of the Providence of God. She describes how wonderfully God took care of his people through the extended hands of many. Never was she seen without a cheerful face. Talking with her is an experience of feeling relief.

Angels of Mercy

We thank Almighty God for calling to join with his mission through the Angels of Mercy. Our Lord talks through Jeremiah 30:17 "I will restore you to health and heal your wounds". saints, come to our aid.

The background of the image is a dense, chaotic pattern of the words "COVID-19" written in a black, hand-drawn, sketchy font. The text is oriented in various directions, creating a sense of movement and repetition. In the center of the image, there is a solid dark blue rectangular box. Inside this box, the text "Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations." is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font, centered both horizontally and vertically.

Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations.

Mission Collaborators

JESUS YOUTH MOVEMENT IN BHOPAL



Vishaka Tirkey
Bhopal

Jesus Youth, the international Catholic movement challenges young people to live a meaningful, creative and fulfilling life. During the journey of the movement many Congregations have supported it in various ways to strengthen the movement. Among this the CMI Congregation played a profound role in the movement from its inception in 1985. The Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) Congregation played a pivotal role by helping the Jesus Youth fulfil the pastoral needs and to mould the movement. The movement is deeply indebted to the Congregation for its far reaching impact on Jesus Youth. Today we are witnessing the legacy of the CMI Congregation through Rev. Fr. Anil Mathew CMI in Madhya Pradesh region.

In 2005 Jesus Youth Movement sprouted in MP region but by 2011 the movement and its activities faded due to various reasons. The present Jesus Youth Movement in Bhopal underwent a resurrection experience just a few years ago. It was in 2015 Mr. Ratheesh Sebastian, a Jesus Youth member and his family came to Bhopal in search of job and higher studies. He has been a nurse by profession and an active Jesus Youth since 2010. After six months of prayer and discussion with his Jesus Youth mentor, in 2015 he could discern his future plan to move to Bhopal for further studies and mission. This Word of God inspired his new mission, "I can do all things in him who gives me strength" (Phil 4:13). As he reached Bhopal, he realised that the Jesus Youth Movement was not active in Bhopal. It was his earnest desire to conduct prayer meetings and outreach programmes to inspire many youth. Ratheesh and his wife Juline ardently prayed for this intention. During their Rosary sessions they prayed that they be led to someone who had the charisma and the spirit to spread the Kingdom of God.

A guardian angel for Jesus Youth: Fr. Anil Mathew CMI

God heard the prayer of Ratheesh and his family and signalled the hope on the horizon. It was a providential intervention when he met Fr. Anil Mathew CMI at Holy Cross Church, Lambakheda, Bhopal, where Fr. Anil had come to meet a group of nurses. (He was in charge of the Archdiocesan Nurses Commission). Since Ratheesh too was a nurse it was a coincidence for him to have identified the right person to revive and promote the Jesus Youth Movement in Bhopal region. Though Fr. Anil was not having much exposure in Jesus Youth Movement, he wholeheartedly agreed to support Ratheesh to identify likeminded and prayerful young people to conduct initial prayer meetings. The first meeting was conducted at the house of Ratheesh and a few Jesus Youth participated in it. Fr. Anil there made a presentation on Jesus Youth Movement to inspire and motivate the participants. It jumpstarted the Jesus Youth Movement in Bhopal. The collective prayer and enthusiasm of the Jesus Youth could make tangible changes in Bhopal. Many prayerful families joined and extended generous support to Jesus Youth. Slowly and gradually the number of participants started increasing, as a result the venue of the prayer meeting was shifted to CMI Provincial House Chapel. Although the beginning was smooth, a number of obstacles had to be overcome to reach the destination. Challenges and struggles had always been with the movement since its inception. It was not exceptional for Jesus Youth Bhopal. Sometimes ecclesiastical authorities and youth directors misunderstood Jesus Youth Movement as a parallel movement moving against the local church. But the fact is that it has been canonically recognised in 2016 as a lay movement and it is always at the service of the Church. Jesus Youth Movement is a missionary movement and has a strong bond with Christ. Since the movement is led by Holy Spirit, all crises have been sorted out smoothly.

CMI Institutional Support

The CMI institutions were like a cradle for Jesus Youth Bhopal because we were welcomed everywhere with a generous heart to conduct prayer meetings, trainings and night vigils. The CMI Provincial, Rev. Fr. Justin Akkara invited us to conduct the prayer meetings in the Provincial House chapel. Since then the institutions and resources of CMI Bhopal have wholeheartedly supported the growth of Jesus Youth Movement. Aanchal is like a second home for Jesus Youth to conduct any programme at any time. CMI Bhavan and Yesu Ashram, Padaria were open for us to conduct night vigils. Rev. Fr. Nitin CMI made ever available Navchetna Communication Centre for Jesus Youth Bhopal, and a good number of activities were conducted there from its very inception. Besides this, Fr. Nitin and his team regularly made media coverage of our activities. The Jesus Youth were incorporated in retreat preaching teams in schools and parishes. CMI Fathers were always available to meet the physical, spiritual and financial needs of the Movement.

Jericho prayer

Paves way for a smooth entry "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city" (Joshua 6:16). It was the prompting of the Holy Spirit that the core team decided to conduct a Jericho prayer during the seven Saturdays of the Lenten season in the year of 2017. The reason for conducting Jericho prayer was a dire need because the hope of growth of Jesus Youth was at risk. Initially we faced real crisis to hold an identity for this movement because Jesus Youth members had no opportunity to officially conduct a prayer meeting in the Archdiocese. Therefore we kept the intention of the Jericho prayer for the growth and flourishing of Jesus Youth Movement in Bhopal. Jericho prayer worked miracles in Bhopal. Providentially the Archbishop Most Rev. Leo Cornelio and Vicar General Fr. Mathew VC officially promoted the movement and Fr. Anil Mathew CMI was appointed Chaplain of Jesus Youth Bhopal. The Archbishop requested Jesus Youth to reach out to every parish of the diocese and even suggested to take care of the spiritual needs of the ICYM. As we realised the power of Jericho prayer we continued this means before initiating every ministry and during every Lenten season. Jesus Youth under the leadership of Fr. Anil conducted Eucharistic procession and Jericho prayer in the entire city to curb the Covid 19 pandemic.

Night Vigil: Waking with the Lord

Jesus Youth Bhopal conducts regular night vigils in different localities with the purpose of the spiritual nourishment of participants and sharing Christ experiences in the fellowship. The youth of Bhopal and some families spare a night once in two months waking with the Lord in Eucharistic adoration, praise and worship, singing and dancing. It's a time to get energised in the presence of Jesus and experiencing the warmth of the Lord amidst one's busy schedule of life. We also utilize the time of night vigil to nurture the spiritual life of participants through the discourse of renowned speakers on various relevant topics. It is also an opportunity to nurture fellowship between the members by the sharing of personal testimonies and Christ encounter experiences.

Campus Ministry: Seek

Regular prayer meetings, night vigils, Jericho prayer, training programmes and retreats laid a strong foundation for Jesus Youth Bhopal. As the movement got strengthened, we initiated focussed interventions and outreach programmes in the colleges, medical and educational institutions. Since Fr. Anil had a good rapport with all the heads of institutions in Bhopal, the movement got an easy access and entry. The cordial relationship of Fr. Anil and the powerful intercession prayer of the team made the campus ministry a fruitful one. By the Grace of God major institutions like BSSS College, Mar Baselious Nursing College, Ashaniketan Nursing College and AIIMS were thrown open to the movement for regular prayer

and had real Christ encounter. This ministry is expanded even to the school campuses to orient the teens to Jesus Youth in the course of time. As a result we have a strong campus team and regular prayer meetings are organised in the campuses.

Nurses' Ministry: Pulse

Since Fr. Anil is in charge of the Nurses' Commission of the Archdiocese of Bhopal it became very easy for the movement to reach out to many people in the medical profession and in medical institutions to initiate the Nurses' ministry. In Bhopal there are a number of medical institutions where a good number of Catholic youth work. The nurses' ministry is concentrated mainly in AIIMS, Mar Baselious College of Nursing and Ashaniketan Nursing College. Regular prayer meetings are conducted in all these institutions and occasionally conferences and training programmes are organised to shape their profession in tune with the healing ministry of Jesus. Dr. Finto Francis (Gynaecologist) from Kerala came all the way to Bhopal to inculcate the relevance of prolife ministry in the contemporary world. It enabled the nursing students to respect and value human life and to promote the gift of life. The nurses' ministry of Bhopal was blessed with the one year presence of Ms. Tessy Mathew, a fulltime nurse, who could strengthen the ministry within a short span of time.

Option for the poor

The frontier ministry of the CMI fathers in Bhopal is known to everyone. The street children ministry called Aanchal is a dream project of Fr. Anil and he has dedicated his life for the same. The team of Aanchal has rescued and rehabilitated thousands of children from difficult circumstances. Aanchal Pathshalas (Slum Schools) are taking care of the various needs of 300 children from seven slums of Bhopal. Fr. Anil motivates us by giving regular exposure in his ministry and sensitises our life and attitude after the image of the compassionate Lord. His profession enables us to practice the sixth pillar of Jesus Youth 'option for the poor'. Besides this, Fr. Anil involves the Jesus Youth in the process of rescuing and rehabilitating the abandoned people on the streets and the vicinities of hospitals. During the Covid – 19 pandemic the movement was actively involved with Fr. Anil for relief work in slums and villages around Bhopal.

Jesus Youth Families

According to the founder of the CMI Congregation, St. Chavara, family is the heaven on earth. As he insightfully puts it, "A good Christian family is the image of heaven, where members live together by the bond of blood and affection, duly respecting and obeying the parents, walking peacefully before God and people, seeking eternal salvation according to each one's proper state of life" (Testament of a Loving Father). Fr. Anil plays the role of a mediator between the families and Jesus Youth Bhopal. Jesus Youth Bhopal is deeply indebted to the families that CMIssion 68

nurtured it in its infancy. A few families visited Bhopal for mission exposure and stayed with us for a few days. When we treated these families as missionaries of Jesus, we were rewarded with manifold blessings. We firmly believe the prayers and sacrifices of those families made a strong impact on Jesus Youth Bhopal. Now we are blessed with lots of Jesus Youth families in Bhopal and they are the backbone of our intercession.

Legacy of Greatness

As far as I know the CMI Congregation has a legacy of being faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church and defending the Faith in crisis period. The charisma of the CMI founding fathers, venturing into many challenging initiatives and missions was well appreciated and that is the reason the CMI Congregation is supporting the challenging movement like Jesus Youth. When Jesus Youth was passing through a crisis period in Bhopal, the CMI fathers supported us as guardian angels. Initially only six to eight people were there in the prayer meetings but as we received Fr. Anil as our chaplain we started growing like a full-fledged fruit bearing tree. The social contact and cordial relationship of Fr. Anil in the Archdiocese were the major capital of the growth and flourishing of Jesus Youth and when it was substantiated with the intercession of the team it turned to be an undefeatable spiritual force. We surrender the Madhya Pradesh Jesus Youth at the feet of the Lord that he may continue to guide us with dedicated and enthusiastic shepherds like Fr. Anil CMI.

As a Chaplain Fr. Anil sets apart his time for the team meeting and helps the coordinator and team to take decisions, connect the Jesus Youth movement with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and accompany the youth in their spiritual journey. As per my experience, Fr. Anil is very accommodative, ever available, approachable and youth friendly. He is known for his patience; he motivates the youth to come up and take leadership roles and gives them the moral support for taking initiatives. He spiritually guides individuals, and administers all the pastoral services in the Jesus Youth programs. He is very enthusiastic about evangelisation especially helping the youth grow in prayer and spirituality. Fr. Anil helped the movement initiate new prayer meetings in different parishes and institutions in the Archdiocese and brought a culture of prayer among the youth.

Charles Antony Bastian





I was closely following the progress of JY Movement in the Archdiocese and I could see that Fr. Anil was quite clear from the beginning that JY is a lay movement with its well-defined rules for each functionary and that the role of a priest was not to lead it from front or get personally involved in its decision-making processes. Rather, he was in it guiding, supporting and encouraging it to be faithful to the pillars of JY and to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It was this quality of Fr. Anil that I appreciate most. He lets others plan, decide and implement as the Spirit leads them, and in the process, he let's them grow into maturity and spiritually. As I look at JY Bhopal now, I feel that the reasons for its success and vibrant dynamism are the soft but active role of Fr. Anil played like a loving elder brother to others. The Archdiocese is ever grateful to Fr. Anil for his commitment to JY and his dedication to its growth, and to his superiors for permitting him to be part of JY Bhopal".



Fr. Mathew VC
Vicar General, Archdiocese of Bhopal



The enthusiastic, energetic, admirable and untiring hard work of Fr. Anil CMI nourished the Jesus Youth Core team and transformed it into the Council team. In the past years, Fr. Anil physically, mentally, spiritually, socially and financialy supported us like a true mentor. His strong relationship with individuals and families brought us together under the umbrella of Jesus Youth Bhopal. Also his dedication and love for the poor and the needy helped us practice the 'option for the poor', the sixth pillar of Jesus Youth. Collaborating with Aanchal every year we celebrate Christmas with the slum dwellers. Fr. Anil has inspired us through his love and passion for Jesus; he goes beyond all expectation and all limitation to help every individual grow and nourish. His sagacity is amazing.



Deepika Kujur
Coordinator, Jesus Youth Bhopal.



As Jesus Youth Movement is guided by the Holy Spirit, God sent his anointed one, Fr. Anil Mathew CMI to revive and restore the Jesus Youth in MP. We are quite sure that it is a great plan of Jesus to reach out to thousands of youth in order to help them identify their vocations and mould them as real missionaries of the Church. James 1:22 says, "Be doers of the word and not just hearers lest you deceive yourselves". We could see this word of God enacted in Fr. Anil CMI. In MP region many youth are inspired and have started to follow Jesus as their real hero by the help of Fr. Anil CMI. He always uses the phrase "strike the iron when it is hot". We could see and experience that many youth could identify their charism and vocation and ready to open completely for Jesus through Fr. Anil's inspiration. Fr. Anil manifests immense love towards the poor and the needy because his love towards Jesus touches the hearts of the youth. Fr. Anil is one of the gems of the movement given by Jesus by his unconditional love towards the Jesus Youth movement.

Ratheesh Sebastian, Jesus Youth Bhopal

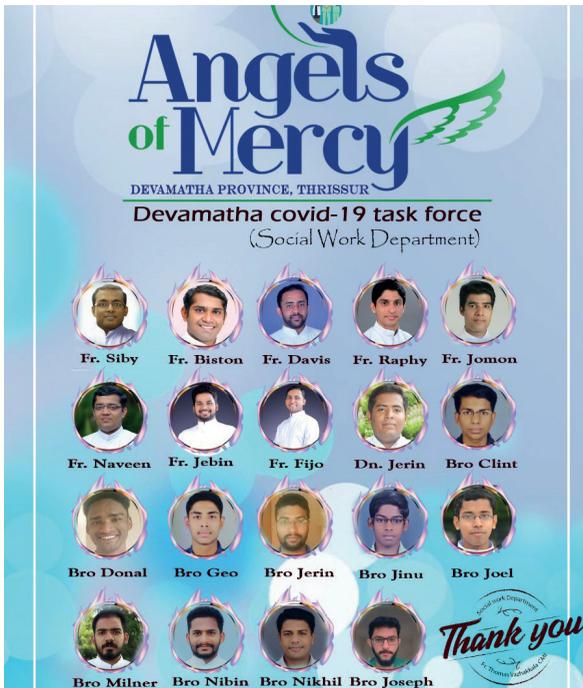


The enormous support and enthusiasm of Fr. Anil to lead the youth as well as families to Jesus through the JY movement is what keeps our flame alive. He is a great example of Servant Leadership. Through his sincere concern for the poor and the sick, he shows us how we must look outside of our own problems and comfort zone to reach out to the needy. He also inspires us to carry out our ministry's responsibilities balancing with other daily responsibilities of life. He constantly encourages and assists us to live faithfully by following the six pillars of Jesus Youth.

Celine Thomas,
Jesus Youth Bhopal



Jerusalem Retreat Centre offers a generous gesture of supporting our missions by providing perpetual intercessory prayer for our missions both in India and abroad. We begin this venture officially today as we begin the retreat preachers meet there. Rev Fr Davis Pattath, Rev Fr Joe Pachiril and the entire team for offering such a magnanimous support for our missions. (If you wish to have any particular intention connected to our missions entrusted to us, please contact our Evangelization office at the Generalate and we will make sure of the prayers for that intention.)



'Angels of Mercy' is a joint venture of the Fathers and brothers of Devamatha Province and Amala Medical College, Thrissur. It was started in the month of May 2021, when the Covid surge and death rate was in its peak in Kerala. More than seven fathers and ten brothers so far actively cooperated with this venture and became the consolation of thousands of Covid patients and their families.



CMI St. Thomas Province Kozhikode distributed one month medicines for 20 Patients, (especially kidney , Heart and Cancer patients) in Chakittapara Grama Panchayath. Rev Fr Rajesh Choorapoikayil funded for this great essential activity during this covid -19 outbreak.



Blessing of Sacred Heart Church and School building, Sarunanala, Mahabo, Madagascar. Inaugurated on the feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus, by vicar Fr. Shaiju Aloor along with Fr. Johnson Thaliyath and Fr. Jinto Erinjery.



Covid relief services at different centers of CMI congregation.



Celebration of Sacred Heart Feast at Dharmaram.



Pilgrim center of St Kuriaakose Elias Chavara at Mannanam.



Logo of 150th Death Anniversary of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara (1805-1871)