

# MISSION

Magazine

October-December '22

Encounter, Experience, Evangelize

**G**o into all the  
world and  
proclaim  
the good news  
to the whole Creation.

Mk 16: 15

Reaching out Peripheries







Civil litigations ruin families. Even in the most just case, many a litigant has come to rue the fact that it would have been better not to have gone to court. No one has been happy or better off by having gone in for civil litigation.

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





To Prepare our hearts to encounter our brothers and sisters, so that we may overcome our differences rooted in political thinking, language and religion."

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti

## JOHN PANAMTHOTTATHIL CMI

Bishop-Elect Syro-Malabar Eparchy  
of St Thomas The Apostle, Melbourne

Fr John was born to the Panamthottathil family as the son of the late Joseph and Thresia in Peravoor, Kerala, on May 31, 1966. After his school education, he joined St Thomas Kozhikode Province of the Congregation of Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). Fr John made his first profession in 1986 and his final profession in 1994 and was ordained a priest on December 26, 1997. He has served as assistant parish priest at Koodaranji in the Eparchy of Thamarassery, Kerala. Fr John has completed MA in English Literature and M.Ed. He was elected twice as the Provincial Superior of CMI Kozhikode Province. Fr John has extensive overseas pastoral experience; he served the Latin diocese of Nashville, USA, for a short period before moving to Australia in 2015 to offer his ministry in the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Fr John's Australian pastoral experience includes serving as assistant parish priest at St Stephen Cathedral, Brisbane and St Bernadine Church, Regents Park, Queensland and served as the parish priest at Our Lady & St Dymphna's Church, Aspley QLD. While ministering in the Latin Church, he was helpful to the pastoral needs of the neighbouring Syro-Malabar communities. In 2020 he returned to India and is currently serving as the Director of St. Elias Ashram, Niravilpuzha, Kerala and the Parish Priest of St. Elias Parish Niravilpuzha in the eparchy of Mananthavady, Kerala. Fr John also teaches the English language at the Benedictine Ashram Makkiyad, Kerala.





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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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## Mission Contemplation

COVER STORY

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**Josey Thamarassery CMI**  
**Vicar General, Chief Editor**

**T**he Vatican II decree on the missionary activity of the Church, *AG*, refers to the “fount-like love” or charity of God the Father’ (AG 2). This is explained today in terms of God’s mission, the *missio Dei*. Because Mission and love have their beginning ‘in the heart of God’. God’s love for creation gives meaning and purpose to human existence and establishes how we are to relate to each other and the rest of creation. God’s love for creation defines what it means to be truly human. ‘God is the fountain of sending love’ (Bosch 1991: 392), God’s mission is our mission. This is a call to mission with an emphasis on the transformation of all humanity and creation by our participation in the *missio Dei*. From the very inception of the CMI Congregation, the founding fathers committed themselves to participate in the Mission of God and therefore, they were ready to read the signs of the times and respond accordingly. CMI Congregation always remained faithful to this legacy and remained missionary all through her life working for the transformation of humanity.

Mission to the African continent by the CMI Congregation which started in 1981 in Kenya and was later expanded to other 8 countries in this continent was part of responding to be part of the *Missio Dei*. Today when the African mission has completed more than 40 years, with gratitude we look back to see how God’s providential love has led us all through these years with a significant breakthrough of accepting members from the African soil and becoming more global and universal.

The current issue of *CMission* focuses on the beginning and growth of the CMI mission in the African context. Therefore, the section on **EXPERIENCE** is dedicated to the African Mission of the Congregation. It begins with the presentation of the life of one of the pioneers in Kenya Fr Jose Kallely CMI who unexpectedly ventures into this mission and then dedicated his life to the growth of the mission in Kenya. Then we are introduced to the two CMI Missions: St Thomas Mission of East Africa of Devamatha Province Thrissur and St Theresa Mission of Preshitha Province. St Charles Lwanga National Seminary in Windhoek, Namibia which has celebrated its silver jubilee was a project born of great trust invested by the Bishops of Namibia in our Congregation. In the section **ENCOUNTER**, we come across articles dealing with inter-religious dialogue and the urgency of equipping people with the deeper knowledge and experience of God in contemplation for an effective mission which is intrinsically related to our call and consecration. In the section **EVANGELIZE** we come across good practices in the mission. We have in the present issue the Arunachal mission undertaken by St Paul’s Province Bhopal which offers a challenging scenario for pastoral and missionary life. The land and people of Arunachal are very much receptive to the message of the love of the Gospel today and look forward to more committed and dedicated missionaries and pastors. We are also introduced in this section to Anchal, a frontier ministry of Fr Anil of Bhopal Province taking care of children from streets/ slums or railway stations. It is a centre which proclaims the gospel truth “let the children come to me, for to such belongs the Kingdom of God” (Lk 18:16).

We also are grateful to God, the Almighty, for our new Bishop-Elect of the Syro Malabar Diocese of Melbourne in Australia, Mar John Panamthottathil CMI, a member of the CMI Congregation. While congratulating him on his new assignment we wish him God’s abundant blessings to lead his people according to the will and plan of God.





Thomas Chathamparampil CMI  
Prior General

I am happy to note that the present issue of CMISSION comes out at a time as we have celebrated the 40th year of the CMI mission of Devamatha Province Thrissur in Kenya, 25 years of CMI Preshitha province Coimbatore in Kenya and the 25 years of CMI presence in Namibia. The CMI Congregation gratefully acknowledges the providential and kairotic momentum by which the good Lord has allowed the Congregation to fulfil the commandment of the Lord, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15). Pope Francis says, “The Church was born going out. She was shut in the Upper Room, and then she went out. And she must continue to be going out.” And by “out,” I mean to the peripheries, both existential and social” (Interview of Pope Francis with Antonio Spadaro).

The global mission becomes an indispensable dimension and responsibility for the congregation realizing the need to support the universal church to respond to the call to bring the Good News to all as the Lord commanded. We know that there is a dearth of priests everywhere in the world today. As per a recent survey of the Vatican, the total number of diocesan and religious order priests decreased globally by 0.57 per cent while the number of Catholics increased worldwide. The CMI congregation showed from the very beginning of its inception the readiness to respond to the needs of the Church and to take up new missions wherever and whenever asked for. Therefore, the Congregation could initiate various missionary ventures in North India, Africa and European countries.

While taking up the missionary mandate, we need to bear two things in mind. First and foremost, it is a journey with the Holy Spirit. The Church has faithfully carried out the mission given to her through the centuries because of the guidance of the Spirit. The role of the Spirit is both fundamental and instrumental in the life of the Church. Pope John Paul II, in his Encyclical, *Dominum et Vivificantem* notes the powerful presence of the Spirit in the missionary activities of the Church. This is because even though the mission of the Church remains the same since its birth, the way she carries out this mission changes. She has to adapt herself to changing circumstances in the world. She needs to read the signs of the times, in order to be relevant.

Secondly, every missionary journey shall be an endeavour of constant setting out with Jesus in order to know how and where the Master lives. It shall not be instead an endeavour born out of the performance of ecclesial structures. Through this setting out with Jesus on mission we become capable of knowing the will of the Father to discern what is the work of God in the mission and not do our work in the mission. Therefore, Pope Francis repeatedly says in his discourses “what makes the mission last is not the generosity and enthusiasm that burn in the heart of the missionary, even though these are always necessary. It is rather the companionship of Jesus in his Spirit” (Pope Francis during his apostolic journey to Columbia in September 2017).

Therefore, may I wish that all our endeavours in the global mission shall be a Pentecostal event and there shall be a constant accompaniment of Jesus in all our missionary journeys. May the good Lord bless us all!



“



The Church's message , therefore ,  
must have an effect on its concrete  
praxis and result in a culture of mercy  
in the entire life of the Church.

Walter Kasper  
Catholic Theologian

Let's face God in context and text



**Encounter**





# Interfaith Dialogue Dalit Solidarity

Celebrating Milestones of Interfaith  
Dialogue and Dalit Solidarity at DVK:  
A Confluence of Dialogue and Solidarity



Jerin Pulikkottil CMI  
Bengaluru

**O**n a typical chilly morning in Bangalore, the stone-paved sidewalks of Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram (DVK) were bustling with activity. Sr. Sterrina CMC, a third-year Philosophy student, was leading a group of Buddhist monks dressed in saffron robes to the conference venue. Her face was glowing with excitement as she said, "This is a truly exceptional experience for me. The conference is yet to begin. And I have already interacted with a group of Islamic scholars and Dalit activists and escorted them to the conference venue." As they walk past the Philosophy Faculty building, she gestured towards the busts of Adi Shankaracharya and St. Thomas Aquinas and shared with pride, "Our curriculum at DVK encompasses both Eastern and Western philosophical teachings, and equips us to go beyond the confines of religions and nationality." Similar to many other enthusiastic volunteers, she eagerly looked forward to attending the conference entitled "Dialogue and Solidarity: A Religio-Subaltern Perspective" from Nov 24-27, 2022. The conference was organized to commemorate the 50th and 25th anniversaries of the Centre for the Study of World Religions (CSWR) and the Centre for Dalit Solidarity (CDS), respectively. Under the aegis of DVK, CSWR as an academic and research centre has had a rich legacy of fostering inter-religious dialogue. CDS has been working extensively in preserving and promoting the cultural, social, and religious diversities of the Dalits, Tribals and religious minorities, to nurture the pluralistic spirit of Indian civilization.



## On the Shoulders of Giants

On a rainy evening of August 2nd, 1971, all the priests at Dharmaram College were making their way to the recreation hall for a local synaxis meeting. In the halls, the thirty-three fathers, led by then-Rector Rev. Fr. Theophine Kanjooparambil CMI, came together in prayerful discussions to establish and launch an institute for the study of world religions. They were determined to make this idea a reality and set aside a budget of 7,500 rupees. Despite the challenges faced by Dharmaram in securing funds and

resources to finish building its structures, this substantial amount was allocated towards the goal of demonstrating their commitment to the cause. Thus the Centre for the Study of World Religions - CSWR became a reality. Over time, the Centre for the Study of World Religions (CSWR) in Bangalore became renowned as a hub for inter-religious dialogue, promoting unity and understanding among different religions and worldviews. It was at the forefront of organizing the Fellowship in Religious Experience (FIRE), a gathering for joint prayer based on various spiritual traditions, which drew large crowds to Dharmaram. The centre also launched the highly regarded scholarly journal - Journal of Dharma, Dharmaram Journal of Religions and Philosophies, which is now indexed by SCOPUS. As the years passed, 1997 marked the silver jubilee, of the Centre for the Study of World Religions (CSWR). To commemorate this milestone, the members of Dharmaram College had an idea to create a new centre dedicated to promoting social equality and uplifting marginalized communities. Thus, on July 14, 1997, the Centre for Dalit Solidarity (CDS) was founded, with Dr Thomas Kadankavil CMI playing a crucial role in its establishment and becoming its first director.

## Shining Bright in Jubilee Glory

Rooted in the Catholic principles of inter-religious dialogue and social responsibility, the Centre for the Study of World Religions (CSWR) and the Centre for Dalit Solidarity (CDS) have expanded their reach in their respective areas over the course of fifty and twenty-five years, respectively.

To commemorate the anniversaries of CSWR and CDS, the Faculty of Philosophy at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram in collaboration with the Department of Media Studies, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore organised a conference entitled "Dialogue and Solidarity: A Religio-Subaltern Perspective." The event partners were: Chavara Central Secretariat, Focolare Movement, Chavara Cultural Centre, Delhi, Darsana Cultural Centre, Kottayam, Chavara Cultural Centre, Ernakulam and Divyodaya Inter-religious Centre, Coimbatore.



The four-day conference was organised with the objective of bringing academicians, practitioners, activists, and policymakers from across the globe with different standpoints to promote inter-religious dialogue and solidarity. The first day of the conference focused on the theme 'Inter-religious Dialogue: Legacy

And Reality.' The sessions on the first day discussed the past and present of inter-religious dialogue. The second day of the conference focussed on the theme 'Inter-religious Dialogue: Prospects,' focusing on the future of inter-religious dialogue. The theme for the third day was 'Subaltern Solidarity.' The discussions on the third day addressed the concerns of Dalit and Tribal lives from a subaltern perspective to empower and enhance solidarity. The final day was set apart for 'Fellowship in Religious Experience' with scheduled visits to different religious centres in Bangalore.

### Inter-religious Dialogue: Legacy And Reality

The conference commenced on 24 November 2022, with various religious leaders symbolically lighting the lamp of dialogue and unity. The inaugural address was delivered by Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, the President of Dicastery for Inter-religious Dialogue. He pointed to the objectives of dialogue and explained that solidarity is the eventual result of dialogue. He adds that regardless of how vast or minor a religion may be, it will always have value to offer human civilization. This conversation aims to be inclusive of everyone. Msgr Dr Indunil J Kodithuwakku, the Secretary of the Dicastery for Inter-Religious Dialogue, Vatican, in his presidential address underlined the importance of undertaking the journey of dialogue, which usually begins with hesitation but strengthens with time. Ven. Ananda Bhikkhu from Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore, Swami Nityasthanandaji Maharaj from Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore, Ven. Geshe Jampa Chodewang of Sera Jey Monastic University, Mysuru, Prof. Dr. Joy Kakkanattu CMI president DVK, Dr. Mathew Attumkal CMI, dean Faculty of Philosophy, Syed Asad Abbas from National Television, and Gautam Shah of Jain Shravak, graced the occasion by their presence and words of blessings. They reiterated the importance of inter-religious dialogue and the solidarity.

The first Keynote was delivered by Archbishop Dr. Felix Anthony Machado, Archbishop of Vasai and Member of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. He spoke on the topic Engaging in Interreligious Dialogue: Can the Past Inform the Present? He focused on the legacy of inter-religious dialogue and offered prospective frameworks for future inter-religious dialogue. Rev. Dr. Paul Achandy, the rector of Dharmaram College, Bangalore, chaired the session.

Dr Sebastian Mullopparambil CMI, dean faculty of Theology at DVK, chaired the first plenary session. The session was enriched by three resource persons with different perspectives focusing on one goal - inter-religious dialogue. One of the speakers, Dr

George Kulangara, Rector, Darsana Institute of Philosophy, Wardha said, "Dialogue begins from the acknowledgement that truth is always shared." While the first speaker, Dr George Kulangara CMI shared the philosophical perspectives of inter-religious dialogue, the other speaker, Prof. Dr Felix Wilfred, founder-Director of Asian Centre for Cross-Cultural Studies, focused on theological perspectives, and Dr Prasanna, Social Activist & Founder, Charaka Cooperative, Karnataka, unravelled the social perspectives.

Maya Angelou says, "How important it is for us to recognize and celebrate our heroes and she-roes" With the aim of amplifying women's voices, the second plenary session at the conference was a panel discussion led by female speakers on the theme of "Inter-religious Dialogue in the Indian Context: Plural Perspectives." Representing the Buddhist perspective was Dr. Kalaiarasi K. upasika from the Maha Bodhi Monastery in Bangalore. The Islamic perspective was presented by Ms. Naureen Aziz, Associate Professor of English at Jyoti Nivas College in Bangalore. Dr. Trapti Jain, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Jain Philosophy at Jain (Deemed to be University) in Bangalore, spoke from a Jain point of view. The final speaker was Dr. Vagishwari SP, a Professor at Christ (Deemed to be University) in Bangalore. She shared the Hindu view point. The session was moderated by Dr. Jose Nandhikkara CMI.

To encourage the empowering women voice, the second Plenary was a Panel Discussion led by women speakers on the theme 'Inter-religious Dialogue in Indian Context: Plural Perspectives'. Dr Kalaiarasi K, Upasika, Maha Bodhi Monastery, Bangalore, spoke from a Buddhist perspective. Ms Naureen Aziz, Associate Professor, Department of English, Jyoti Nivas College, Bangalore shared the Islamic perspective and Dr Trapti Jain, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Jain Philosophy, Jain (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, focused on the Jain point of view. The final sharing was by Dr Vagishwari SP, Professor, Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore. The session was chaired by Dr Jose Nandhikkara CMI. It was followed by concurrent sessions were held in four streams on the following themes: Dialogue in Modern Contexts, Inter-Relational Dimensions, Social and Human Concerns and Buddhist perspectives.

### Interreligious Dialogue: Prospects

The Keynote address of the day was delivered by Dr Shiv Visvanathan who serves as a professor at Jindal Global Law School, Sonapat. His paper was entitled Prospects of Inter-religious Dialogue in the Context of Radically Plural Public Sphere. The paper shared a range of case studies which included looking at the role of the Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa as ethical repair; The return of morality to dialogue; Anthropocene as dialogic imagination; and The possibility of a Dalit science. Dr Kurian Kachappilly CMI moderated the session.

According to some scholars, “The Bible is a book written by migrants, for migrants and about migrants.” The President of DVK, Prof. Dr Joy Philip Kakkanattu CMI, a prominent Bible scholar, presented the plenary paper on the topic Migration and Integration: Religious Perspectives.

In conclusion to his talk, he said, “Any religious perspective which may hinder the migrant from integrating into the migrating culture and ethos is to be critically appraised and rejected.” After Dr. Joy’s presentation. Dr Jacob Peenikaparambil CMI, a prominent social activist, shared his perspectives on the topic Inter-religious Dialogue and Identities: Engaging Religious, Personal, and Political Identities. During his talk, he mentioned ‘The Universal Solidarity Movement’ (USM), Indore which is an experiment by people belonging to different religions living together as a community with the vision of building a civilization of love by drawing the core spiritual values of all religions in India, and at the same time individuals having the full freedom to practise their own religion. It is inter-religious living, one step ahead of inter-religious dialogue. As a conclusion to his presentation, he added that one of the goals of inter-religious dialogue should be promotion and strengthening of pluralist democracy. This session was chaired by Dr John Joseph Kennedy from Christ University, Bangalore.

The fourth plenary session of the conference was chaired by Dr Jobi Thurackal CMI from DVK. The speakers of the session were Ms Edelweiss Quadros and Dr J Charles Davis. Ms Quadros, a member of the Bombay Archdiocesan Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue, spoke on the topic Women in Religion: Exploring Dimensions of Inter-religious Dialogue. Dr Davis, the Associate Director of St. John’s Medical College, shared his view on Religions and LGBTQ: Intra- and Inter-religious Dialogue. The focus of their discussions was the role of religion in uplifting the poor and marginalized communities, including the migrated, women, and LGBTQ groups. They examined the contributions these communities have made throughout the history of religion and discussed what religion as a whole can do to address the injustices they face. They emphasized that dialogue is necessary to prevent conflicts arising from questions about the origins of migrants and to facilitate their integration into society.

The subsequent plenary session was graced by two distinguished speakers, Justice H N Nagamohan Das and Dr Padmakumar, and was presided over by Dr Varghese Koluthara CMI. Justice H N Nagamohan Das, a retired High Court Judge of Karnataka, addressed the audience on the topic of “The Juridical and Political Impact of Laws and Policies on Religions in Contemporary India”. He emphasized the singularity and fortitude of the Indian Constitution, while also warning against the dangers of weakening it. Dr Padakumar, an Associate Professor at Christ University, spoke on the subject of “Promoting Peace and Harmony through Inter-religious Dialogue”. The session concluded with a productive exchange of ideas and opinions.





The last plenary session was a panel discussion on the theme “CSWR and the CMI Legacy in Promoting Inter-religious Dialogue.” It was chaired by Dr Jeff Shawn Jose CMI, the Director, CSWR. Representatives from various CMI inter-religious shared the legacy of the CMI congregation in the promotion of inter-religious dialogue. Dr Roby Kannanchira CMI, Director, Chavara Cultural Centre, Delhi; Dr Johnson Valiyakulathil CMI, Divyodaya Inter-religious Centre, Coimbatore; Fr Thomas Puthussery CMI, Director, Chavara Cultural Centre, Ernakulam; and Fr Emil Pullikkattil CMI, Darsana Cultural Centre, Kottayam were the speakers of the session. The audience sat in awe listening to the rich legacy bequeathed by illustrious priests from the CMI congregation and their dedication in pursuing the path of inter-religious dialogue. The day ended with a cultural evening - when the sky was adorned with moons and stars in the night, the stage of Christ University was lit up by various talented artists from Dharmaram College and Christ University.

## Subaltern Solidarity

Focusing on the silver jubilee of Centre for Dalit Solidarity (CDS), the day's talks were all based on the theme of Dalit solidarity. The Keynote of the day was given by Dr Joseph Xavier SJ, Director, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore, on the topic, Subaltern Social Movements and Socio-Economic Empowerment. He underlined the necessity of improving the conditions of various oppressed sectors of society by highlighting a strong counter against patriarchal malevolence. He concluded by stating: “We need to be neither admirers of the poor nor have pity on them. The question is how we accompany the poor so that they can make informed decisions, their voices are heard, access new opportunities and technological benefits and hold the governments accountable and are the subjects of their destiny.” The session was chaired by Dr Sebastian Alackapally CMI, Director, CDS.

There were two plenaries. The speakers of the first plenary were Ms Cynthia Stephen, Independent Media Person and Social Policy Researcher, Ms Susheela Punitha, Author and Translator and Prof. T Marx of Pondicherry University, Puducherry. They all shared various aspects of Dalit lives like Dalit Memory and Dalit Identity, Academic Perspectives on Dalit Identities, and Dalit Identities and Religious Beliefs. The session was chaired by Saurabh Das from Christ University, Bangalore.



Moving on to the final plenary session, Dr Venkatesh Vaditya, Assistant Professor, English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad spoke about the Facets of Tribal Upliftment and Exploitation. Then, Fr Stephen Rawat, Udaipur Diocese addressed the audience on the topic, The Tribal Culture in the Contemporary Context where he spoke about the Bhil tribe of Rajasthan in various contexts. Finally, Fr Sunil Tirkey OP, Lecturer, St Charles Seminary, Nagpur talked on the subject of Tribal welfare: Contemporary Context, in which he discussed how the ministry of welfare adopted Tribal sub-plans to look for the socio-economic development of Tribal Communities. He concluded by saying that Tribes should be integrated with larger sections of Indian societies in terms of various fundamental provisions.

The Valedictory session was graced by the presence of Bishop Joseph Raja Rao, Diocese of Vijayawada who reiterated the importance of dialogue and solidarity in today's social construct. Then, Haji Syed Salman Chishty, Chairman, Chishty Foundation, Ajmer spoke about spirituality and the purpose of our creation, telling us to propagate the sublime essence of the conference that is 'Unconditional Love'. Dr. Abraham Vettiyankal CMI, Vice Chancellor, Christ (Deemed to be) University urged the participants us to strive towards becoming more humane by incorporating more dignity and Love. Dr. Thomas Kadankavil CMI, Founder-Director, CDS, DVK, Bangalore and Dr. John Peter Muringathery CMI, Founder-Director, Divyodaya Inter-religious Centre, Coimbatore were honoured. They are among the pioneering personalities who championed the cause of Inter-religious dialogue and Dalit solidarity. Dr. Sebastian Alackapally CMI announced the Festschrift in Honour of Dr Thomas Kadankavil CMI. Dr. Jeff Shawn Jose proposed the vote of thanks, thus bringing the academic part of the four-day conference on Dialogue & Solidarity: A Religio-Subaltern Perspective to an end.

## Darsan

The last day was designated for the "Fellowship in Religious Experience" (FIRE) program, which involved visits to various religious sites in Bangalore. The day started with a trip to the Maha Bodhi Society and continued with a visit to the Ramakrishna Math. The group also toured a Jain Temple and the Mahabodhi Meditation Centre.

The combination of three days of theoretical academic discussions and practical experiences of fellowship at the different religious centres resulted in a seamless and enriching experience for the conference participants. No conference is an end, but it is a springboard to attain enlightenment and gain wisdom in our march towards dialogue and solidarity.

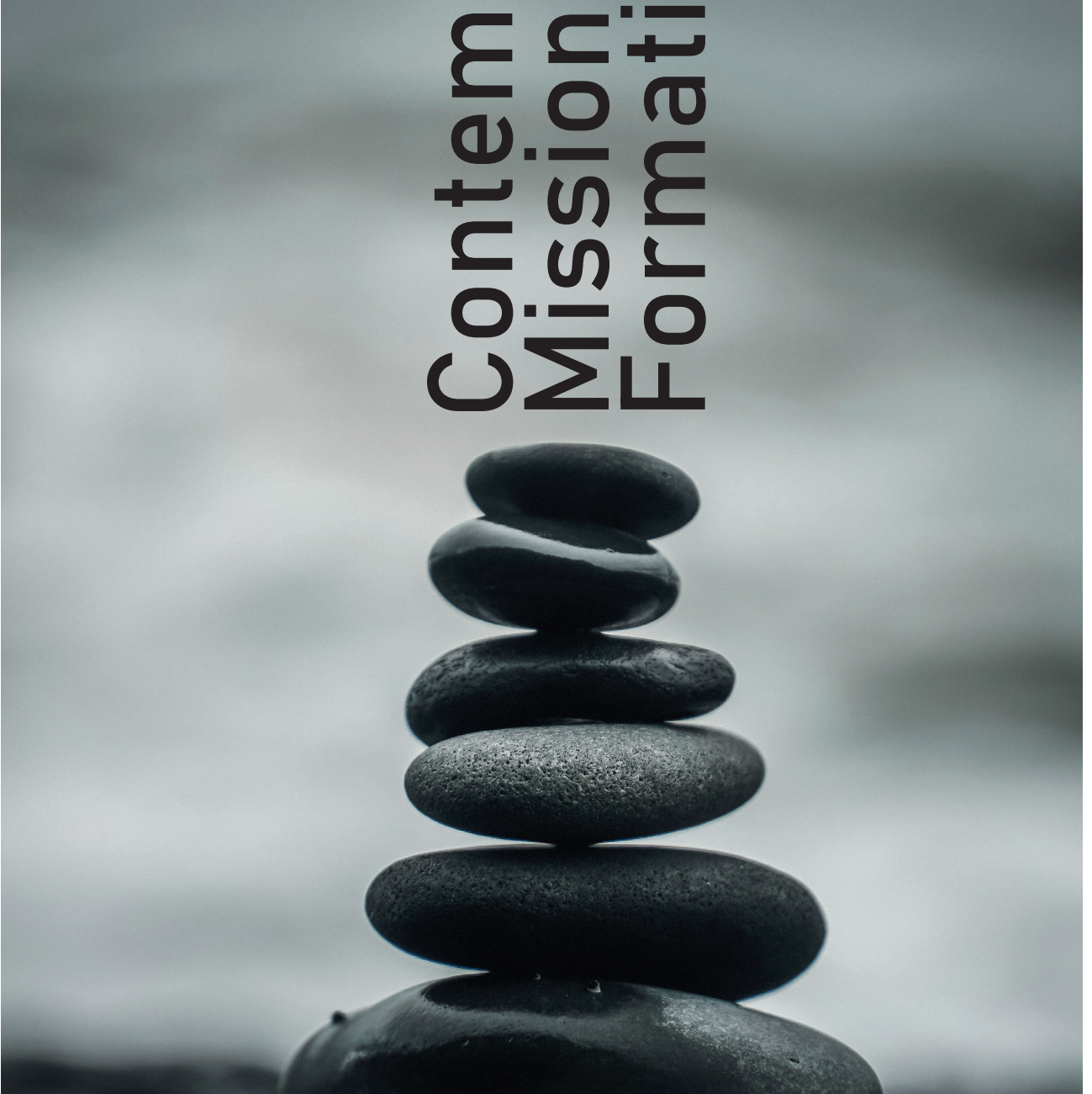




# Contemplation Mission Formation



Tomy Kattampilly CMI  
Bengaluru



**T**he very word contemplation gives the impression to the common people that it is inaccessible to them. It is considered to be reserved for few people like religious and priests. Whenever, contemplation is referred the negative aspect like denouncement of all that is worldly is emphasised. Living in a fast changing and media driven world, contemplation is considered as an outdated aspect to be promoted. It is because people have a very wrong notion about the concept contemplation. Thomas Merton says that in contemplation we discover our “real” selves, “the hidden and mysterious person in whom we subsist before the eyes of God.” Andrew Prevot makes an observation on Thomas Merton’s reflection on contemplation and says: “Merton adds that contemplation teaches us to distinguish this true, God-given identity from our “superficial” or “exterior” selves, the egos that are the products of our greed, pettiness or pride. A contemplative is a person who spontaneously perceives, admires, and adores the loving hands of the provident God in all that happens to and around him/her. If contemplation is understood in a comprehensive way it would turn to be the necessary quality a person should have, in order to face the challenges of the modern world. Contemplation is not something to be reserved to few people. Contemplation is not against anything progressive. It is not an invitation for denouncing everything, but it is an invitation to make oneself available to God to the other. Man has a basic orientation towards contemplation as he is created in the image and likeness of God. As human beings are created with the basic quality to relate with God and the other they attain self-actualization when they are having a right and intimate relation with God and His people.

## Contemplation and Knowing God

A person of contemplation would always give credit to God for all his success and achievements, and that makes him humble and free of attachments. “Contemplation is not primarily an activity on our part. It is not a skill to be acquired or an object to be possessed. It is the grace of God working within us, opening us to higher forms of consciousness, freedom and love.” A person who is having pride fails to give credit to God for what he/she does. Such persons are at the danger of depending on their own capability for any kind of endeavours they undertake. They spontaneously forget that human beings are existing in space and time and thus, they have got number of limitations. Naturally they may not be able to achieve, all that they desire and plan, therefore, they get frustrated, and they blame God and everybody around. The true contemplatives would accept things as they come on their way. God is the one who gives life and therefore, He is the author of life and human beings are only stewards. Contemplation would help one to accept God as the author of life, thus

would keep an equilibrium in his/her life. Contemplation is the solution for restlessness, loneliness, and the vacuum that is experienced in the hearts of the people of the present world. Contemplation and Prayer

A contemplative is a person who enjoys a very intense union with God in prayer. Contemplative prayer is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery. Pope Francis reiterates this teaching of the Church on prayer when he teaches on contemplation. Jesus was a master of this gaze. His life never lacked the time, space, silence, the loving communion that allows one’s existence not to be devastated by the inevitable trials, but to maintain beauty intact. His secret was his relationship with his heavenly Father. It is not to be achieved through by strenuous efforts but by letting God work in one’s life. It is a gift a grace, it can be accepted in humility and poverty. Contemplative prayer is a communion in which the Holy Trinity conforms man, the image of God, to His likeness.

## Contemplation and Mission

The other side of contemplation is that such a person is always selfless. He/she makes himself/herself available to the other in an unconditional way. Jesus in his encounter with Marth and Mary, makes it clear that Mary opted for the better part. Opting for the better part does not imply that the option was complete, but it had to be complemented with the necessary services that had to be extended to people around her. Martha was lacking the quality of contemplation in her service, that is why she was distracted by her many tasks.

Contemplation is availability. Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, the thirtieth Superior General of the Jesuits (2008–16), notes in his address at Loyola Marymount, 2009: “While Jesuits bring their own distinctively Catholic, Christian identity to whatever work they join, they know that others’ projects are not always conceived explicitly in Christian or even religious terms. They join such projects, with the identities that are their own, because they see deep consonance between the non-religious mission and their own criteria for mission. Similarly, they ask members of other—religious traditions or simply men and women of good will to join in their own sponsored works without, in any way, asking of them that they deny or negate their own identities in the common work.... We need to move from mere talk to a common walk.” St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara practiced this virtue in his life. Being a contemplative, he carried out his mission effectively. This is acknowledged by Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the beatification of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara in 1986: “His success [.] in all his many undertakings was undoubtedly due to the intense

charity and prayer, which characterised his daily life, his close communication with Christ, his love for the Church as visible body of Christ on earth.” Real contemplation moves a person to action. That is why when Jesus was asked about the most important commandment, he gave an answer in which love of God and love of neighbour are demanded as the gist of the entire law. The other way a person doing a genuine mission doesn’t neglect his prayer life. Some of my students, who are really interested in reaching out to the poor and the needy, were found to be sleeping during the meditation and other spiritual exercises. I warned them that, they were not doing a real apostolate, as their services to the poor were not keeping them awake in the presence of the Lord. They were not doing any mission but they were doing some social work only.

## Contemplation and Formation

A contemplative is a steady-minded person. He/she is a person always keeping the mind fixed on the Lord alike in praise and blame, health and illness, success and failure, life, and death. The very purpose of formation is to mould a person as a steady-minded person. Fr Thomas Kochumuttom presents Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara as having the contemplative character as he remained a pleasant person in the face of painful experiences. A person who feels that he/she is in union with the divine will never be afraid about being alone. Such a person will never feel that he/she is alone fighting against the enemy. A contemplative will never be affected by anything that is happening outside. All the experiences of such a person can only nourish his/her personality. Recently a consecrated person who is very active in the community, just told me that he is feeling lonely. After having made an introspection into his life and activities, he identified that he was lacking a genuine relationship with the Lord. Another person, who is leading a family life, was experiencing a lot of rejection in his family especially from his wife and children, but he told me that he was fine, because he identified Jesus as the only resort of his life, and he nourishes such a conviction through his consistency in reading the word of God and daily participation in the Eucharist.

Contemplation leads one to sense of gratitude. The first commandment which insists on the necessity of worshipping God and not turning to other gods, presents the reason for such worship, as the liberation Israelites experienced through the powerful intervention of Yahweh. “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me” (Deut 5:6-7). Contemplation helps a person to be liberated from all kinds of bondages/complexes. One of the most serious hindrances for practising contemplation is

that many people are not ready to address their complexes. In contemplation a person feels that he/she is being loved by the Lord and he/she enjoys an awareness of security. When a person attains such an awareness, he/she will be relieved of many of his/her material cravings.

In the entire process of formation, what is aimed at is that the candidate should build up a sense of gratitude and that happens only when the candidate enters into union with the Lord in contemplation.

Contemplation helps a person to live in the continued presence of God. The candidates who experience the presence of God will be able to sanctify themselves from all kinds of unworthiness. In the context in which God came down and dwelt among the people of Israel that He instituted the cult to sanctify them frequently. The liturgy of the hours and the celebration of the Eucharist, reading the word of God etc. are the occasions in which they can sanctify themselves. As human beings, all are prone to sin, therefore, all those who practice contemplation, feel the necessity of sanctifying them. Those who live in the presence of the Lord, will be able to go through the experience of physical healing, forgiveness of their sins, and being empowered at times of crisis.

The above reflection on contemplation makes it clear that contemplation is not something to be reserved to a group of people, but is needed for everybody to lead a balanced life. Contemplation helps a person to recognize God as the source of his life and thus will help one to understand the necessity of interdependence to live in this world. Contemplation leads one to union with Lord the highest form of prayer. A genuine contemplation will automatically equip one to be sent for mission. The formation given to the followers of Jesus, must equip them to be grateful people, for the liberation they experience during the period of formation and it will in turn help them to lead their life in the presence of God.



A contemplative is a steady-minded person. He/she is a person always keeping the mind fixed on the Lord alike in praise and blame, health and illness, success and failure, life, and death.







# call consecration mission



Thomas Kochumuttam CMI  
Bijnor





The second chapter of the CMI Constitutions deals with “Our Mission.” Mission of the Church is a generic expression including all the ministries. Among them evangelization, which means the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is obviously the most basic one. Through it we share with the people the gospel message, and make them Christian disciples through baptism. Other ministries are meant to confirm the same people in their newfound faith and deepen their commitment to Jesus Christ, and help them to persevere in Christian life and practices. The beneficiaries of these ministries, therefore, are the Christian communities, ether the natives or the diaspora. Evangelization also is on two levels: the first one, called mission *Ad Gentes*, is the proclamation of the gospel to people who are still outside the Christian fold, either because they have not yet heard about the gospel or because they have not so far given any serious thought to it. The second level of evangelization, called New Evangelization, is to work among the Christians who may have become indifferent about their Christian faith and unconcerned about its practice: lukewarm and nominal Christians in urgent need of being re-founded in Christian life.

In our Province of Bijnor we are engaged mostly in mission *Ad Gentes*, proclamation of the gospel to people of other religions and those without any religion. In the diocese of Bijnor, with a population of 307500, even after 48 years of the committed work of missionaries, the Catholics are only about 5000 (6.15%)! Among the rest of the people, a few belong to Non-Catholic Christians; the vast majority follow other religions, by and large Hinduism; and there may be a small minority with no religious practice. Of course our

missionary efforts have to cover all these groups of people: the pastoral and the other apostolates, and, wherever necessary, the new evangelization, too, among the little Catholic flock, and the ecumenical endeavours among the few belonging to non-Catholic denominations, and evangelization among non-Christians who are the biggest group. The scenario is almost the same also in places outside the provincial territory, in India or abroad, where our members work. In short, we are called and commissioned to “Go into the entire world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15). Accordingly our spirituality should be a fitting response to this context.

## Inclusive Perception of Mankind

Vatican Second’s document on the other religions—*Nostra Aetate* (NA) opens with the observation that there exists a basic unity of mankind based on the fact that God is the origin and end of all people alike, and that his providence also is the same for all. All of us have come from him and are journeying towards him ‘under his impartial providence that lets his rain fall and sun rise for all equally, irrespective of caste and creed’ (Mt 5: 45). Thus, God being our common parent, we are all truly own brothers and sisters, and that obliges us the

Christian disciples to share the gift of faith with all others as a mark of our love and concern for them. So the mission is essentially an act of Christian love.

## Our Close Contact and Union with God

The first among the credentials for being evangelizers is one’s close contact and union with God whose messenger one is. This was undeniably the case with Jesus Christ. For him authority was authenticity and reliability. A common comment made even by ordinary people about Jesus Christ was that he spoke with authenticity: “The crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them, as one who had authority, and not as their scribes” (Mt 7:28-29); and “No man spoke like this one [Jesus]” (Jn 7:46).

As a matter of fact Jesus’ way of teaching was obviously so different. In the Old Testament the prophets would say: “Yahweh says so and so.” They were merely quoting Yahweh. In Jesus time the Scribes and other Jewish leaders would say: “It is written so and so.” They were making references to the Scriptures. But Jesus’ characteristic style was: “Truly, truly I say to you!” Being confident of the veracity of his teaching he did not need the support of other sources. The ordinary people were happy that at long last they got a teacher with authenticity. But the Jewish leaders questioned him: “Who are you?” (Jn 8:25). “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (Mk 11:28). Jesus’ answer to them was: “I do nothing on my own authority but I speak as the Father taught me. And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him” (Jn 8:28-29). Thus Jesus based his authenticity on his filial relation with God the Father, who was always with him. He was so united to the Father, and had him present in himself that he could confidently say: “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me, sees him who sent me” (Jn 12:44). While speaking about the Father ‘he was speaking of what he had personally known and was reporting what he had directly witnessed’ (Jn 3:11). This indeed persuaded all the people of good will to hear and follow him.



*Ad Gentes*, is the proclamation of the gospel to people who are still outside the Christian fold, either because they have not yet heard about the gospel or because they have not so far given any serious thought to it.



Similarly, before sending out the disciples to preach, he took care to empower them with his own authority (Mt 10:1; Lk 10:19); he insisted that they should abide in him as branches do in the vine, and guaranteed his abiding presence in them (Jn 15:1-12), saying that he and his Father will come to them and make their home with them (Jn 14:23), and that the Holy Spirit will guide them into all truth (Jn 16:13), and will speak through them (Mt 10:19-20); he advised them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them (Acts 1:4); he assured that he himself would

be with them always to the close of the age (Mt 28:20). These were deliberate steps that Jesus took so that his disciples would be, in Indian terminology, *brahma-nias* and *avata-ras*: meaning 'people rooted in God and having his presence in them' so that those who see and hear them would see and hear Jesus himself. And the disciples themselves were aware of their authenticity so that they could confidently say: "That which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us, as our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn 1:3). By such words they were commanding, not demanding, the people's recognition of their being God's reliable messengers.

## Consecration for Mission

One needs to be properly equipped for the mission. Now-a-days we mention three things as mutually complementing: call, consecration and mission. Of course all Christian disciples by baptism are missionaries. However, the priests and religious may be considered as called to be professional missionaries. This is a call to be properly discerned as well. But as soon as you discern and respond to the call, you cannot presume to be ready to venture into it. Before it you need to be consecrated for it by a rigorous process of formation! Consecration is not a single act accomplished by the prescribed ritual, but a process of your being clearly and definitively set apart—a process in which you are thoroughly tested and proved fit for the mission. This has to be taken seriously and gone through with commitment; and in it both the *formees* and the *formators* have to be whole heartedly and conscientiously involved.

Jesus' forty days and nights of stay in fast and prayer in the desert culminating in severe temptations is an instance of the kind of formation to which the missionary candidates are expected to subject themselves. His baptism by John the Baptist in the river Jordan was the solemn confirmation of his call: 'As he came up from the water, suddenly the Holy Spirit alighted and anointed him, while the Father publically announced him to be his Beloved Son whom he was pleased to send as the Saviour of mankind' (Mt 3: 16-17). It was indeed an event worth celebration much more than like a priestly ordination or religious profession now-a-days! But in Jesus' case what followed was something so strange and startling

for us: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Mt 4: 1). How incredible it is that the Holy Spirit immediately after (Mk 1: 12) the momentous event of baptism takes the Lord to the desert, there to be tempted by the devil!

First of all for Jesus it was unequivocally an act of being set apart from the crowd, in the silence and solitude of desert; it was a clear gesture of being set a part in terms of space, life style and values; and positively it was a time spent in close and personal contact with his Father in continuous fast and prayer, with the mind uninterruptedly fixed on him. For the Lord it was literally a desert experience, getting physically weak but spiritually strong and alert. That he did all this in immediate preparation for the launch of his mission is rather understandable for us humans. But what follows really baffles us, the appearance of the villain, the devil, authorized by God to test Jesus' fitness. "As he was famished the tempter came and severely tempted him!" (Mt 4: 2-11). What does it mean? We must make a distinction between temptation and test. The former means that you are persuaded to do something evil, which can come only from the devil, of course with God's permission. The latter—a test—is a chance given to you for proving your fitness for one thing or another. For example, the teacher giving tests to the students is asking them not to do anything evil, but to prove their knowledge and fitness for promotion; such tests are also an incentive for the study of the lessons well in solid spirituality. In fact every temptation that we the experience is on God's part a test by way of letting us prove our ability to face the challenges of life and mission. So was Jesus' temptation, too!

## Information, Formation, Transformation

The various courses given in our religious and priestly centres should not be mere academic and intellectual exercises of imparting and gathering information about God, the humans, world, Bible, Church, sacraments, dogmas and such other subjects. The information about them should have a formative effect on the trainees so that each of them is gradually formed into Christ and finally becomes another Christ, *alter Christus* in traditional terminology. Teresa of Avila in *The Interior Castle* compares the process with a silkworm becoming a lovely butterfly (IC V. 2), while John of Cross in his *The Living Flame of Love* sees it as a log on fire turning into a glowing ember! St Paul writes about his concern about the Galatians: "My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you" (Gal 4: 19). This should be the concern of our novice masters and seminary professors for which they themselves should be persons formed and transformed into Christ so that their disciples would learn not only from their words but more effectively from their lives! The novices and students, too, whole-heartedly cooperating with God's unfailing grace and the formators' committed service, should aim at being formed and transformed into Christ.



One needs to be properly equipped for the mission. Now-a-days we mention three things as mutually complementing: call, consecration and mission. Of course all Christian disciples by baptism are missionaries. However, the priests and religious may be considered as called to be professional missionaries.

## Divinizing Knowledge

The Indians are well aware of the formative and transforming power of knowledge. An Upanishadic saying is: “Brahma-vid Brahma-eva bhavati [Knower of Brahma surely becomes Brahma].” It is a simple epistemological principle, namely, that knowledge is the identification between the knowing intellect and the known object. But to be identified both of them should be of the same form for which either each of them or at least one of them should change to become mutually one. Obviously, if the object changes the resultant knowledge will not be objective. Therefore, the subject changes and takes the form of the object: in effect the subject gets identified with or is transformed into the object. In the natural human knowledge—the rational knowledge—the identification or transformation is only partial unlike in the supernatural, spiritual, mystical knowledge; the latter is

otherwise called infused knowledge, the knowledge that is got not by the use of the natural human faculties of senses and reason, but is infused by God into the human spirit. Here the subject transforms into the object, and becomes the known object, so to say, even as they still remain different beings. Teresa of Avila in *The Interior Castle* says that the human soul created in God’s own image and likeness is incomprehensibly beautiful like God himself, in spite of their infinite difference as the Creator and creature (IC I.1.1). But, because of the sin the soul loses its beauty and the oneness with God, which then are regained by the restoration of the lost grace. This is what the Greek Fathers call the divinization of the human! The knowledge that we impart in our training centres, both in its content and the manner of being communicated, should have the transforming effect on the disciples.





The person and message of Jesus was so attractive and contagious that it spread rapidly into the four corners of the world.

Late Kuncheria Pathil CMI  
Indian Catholic Theologian



Experience is shared and transmitted  
to the next generation in Mission



**Experience**

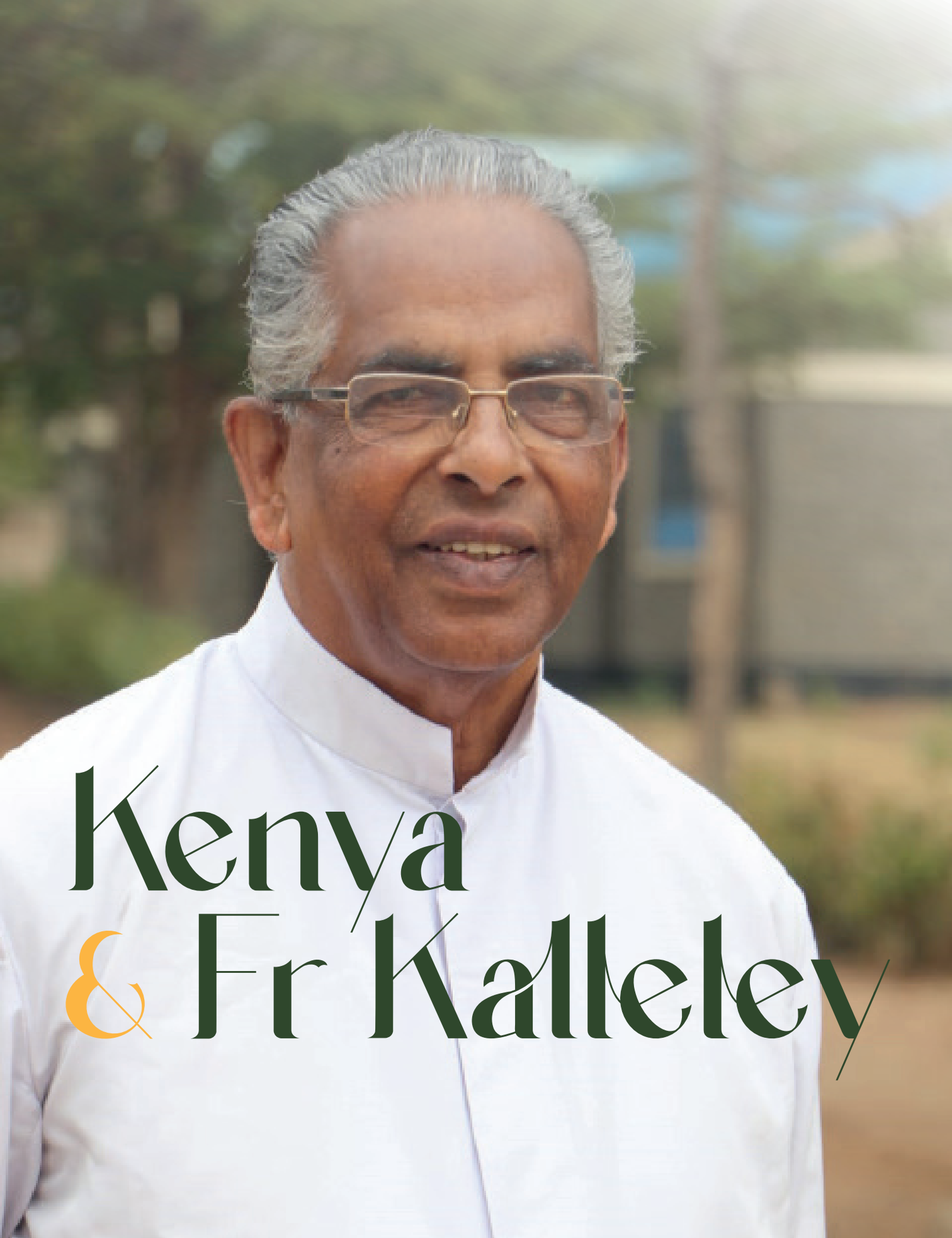
# CMI 40 Kenya

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# Kenya & Fr Kalleley



**F**r Kallely says that it was through his own father that God called him to His service. He was born as the 7th of 8 children (6 girls, 2 boys) of the parent couple, Anthony-Rosa," belonged to the parish of Kuttikkat, that comes under the diocese of Irinjalakuda. The parish and the family were rich in vocation to priesthood and sisterhood. It was the sermon by a missionary priest that inspired him to respond to God's call. The boy (Fr) Jose then had just finished his 5th year at school. One Sunday it was one missionary priest who arrived at the parish from outside who offered the Holy Mass of the day. In conclusion of the sermon the Father said that he had come over there in search of boys with vocation for priesthood. Boy Jose's father who had attended the Mass asked his son, "Do you want to join the seminary?" He didn't take into account the fact that he had 6 daughters. His son made known to the father his willingness to become a priest. Without delay the father accompanied the son heading for Thrissur by bus. Getting off the bus they hired a horse-drawn cart to go to the seminary at Elthuruth that St. father chavara had founded. Thus our boy Jose joined the seminary at his 12th year.

## Taking, over the Mission

It was at his 30th year seminarian Jose Kallely was ordained a priest. The one who anointed him a priest was no less a person than late Bishop Mar George Alappat. The ceremony took place in Lourde Cathedral Church in Thrissur.

During the subsequent 12 years Fr Kallely discharged several duties and responsibilities in Kerala. Never had he thought of going to any far-off mission field in this period. Nevertheless God's plan proved to be something different. It was during the tenure of his office as the superior of the Monastery at Chalakkudy, a letter from the Bishop of Machakos diocese in Kenya reached the Headquarters of CMI Congregation. The letter carried the request whether one more priest could be sent to his diocese. That time Fr Edward CMI had been working over there in Kenya. Though the Bishop's request was published as a notification in the official Bulletin of the CMI Congregation, nobody came forward to respond positively.

One day, Fr Provincial arrived in the House at Chalakkudy. For Kallely inquired whether anyone in the Province (Devamatha) had volunteered to go to Machakos Diocese in Kenya. The reply was in the negative. "If so, Fr Kalley told him, I am ready for that." But the Provincial did not give any reply to Fr Kallely offer. Three weeks thereafter Fr Provincial again arrived, Chalakkudy House and asked for Kallely whether he really meant his previous offer and whether he was serious about it. Fr Kallely made known to his Provincial Superior that he was quite serious about the offer he made. Thus in 1983 Fr Jose Kallaly CMI arrived in Kenya. And there, a new chapter of his life of dedication had its Start Before the arrival of Fr Kallely it was Irish Missionaries who were at work in Kenya. In all there were then only 28 priests in the Machakos Diocese, including Fr Edward CMI referred to earlier. And it was he who gave the Diocesan Authorities the address of the CMI Devamatha Province.

## Drinking Water Revolution

One and a half years after the arrival of Fr Kallely in Kenya, Fr Joy Kelaparambath CMI as well landed in Kenya. It was thanks to his help that schools could be built up and other constructions be undertaken. It was a big event those times, Fr Kallely reminisces, when drinking water from one mountain top water reserve was brought down through pipes alongside a walking track so as it be supplied free to the families settled along both sides of the track.

The lives of many a soul, irrespective of denominations and religious faith underwent a total transformation. People all around reading under pain and problems of all sorts sought solace and strength in Fr Kalley's succour and support. When Children's education, diseases, treatment, financial crises etc. were found beyond their capacity to solve, the first took resort to their father's hand and heart. Many of them were given free education. Several of them later got at high ranks and titles in the society. On the other hand, those who had got addicted to drugs and alcohol got rid of it.

## Kenyan President Visiting Fr Kallely with Funds

What is special about with Fr Kallely is that he keeps relationship with people in the lowest strata to those in the highest echelons of government administration without siding with any. The fact that the country (Kenya) put its trust upon the Father is proved by instances when even the Kenyan President contributed large sums of money to him for his humanitarian and heroic activities. In 1987 the then President Daniel Arab Moi visited the High School started by him in the place called Kelaa and handed to him a cheque worth 5 lakh while on the stage (dais) during a meeting. When the current Kenyan President William Putts, was the Vice President, he had visited this special school twice. The first time he came to the school he gave Rs 10 lakh. On a later date Father with his team visited called on the Vice President in his Office. This time also Rs 10 lakh was released. One day he came to attend the Holy Mass offered by the Father and thereafter spent some time with him; and while departing he gave the father a parcel that had carried R. 20 lakh. The Kenyan President, the Bishops and the people over there do stand by the father with their wholehearted Support to all his activities

In appreciation of and attracted by the Father's works, there is the rare instance of an entire non catholic denomination joining the catholic church. However, on grounds of that the denomination authorities (African Brotherhood Author Church) did not entertain any animosity or feeling of Vancour against Fr Kallely and his activities. Not only that, they gave permission to sell their land in their ownership to the Father at a nominal rate of Rs. 2 Lakh. Knowing about this, another Pastor in the church wrote a letter to the Bishop "This priest is doing service to our Land beyond intimation; so it is not in the fitness of things that we ask for a huge price from him" Consequently there came the next letter from the Bishop with the order to sell out the land for Rs 10000/-. It is on this piece of land the present Carmel School Staff House was built.

Fr Kallely is a missionary looked upon by the Kenyans including the presidents with respect and reverence. Witnessing his life as a missionary the whole of a region in Kenya has accepted Christ as their Saviour. Several of them baptized by him are now priests. Those exists even a bridge over there namesd after him.

## Valuable because of Rarity

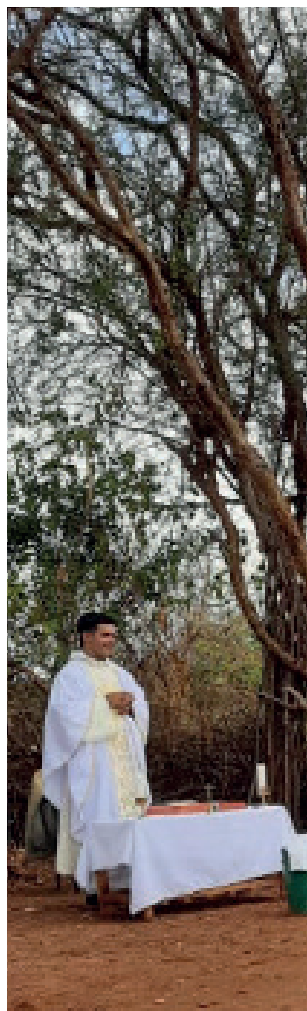
It is said that diamonds are valuable because of their rarity. So also is Fr Kallely.. In modern times a priest baptizing souls as many as 30000 without counting controversies is something of a rarity. There, were 22 parishes under the care of fr Kallely. In all of them you come across Catechists. It is they who prepare people who wants to receive Baptism. The sacrament is administered like the First Holy Communion in our part of the world. A good number of people receive it in a group. Ceremonies of this sort went on for years. Now Christians in Kenya are in the majority. Kenyans are zealous believers. All their activities are centred on their trust in God. Even when the priest to offer the Mass is delayed to arrive, say, for one or two hours they don't feel like dispersing. They won't even wait outside the church for the priest to come. Instead they stay on inside and pray in silence or offering vocal prayers. They are not at all reluctant to put in hand work in the company of priests.

## Devotee of St. Joseph

Some years ago the Bishop of Kenya sent a letter to the CMI Congregation Authorities is he writes" Fr Kellely is one like St Joseph who goes on with his responsibilities and activities in all silence. He is quite a model for the parish priests here". And Fr Kallely says that he came to know about it only when the letter was published in 'Carmelasandesam' the official News Bulletin of the Congregation. Devotion of Joseph is an inseparable part of the Fathers life. During the first one and half years in Kenya the Father lived alone in a house. These were then all the possibilities of attacks from thieves and thugs. What he did then was he got a photos of St Joseph framed and installed the saint in the residence, entrusting his protection to him, the protector of the Holy Family and of the church.

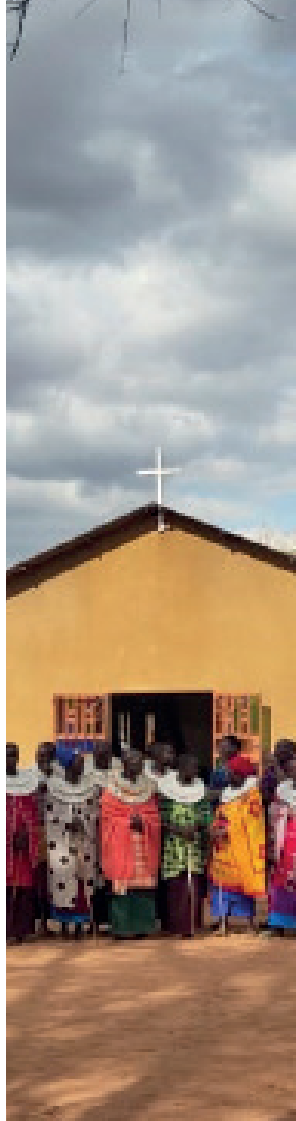
What Fr Provincial told him while moving out to the mission field is still alive in Fr Kallely's mind: " Whatever you come to earn in Kenya, in hand or cash, should be spent in Mission terretory itself " And the father confides to us that he has done 100% justice to what he was told to do by the Provincial, at an age when he is 82 now And that dispassionate and dedicated mind set of Fr Kallely probably earned for him love and reverence from both the Government and people of Kenya alike.

It was only 25 years after his arrival in his mission field (Mbiuni in Kenya) electricity was made available over there. Going through such inconveniences and deprivations the Father built up the mission. From the moment of landing in Kenya, he says he enjoyed his life there. In his eyes nowhere also across such a loving community of people. One must say that it is more the deeds than the words of Fr kallely that led thousands of souls to Christ, the Saviour. People saw God through the life of the Father. How can they keep distance from god who loves them so much Fr Kalley did! Christ the Lord in their minds and hearts carries the likeness of Fr Kallely!



Jose Pellissery CMI  
Thrissur







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St Thomas Region  
Years of "Grace-Filled Presence"  
in East Africa

**T**hey went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it” (Mark 16:20). This Bible passage is the summary of the 40 Years of the “Grace-filled Presence” of the CMI Fathers and Brothers in East Africa. It was late Bishop Urbanus Kioko of Machakos Diocese invited CMI Missionaries to Kenya. Fr. Edward Padickala CMI came to be the first missionary in Kenya, beyond borders. He came on 11th November, 1981. to teach in Kabaa Catholic School and to lead and guide the youths and to spread the good news through educational and pastoral apostolates. On 11th April 1983, another zealous CMI Priest, Fr Jose Kallely CMI followed him to Kenya, particularly to Mbiuni to sow the seeds of hope and to set spiritual fire in the hearts of many people. He started the work “Beyond Borders” in the Educational field, with the assistance of FCC Sisters.

On 12th December 1984, late Rev. Fr. Joy Kalaparambath CMI came to assist Fr. Jose Kallely in Mbiuni Parish. They believed and practiced what their founder Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara told them: “a day without charity is a waste”. “Sanctification of oneself and Salvation of all” was their motto. CMI Fathers were always aware of the needs of the poor and were trying to meet their needs, mostly through the local communities, institutions and individuals. St. Mary’s Rehabilitation Centre and the projects like: “Women’s Organization for Rural Development” (“WORD”); “Self-Help Groups”; “Nutrition Programme” and other “Income Generating Programme” were different means to Support the elderly people, the widows and the poor.

The CMI Mission started to take root in the African Soil, when we decided to take candidate from Africa during the Jubilee Year 2000. Now we have our own Aspirants House, Novitiate and Home for the Scholastics and have candidates from Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda. We have now 10 Rev. Fathers from Kenya. It is a clear sign of getting CMI roots in African soil and the growth of the CMI Congregation to be International with Latin Rite.

When we Celebrate the 40th Year of Service, of the CMI Fathers from Devamatha Province in East Africa, we are proud to profess with hearts full of thanks to God that there are 28 CMI Fathers working in St. Thomas Region, Devamatha Province serving in East Africa and 26 of the CMI Fathers returned to the Province after their glorious service in the “CMI Global Mission” in Africa.

We have 11 CMI welcoming Communities in Kenya and two in Tanzania. We are in charge of 9 Parishes, where we administer Sacraments, promote family welfare and take care the faith formation of our youths and children. We are running 11 Educational Institutions, they are well known in the region and are nurturing grounds for the student’s holistic development. We have 1 School for the differently abled children in Mbiuni, our first CMI house in Kenya and have more than 150 students. The “Huduma” Project, in Kibiko is a unique one for the disabled people in the Ngong Diocese. Following the CMI tradition

we have 1 Retreat Centre, where we have regular retreats, counselling and spiritual and formative courses. All our Schools “envision excellence in education rooted in Gospel values and ethos of the Nation”, they attempt to achieve full potential of student’s academic, creative, personal, physical, moral and spiritual developments. Two of our CMI Fathers, namely Fr. Paul Chummar CMI and Fr. Johny Thachuparamban CMI are teaching in the well-known Tangaza and Hekima Universities in Nairobi, where our 8 CMI Scholastics are studying theology and philosophy, besides two of our Brothers in Dharmaram-Christ Bangalore.

As our Founder, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara said, “Let the Word of God shall be our Food and Drink”, “Sanctification of self and Salvation of all” is our first concern (CMI Constitution No. 1); “Building up and renewal of the Catholic Church” is our Mission. We move together with our brothers and sisters and parishioners to renew our Families, to lead and guide our Youths, to educate our Children and to be with the poor and the marginalized and partake in the building up of a “Synodal Church”.



**Anto Thekkudan CMI  
Kenya**

We appreciate Rev. Fr. Prior General for his constant support and prayers and his councilors for their visit in our Mission and their encouragements and Rev. Fr. Provincial and his councilors for their love, concern and support. We are grateful to all the members of our CMI Congregation, the members of our 14 Provinces and other Regions and Sub-Regions, that when we celebrate the Bicentennial Jubilee of CMI Congregation, St. Thomas Region, East Africa, will also enter into the Golden Jubilee of her existence in Africa, and it shall be mile stone of the “CMI Communitarian Witnessing Beyond Borders” in Africa.

We shall enter into new areas of witnessing God’s Kingdom in African Countries, namely “Healing Ministry” in Africa. An opportunity once given, shall never return. “Let there be no day in your life in which we do no good to others” (St. Chavara). Thanks a lot for the editor of CMISSION and all the collaborators and we promise to be together.

## My life experience with C.M.I. missionaries in Kenya.

Mr. Charles Wambua

I am born and brought up in Mbiuni Catholic Mission during the time of Fr. Jose Kallely CMI as the priest in charge. My name is Charles Wambua. The several baptisms in different out stations in our parish made me take the decision to be baptized into Christ by Fr Jose Kallely CMI when I was in secondary school. It was really a re-birth day for me. I started to experience the faith I received in baptism as the foundation of my life, hope as the growth of my life and love as the life of my faith. I assisted many of my colleagues to receive baptism in our schools. Many protestant students with the consent of their parents became Catholics. The Holy mass offered in different schools in different times helped us grow in faith, hope and love. Now I am a well grown up Christian in Mbiuni Parish. I am thankful to C.M.I. fathers for their pastoral, educational and healing ministries.

Mbiuni Church was reconstructed and renewed from time to time reflecting the renewal of Christians in the parish. Holy Mass in different out stations, families, schools healing ministries in different broken families and yearly retreats in the Parishes are the regular pastoral ministries. The vision and mission written on the fence of our Church reveals our growth as Christians. Our vision is to become kingdom people and our mission is to live as kingdom people. We are asked to make our families God's kingdom on earth allowing Christ, the King, dominate our families. Living the truth, freedom and love we serve as kingdom people. The educational ministry of C.M.I fathers involving family, church and school as partners and participants contributed much to the holistic formation of the students. I congratulate them.

As a participant in the Ruby celebration of C.M.I Mission in Kenya in 2022 in the Regional House, Syokimau, I could gather more creative information from parishioners of different parishes where C.M.I. fathers serve. On the Ruby day we acknowledged the great mission works C.M.I. Fathers are performing in East Africa. May God bless you to continue and extend your Global Mission.



We shall enter into new areas of witnessing God's Kingdom in African Countries, namely "Healing Ministry" in Africa. An opportunity once given, shall never return.





# Saint Therese CMI25 Mission, Kenya



Rev. Fr. Paulson was the first missionary of the Preshitha Province to Kenya, where he came in 1995 and assisted Fr. Jose Kallely of Devamatha Province, Thrissur, at Mbuni Parish in Machkos Diocese. He assisted in different parishes and finally came to Magumoni Parish in the Diocese of Meru on 1st November 1997. We celebrate this year as the Silver Jubilee of Preshithes working in Magumoni parish exercising duties independently.

Although Preshitha Province started its mission in Kenya as a part of the Devamatha Province's mission initiative; gradually both Provinces moved to their own territories. At present "the dioceses under Nyeri Archdiocese in Kenya, excluding Muranga Diocese" is formally declared as the extended territory of the Preshitha Province (PG 257/2004, dated 12, May 2004). In 2011, Preshitha's mission was declared a Sub-Region christening it as 'Mount Kenya-Saint Therese Sub-Region'. Now it is renamed as Saint Therese CMI Mission.

In the past 25 years, around 25 CMI members have so far worked in four of our different institutions of our mission in different period of times. At present we have two Parishes in Meru Diocese, Magumoni and Mikumbune with eight substations each with about 8000 plus Christians. We provide spiritual care for our faithful by means of administering sacraments, family visits and animating 'Small Christian Communities', which form an integral part of the life in parishes. We have started three Primary Schools under these two parishes.

It was in 13th April 2007 through the letter of Most. Rev. Nicodemus Kirima, the Archbishop of Nyeri, welcomed CMI Fathers of Preshitha Province to do Apostolic Activities in Naromoru. He also offered 20 acres of land to utilize the premises on ad usum basis for the purposes of youth education and other connected activities (school, formation, convent, pastoral, retreat etc). Chavara Family Renewal Center at Naromoru serves as a source of spiritual solace for many in the area. In our Renewal Center, we offer regular residential as well as one-day retreats to the public, priests and religious. Our members also reach out to other parishes, institutions. In the context of COVID pandemic

we have reduced residential programs.

It was in 2012, Baraka Community Care Center (B.C.C.C) was started with various social projects funded by Chalice, a Canadian Funding Agency. The main office of Baraka is in Nanyuki town and sub-office at Naromoru. Its activities are spread over 22 communities. At present, there are 626 sponsored members including 609 children and youth who are getting financial support for their education; five babies, 27 special children and 16 senior citizens who get support for their food, medicine and livelihoods. Baraka has got 34 Micro Finance Groups with 615 members. There are also various community development projects like School Infrastructures, Agriculture promotion etc. for poverty eradication.

Preshitha Province brought six acres of land at Embu and started Mount Carmel Center in the Diocese of Embu with the generous financial support from various CMI Houses of the Province. A Primary School was constructed with the support of our Priests in Germany in 2011. Continuous contributions to this center through Canada Mission is acknowledged herewith gratitude. From 2016 onwards Charity Sisters (CSC) have been collaborating with our missions in Embu. As on the request by the Bishop of Embu to infuse Carmelite Spirituality in the diocese, we started 40 Hour Adoration, sharing the spirituality of St. Chavara, our Founder in the diocese and neighboring schools.

We had concluding function of Silver Jubilee of CMI Presence in Mount Kenya Region with con-celebrated Liturgy, Public Meeting with around 700 participants with Bishops and priests, officials, delegates from abroad, invited guests and parishioners. To mark the Silver Jubilee Celebration, Rev. Fr. Saju, Provincial Superior, blessed the Foundation Stone for the Orphanage building in the newly purchased land at Jua Kali in Laikipia County. St. Thresa of Lisieux, being the Patroness of our mission, is showering the roses of blessing in our Sub-Region for the past 25 years. We pray that God will bless our mission in the years to come.



**Varghese Kakkadan CMI  
Kenya**



In our Renewal Center, we offer regular residential as well as one-day retreats to the public, priests and religious. Our members also reach out to other parishes, institutions.



## Impact of CMI Presence in Kenya, Margret Kawara

I am writing this not only from my own view but also as witness of what others have said to me concerning the presence of the CMI Priests in Kenya. I have my catholic foundation in childhood having been brought up by catholic parents under the influence of the Italian Consolata and Comboni Missionaries. It is only after experiencing the CMI priests, that I have felt the missionary spirit evident in their pastoral work. I would like to outline some of the areas that have touched me a lot.

A barren land at Naromoru belonging to Nyeri Diocese was given to CMIs have been converted into a productive agricultural field applying modern agricultural methods through which they have supported some desperate farmers. The priests in the CMI Order have put up a Spiritual Renewal Center at Carmel Garden through which many residential as well as non residential spiritual programs are conducted for the people. They have also introduced skill training programs like Tailoring, Embroidery and knitting through which many young people could find their livelihood.

I recall the instance when the CMI fathers went out seeking medicine for a young girl who was severely affected by a skin disease. This girl was one of our neighbour and these fathers made sure that the girl was getting nutritious food by giving support to the family.

The care and concern towards the old and poor people by giving them the means of livelihood gave the Priests a fatherly figure among the people. A cancer infected old lady who was abandoned by her own family, was taken to hospital and care. The Chalice project from Canada which has been successfully executing by

CMI fathers in this locality provided a lot of opportunities and guidance to thousands of children in order to achieve their dreams. The spiritual legacy is being transmitted through two different parishes namely St. Theresa's Catholic Parish Magumoni and St. Joseph Parish Mikumbune showed their spiritual vibrancy and community spirit during the time of Silver Jubilee celebration of the presence of CMI fathers in Mount Kenya Region. The co-operation of the people from two different parishes were evident in terms of preparations and contributions during the time of celebration at Magumoni. The CMI priests have passed the legacy of the spirituality and unity to the people and people always carry it in their hearts.

The whole congregation is eagerly work to spread the Kingdom of God by working in various parts of the country. One of the beautiful Church in Syokimavu at Nairobi is a witness to it. The CMI priests have not only developed a very good school known for its performance but also developed peoples' spirituality, organized pilgrimages to holy-lands and medical care trips to India. This was shared by one of the lady Justice present at the Jubilee Celebration.

Last but not the least I would like to appreciate the new initiative began by the fathers in the form of a new project to establish Home for the Orphans and Educational Institution in an underdeveloped area at Jua Kali in Laikipia County. This will help the pastoralist community there and may go a long way in ensuring that this children will now get good education and spiritual care when it is completed.

I wish to express my appreciation and that which should be coming from my people in Kenya for this great sacrifice undertaken by these selfless CMI Missionaries. God bless them and their families that freely gave them out to work for God. Surely they are fulfilling one order 'You shall be my witness to all corners of the world'



“

The whole congregation is eagerly work to spread the Kingdom of God by working in various parts of the country. One of the beautiful Church in Syokimavu at Nairobi is a witness to it.





# CMI Missionaries in Namibia Rejoice!

Siby Kavattu CMI  
Bengaluru



Every Christian by virtue of baptism is a missionary (AG#2). Every missionary is engaged in the noble task of proclaiming the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ and strives hard for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth. This vision of God for humanity was first revealed in creation and subsequently made clear in the incarnation of the Word and fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Responding positively and creatively to the mission command of the Risen Lord (Mt 28:16-20) and the request of the Namibian Catholic Bishops' Conference (NCBC), the CMI congregation started her mission in Namibia on 21 April 1998, with the primary task of equipping the Church in Namibia with local clergy. Our congregation has been performing praiseworthy service in Namibia, the 'Land of the Brave' in Southern Africa, for the past 25 years. 2023 is the silver jubilee year of our missionary presence in Namibia. Every member of the CMI congregation can be proud of the magnificent services and the laudable contributions our members have rendered in this mission. Our members have been actively involving in the formation of the seminarians, ecclesiastical education, administration of NCBC, pastoral animation—especially of the youth and school learners, faith formation of the laity, prison ministry etc. The vision statement of the CMI community in Namibia states, "We serve the Namibian Church by helping in its attempt to establish a self-reliant local Church."



## Namibia: Land, People and Culture

Namibia is located in the southwest of Africa and has an area of 824292 sq km. The name Namibia is derived from the Namib desert, which constitutes a large portion of the country. Namibia is bordered by Angola, Zambia, Botswana, South Africa and the Atlantic Ocean. The landscape is spectacular, but the desert, mountains, canyons, and savannas are perhaps better to see than to occupy. Very little was known of the country until the latter of the 19th century. Even today, Namibia is not well known to the rest of the world. When I was at Cochin International Airport to fly to Namibia, the beautiful girl at the check-in desk asked, "Where are you flying to?" I replied, "To Windhoek." She then asked, "Which country?" I said, "Namibia." She asked confusingly, "What? Amoeba?" I had to wait a long time to complete my check-in as she went to consult with her colleagues to confirm that there was a country called Namibia. cursory exploratory voyages were made along the coast of Namibia from the 15th to 17th century. In the early 19th century, South West Africa was established as a colony of Germany, and the German military did some detailed exploration and mapping of the country; thus, Namibia became known to the world.

Namibia is one of the least populated countries in the world, (to be specific, the second lowest) with a population of 2.6 million people, that is 26 lakhs. Situated between the Namib and the Kalahari deserts, Namibia has the least rainfall of any country in sub-Saharan Africa. The average annual rainfall is about 0.5 inches at the coast, and 2 inches, inland. In some years, however, no rain falls at all!

Namibia has different tribal groups, such as Ovambo, Kavango, White Namibian, Herero, Damara, Nama, Caprivian, Bushmen, Tswana, etc. German colonisation left its imprint on Namibia with German architecture and cuisine. Although the country is rapidly urbanising, a majority of Namibians still live in rural areas and lead largely impoverished lives. However, cultural traditions survive most strongly among these people. After 106 years of German and South African reign, Namibia became independent on 21 March 1990, with a constitution guaranteeing democratic governance with a multiparty political system. Windhoek serves as its capital.

## Catholic Church in Namibia

The Roman Catholic Mission in the Southwest Africa (Namibia today) was established in 1896 by the German missionaries of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI). The first missionaries were allowed to minister only among the Europeans and Afrikaans people, not ministered to by the protestant missionaries. In 1905, new Catholic mission stations were allowed in other parts of the country. Initially, the growth of the Catholic Church and its missionary activities were slow, but steady. In 1926 and 1930 the Vicariates of Windhoek and Keetmanshoop were established respectively. In the second half of the 19th century, the Catholic Church could make her presence noticed in different spheres of life, especially in favour of human rights. After the independence in 1990, the relation between the Church and the state

became cordial and more productive. In 1994, Rome established the national hierarchy consisting of the Archdiocese of Windhoek, the Diocese of Keetmanshoop and the Vicariate of Rundu.

## St. Charles Lwanga Major Seminary

The formation of Namibian seminarians for the priesthood was done mainly in different seminaries in South Africa and other neighbouring countries. In 1994, as soon as the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Namibia was established, preliminary discussions to start a seminary in Namibia were initiated. Archbishop Bonifatius Haushiku of the Archdiocese of Windhoek, Bishop Anthony Chiminello of the Diocese of Keetmanshoop and Bishop Joseph Shikongo of the Vicariate of Rundu made some initial deliberations to begin a seminary. They invited the provincials of OMI and OSFS congregations to discuss the possibilities of starting a seminary in the country. As a result of the discussions, a steering committee was set up, and Bro. Hermenegildus Beris CMM was appointed the chairperson of the committee. The committee made extensive studies, visited different seminaries in Southern Africa, searched and researched for a suitable site for the seminary, and finally decided to open the seminary in Klein Windhoek, where a pastoral centre for the Archdiocese of Windhoek and a hostel for the students of St. Paul's college existed. The site of the seminary is historically significant for the Catholic Church in Namibia, as it was the first property the early missionaries purchased in 1898, which they used for agricultural (vineyard) and educational (school) activities.

On 28 January 1997, the St. Charles Lwanga Seminary was opened in the name of the leader of the Ugandan martyrs. It started as a diocesan seminary for the Archdiocese of Windhoek, and Fr. Nicholas Mokhatu was appointed as the acting rector. There is a testimony about the primary initiatives of the establishment of the seminary in the annals of the Church by Pope John Paul II in his address to the Bishops of Namibia, when they made their first ad Limina visit in 1997. Pope's address stated, "It is a sure sign of growing ecclesial maturity that the Archdiocese of Windhoek is in the process of establishing a seminary." The first intake of the seminary was eight seminarians, though none of them finished the programme. In the first year of the opening of the seminary, there was a request from the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples in the Vatican to make it a national seminary so that the seminary could obtain subsidies from the Propaganda Fide for its smooth functioning. As a result, the bishops decided to upgrade the diocesan seminary into an inter-diocesan/national seminary. In June 1998, the decree of approval from the Propaganda Fide established the St. Charles Lwanga Major Seminary. The motto of the seminary is "United in the Word to Shepherd."

It is remarkable that after the initial small beginning the number of students remained constant. In 1997, the seminary started with 22 students, which rose to 34 in 1999, of whom many dropped out during the year. For a couple of years, the number

increased and became steady between 25 and 30. This is because of the presence of the pre-novices, who come only for classes and do only philosophy at the seminary. The seminary has international students from South Africa, Botswana, Angola, Malawi, Kenya (4 CMI scholastics did their philosophy course in 2020-2021) and Namibia.

The seminary formation programme is for seven years in three phases. The first year is called 'orientation,' a year for discernment, a time to know more about the vocation to diocesan priesthood and acquire various skills in prayer, interpersonal relations, communication, language(s), personality development etc. Then there are two-year philosophy and four-year theology courses, after which the students receive a diploma/bachelor degree in their respective stream, accredited by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA). In the second semester of the third year of theology, students have an internship for pastoral experience for six months arranged by their respective dioceses.



## The Arrival of the CMI in Namibia

The CMI mission in Namibia began with a providential encounter of Fr. Thomas Aykara with Fr. Heinz Steegmann OMI in Aachen, Germany. Fr. Heinz Steegmann was searching to find professors for the seminary in Namibia, as directed by Bishop Karl Lehmann (later Cardinal Karl Lehmann). Fr. Thomas Aykara suggested Fr. Heinz Steegmann make a formal request for the same to the authorities of the CMI congregation. Bro. Hermenegildus Beris CMM, a renowned Church historian, especially of the Namibian Church, wrote in his book, *Forming Shepherds of the Soil: A History of St. Charles Lwanga Major Seminary*, about the beginning of CMI mission in Namibia, as follows:

"In May 1997, while the application for recognition of the inter diocesan seminary from Rome was still awaited, the Namibian Catholic Bishops Conference (NCBC), especially its President Archbishop [Bonifatius] Haushiku was looking for staff for the Seminary. In Germany he met Bishop [Karl] Lehmann, the president of the German Catholic Bishops' Conference and requested his help to find formators and professors. As directed by Bishop [Karl] Lehmann, Fr. Heinz Steegmann OMI, in-charge of the Foreign Department of MISSIO, Aachen, after searching in vain to find professors in Germany and other

European countries, sent a request, dated May 16, 1997, to the Congregation of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI), for qualified priests for training the seminarians in the Namibian Church. The CMI Congregation, the first indigenous congregation for men in India, runs three Major Seminaries in India where degrees, including Ph.D., are offered in different fields of study. Their founder St. Cyriac Elias Chavara was a pioneer in the organized seminary formation for clergy in the 20th century in the Indian Church. Fr. Thomas Manninezhath CMI, who was a professor of Philosophy at Dharmaram College, Pontifical Athenaeum of Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law in Bangalore, volunteered to serve in the Namibian Seminary and he arrived in Namibia on 21 April, 1998. Later on, on June 15, 1999, Archbishop [Bonifatius] Haushiku wrote another official letter to Fr. Alex Ukken CMI, the Prior General of the Congregation, requesting him again to "send a few more priests from the congregation to Namibia for teaching, spiritual direction and administration in the Seminary and for pastoral works in various parishes of the archdiocese."







A number of discussions with the prior general and the general council of the CMI congregation and a visit of Archbishop Bonifatius Haushiku to India resulted in the beginning of the CMI mission in Namibia. On 21 April 1998, Fr. Thomas Manninezath arrived in Namibia, and on 15 June 1998, he was appointed as the bursar of the seminary. Later on 9 February 1999, he was installed as the first rector of the seminary, appointed by the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Peoples, Rome. Thus the leadership and administrative responsibility of St. Charles Lwanga Major Seminary was entrusted to the CMI congregation. Since then, the seminary has been run by CMI priests. Bro. Hermenegildus Beris notes in this regard: “The Namibian Church and St. Charles Lwanga Major Seminary are greatly indebted to the invaluable assistance rendered by the Carmelite Fathers. During this period of twenty-five years the Congregation has been regularly sending some of its well qualified members to ensure the continued and successful existence of this institute”.



In 2008, Fr. Thomas Manninezath was appointed the secretary-general of the NCBC but continued to teach both philosophy and theology. He finished his long years of service in Namibia in 2016 and returned to his province. During his term of office, the new orientation and the library buildings were constructed. In 2009, Fr. Benny Karuvelil was appointed the rector of the seminary, and he continued in the same position till 31 March 2022. He was appointed the secretary general of NCBC in 2022. Fr. Benny has undertaken many projects that added to the expansion of the seminary facilities and effectiveness, such as the installation of solar power, security cameras, alarm systems, electric fencing, the grotto of St. Joseph, etc. The current rector of the seminary is Fr. Taiju Thaliath, appointed on 7 April 2022. Within a short time in office, he was able to give a new face to the seminary by putting up a beautiful name board and constructing the grotto of St. Charles Lwanga, the patron of the seminary.



The following is the list of the CMI members who have rendered their services during the years as resident staff: Fr. Thomas Manninezath (1998–2016), Fr. Benny Karuvelil (2001–2002; 2005; 2008–), Fr. Cyriac Kannezhath (2001–2016), Fr. Jacob Alackal (2001–2002), Fr. Thomas Manikkam (2003–2004), Fr. Abraham Vadakkemury (2005–2006), Fr. Immanuel Ayamkudy (2005–2007), Fr. John Eattaniel (2009–2017), Fr. Davis Vadakkumpadan (2010–2013), Fr. Pradeep Aerthayil (2014–2021), Fr. Oliver Inchody (2014–2016), Fr. Joshy Paramthottu (2017–2020), Fr. Taiju Thaliath (2017–), Fr. Anto Thunduparampil (2017–2019), Fr. Siby Kavattu (2019–), Fr. Vibin Pullanpally (2022–), Fr. Godfrey Mwenda (2022–), Fr. Antony Puthussery (2022–), Fr. John Pallithuruthil (2022–). The following is the list of the CMI members who have rendered their services during the years as visiting faculty: Fr. Johny Thachuparamban, Fr. Jose Nandikara, Fr. Kurian Kachapilly, Fr. Sebastian Alackapilly



The current CMI missionaries in Namibia are Fr. Benny Karuvelil (Secretary General, NCBC; Lecturer-Philosophy), Fr. Taiju Thaliath (Rector; Lecturer-Theology), Fr. John Pallithuruthil (Dean of Studies; Librarian; Lecturer-Philosophy and Theology), Fr. Vibin Pullanpally (Bursar; Lecturer-Philosophy and Theology), Fr. Siby Kavattu (Director of Orientation and Philosophy Students; Lecturer-Philosophy and Theology), Fr. Godfrey (Lecturer-Philosophy), and Fr. Antony Puthussery (Lecturer-Philosophy).



It was in the beginning of the year 2019, during the major superiors meeting and when the La Spezia mission was offered to the Congregation that I took a difficult decision to send one of our priests to La Spezia Diocese in Italy, for the missionary service. Yes, it was a difficult decision, because it was a time when there was a great requirement for the service of the priests in the province (Chanda), I have taken this decision. Luke Ch. 04: 43 gave me the strength and courage to take this challenging decision. Jesus said to the people, “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose.” Because the diocese of La Spezia has asked us for priests for the service of the sacraments and related pastoral services. In their words, “we need priests who can be a witnessing presence in these difficult times”. But months later during my canonical visit to Germany I found time to go to La Spezia diocese in Italy, I have been to the parish to which our priests were invited to lend their pastoral services. It was the conversation with Bishop Luigi Ernesto, opened my eyes to realize the scarcity of priests even to the extent that some of their priests had to look after 10-15 parishes due to the lack of vocation to the priesthood. A catholic country from where great Italian missionaries came to India after the command of Jesus, is now suffers and thirsts for missionary priests.

Thus, finally after signing the contract with the diocese and the Mar Thoma Province, Chanda, our first Italian mission of the CMI congregation was born on 13th October 2019 with the sending of our priest Fr. Bipin Ottaplackal for the Italian mission. He has taken charge as the assistant parish priest. It was Jesus and his words gave me the inspiration and strength to take this challenging decision even in the midst of severe criticisms and related difficulties. Now the province has got two priests working in the diocese of La Spezia namely: Fr. Bipin Ottaplackal and Fr. Thomas Thadathil.

The Diocese of La Spezia-Sarzana-Brugnato is a Roman Catholic ecclesiastical territory in Liguria, northern Italy, created in 1929. It is a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Genoa. The historic diocese of Luni (earlier Luna) was united to the Diocese of Sarzana in 1465, and then to the Diocese of Brugnato in 1820, to form the current diocese. Its name has been changed more than once. The diocese of La Spezia was created on 12 January 1929 by Pope Pius XI, into which he incorporated the diocese of Luni-Sarzana and Brugnato. The title of Luni was dropped from the name of the diocese on 12 August 1975, which became La Spezia, Sarzana and Brugnato. The name was hyphenated in 1986. The name Luni has been reserved since 1975 as the title of a titular diocese. The current bishop is Msgr Luigi Palletti who was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI on October 20, 2012. The episcopal see of Luni dates at least from the fifth century. Under Bishop Felerandus, in the 8th century, the purported relic of the Blood of Christ is said to have been brought to Luni. The current bishop is Msgr Luigi Palletti who was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI on October 20, 2012

# The First Italian Mission La Spezia

**Benny Joseph Mukalel CMI Chanda**



La Spezia is the capital city of the province of La Spezia and is located at the head of the Gulf of La Spezia in the southern part of the Liguria region of Italy. La Spezia is the second largest city in the Liguria region, after Genoa. Located roughly midway between Genoa and Pisa, on the Ligurian Sea, it is one of the main Italian military and commercial harbours and a major Italian Navy base. A popular seaside resort, it is also a significant railway junction, and is notable for its museums, for the Palio del Golfo rowing race, and for railway and boat links with the Cinque Terre.

La Spezia has a borderline humid subtropical and Mediterranean climate. The city enjoys hot summers, chilly damp winters and very changeable and rainy autumns and springs. The average temperatures of the coldest month (January) are 4°C minimum and 11 °C maximum. In the hottest month (July) they are 18 °C minimum and 29 °C maximum. Average annual precipitation is 1,314 millimetres (51.7 in), more than twice that is in London. Snow is extremely uncommon. Heavy snowfalls are exceptional events: only in 1985 was a snowfall of more than 50 centimetres (20 in) recorded. Another big snowfall occurred during the night of 18 December 2009, with approximately 25 centimetres (9.8 in) of snow and temperatures as low as -7.4 °C in the following nights. Because of its topography, the city is not exposed to winds from the north, which lap western Liguria, but to those from the southeast. These winds may bring heavy rain and they can reach 80 kilometres per hour (50 mph), in rare cases causing the blocking of the port. The only northern wind reaching the city is the north-eastern Grecale, common during incursions of Arctic air, when the cold air flowing over the warmer Tyrrhenian sea triggers the formation of low pressures, draining the colder and heavier air trapped in the Po Valley, behind the Apennine Mountains.

The new mission of the CMI congregation in Italy was taken up by the Mar Thoma province, Chanda. Rev. Fr. Bipin Ottaplackal reached the diocese of La Spezia on 13th October 2019. He was appointed as assistant parish priest of the parishes of San Lorenzo in Portovenere, Nostra Signora delle grazie in Le Grazie and San Giovanni Battista in Fezzano. These three parishes were looked after by one of the diocesan priests, and to these parishes were our service requested.

Yes, indeed it was a time of crisis for Fr. Bipin in the initial days. The difficulties and problems he faced in the beginning were mainly with regard to the language, food and culture. There was nobody with whom he could communicate his needs, he had no option for food other than having the local food and life in another culture without knowing the culture, with new people, an alien climate and of course the new language were really gigantic barriers he had to overcome. After four months of his arrival, the pandemic broke out. He had to lock himself up in the presbytery for several months. North Italy became a major victim and but the place where Bipin lived also suffered severely. It was during this time they started online programmes like mass, divine office, adoration, rosary, motivational messages and so

on. In the initial stage he used a translator app on the phone to communicate. Father Bipin recalls those days now: those were the days when he really felt the presence of Jesus with him and he earnestly prayed to Jesus for help. Of course the difficulties were plenty but God's graces were also plenty. As a result he could sail through this difficult time which made him more courageous to face any difficulty. Now he says that he really enjoys this mission.

As pastoral service they have daily celebration of the Holy Eucharist and confessions. On Sundays they have 5/6 mass depending on the season. There is more participation during the Summer season. They have regular catechism. It is normally taken care of by the lay people under the guidance of the parish priest. At present Fr. Thomas Thadathil CMI, the second missionary to La Spezia from Mar Thoma Province, Chanda is taking catechism for the children and animating the mass acolytes (Mass Assistants).

At least once a month they go to visit the sick and old people. They spend some time with them talking, hearing confessions and giving communion. It is an enjoyable moment for them to be with the people and listen to their stories. They appreciate the missionaries visiting their houses. Fr. Bipin says that they believe what makes them a witnessing presence is the time they spend with people and for the people. One should be able to give Christ with his words and deeds. That will remain in the mind of the people and it will become a reminiscence for them. Their presence and interest in conducting adorations and confessions are really appreciated by the people.



“

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.  
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The Spirit of a good liturgy is the  
spirit of God, namely the harmony  
between Word and Silence .

**Aloysius Pieris S J**  
**Catholic Theologian**

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

A circular frame with a yellow border containing a photograph of a tropical beach scene. Several tall palm trees are visible against a light blue sky. In the foreground, there is a body of water and some small plants. A yellow diagonal band crosses the circle, containing the word "Evangelize" in white text.

Evangelize



# Mission Meditation

Kenyan Mission Journey



Raju Nellisery CMI  
Bengaluru



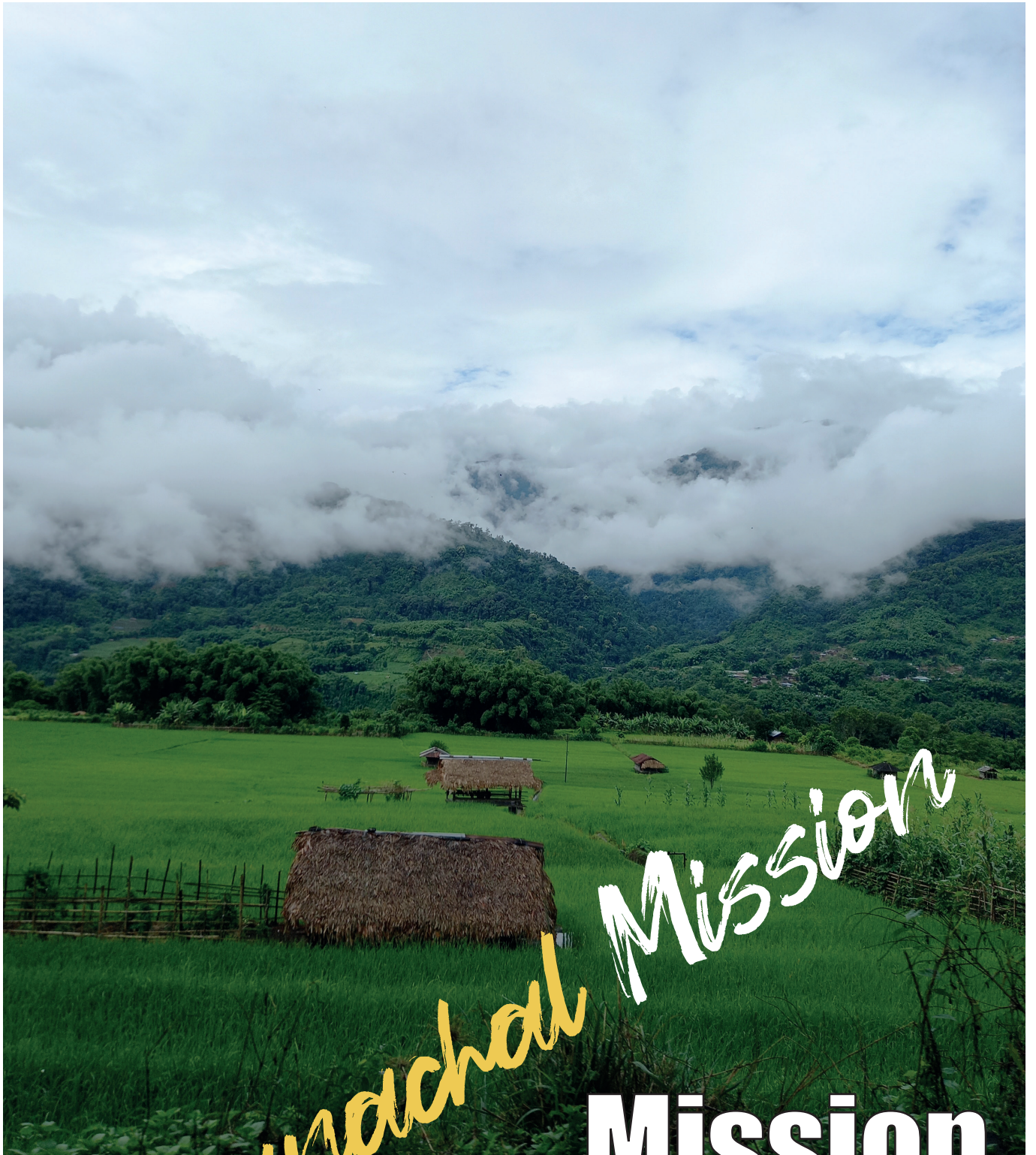
**I**t was on a weekday! I clearly remember the scorching sun that treated me as an enemy! The parish Priest has gone shopping at Wamba, which is almost 50 Km from the parish. On the way back the river got flooded due to unexpected heavy rain which happens very rarely. I was waiting for the Bishop in the presbytery of Lodungu Kwe Parish, in the Diocese of Maralal, Kenya. I was entrusted to assist the Bishop in his pastoral visit to a sick Mama, and a mass in a village. I have never met him before but I was sure I could recognise a bishop easily.

During my most awaited moments, a priest with an ordinary outlook came and greeted me by calling my name and recognised me as an Indian and began to chat with me. After some time of chatting, he asked me *twende* (= Lets Go). Then I said that I cannot come now because I have to wait for the bishop to come. Then with a smiling face, he said that the bishop will reach direct there, and the bishop had already informed the parish priest about it. So, we started walking. We walked about 3 Km and we had to cross a river, where a lot of crocodiles were struggling to hide in the shallow water. We wanted to rest a while, and to my surprise, he began to make a pit with his own hands in the sand I could see the underground water was slowly filling in that sandy pit and we waited for a while to clear the water. With that water, we washed our faces and he offered me some fruits which were plucked on the way. We continued our journey with a lot of discussions.

After a long walk, we reached our destination; where we met a sick Mama and gave anointing and prayed. Meanwhile, the catechist went to the manyatta (small huts) in the Bomas to gather the people for Holy Mass. People gathered and greeted the priest and the mass was about to start. I was preparing a temporary altar for the mass. There was a plane stone with rough edges and it was used as the altar. I asked the priest about the bishop coming. He ignored my question with a smile and began to vest himself. An old Lady started the entrance hymn and I was searching for the chasuble. Then I found another old lady who came with a chasuble which is made of cow skin and the priest was happy to wear it. I was wondering and then He took a chain with a special cross and put it on by himself. Somebody gave him a pastoral staff and he told me *sasa mimi ni askofu* (=now I am the Bishop). We celebrated Holy mass with the people in that village by singing and dancing. I felt that it was really the heavenly choir and it is good to be here. This happened when I was studying theology at Hekima Jesuit college in Nairobi, Kenya. This incident imprinted in me who is a pastor. 'A priest or bishop should be a pastor with the smell of the sheep.' We

say this many times but we never try to have that smell. We have a prejudice that certain things or certain people, certain cultures (= certain smells) are bad and we cannot bear with it. We feel often that we are better than others or that other should be like this or that. We make a frame and try to fit others into it. If he or she is not fitting into my frame, we feel that he is not one among us. We never feel that his smell/ fragrance is different from ours. He may be feeling bad about our smell or odour and he may be suffocating by our routine way of treating others. Still, we claim that we the pastors with the smell of the sheep. These kinds of separation and labelling happen in every sector of human society. Even in the pastoral field, priestly life, formation, and vocation promotion. We search for people who can think like us; The people who do things as we have done and as we have seen. We think that this is the only ideal. For claiming this, we often quote and misquote even Bible. We form a stereotypic society where creativity and diversity are denied through this. Jesus excluded anyone, including sinners, tax collectors, fishermen, sick and blind, men and women. That is why Jesus was excluded from society and they tried to stone him. They conspired against Jesus. In this modern world, the youth come to church with trendy dressing models, different hairstyles, with tattoos. Who am I to judge them? What if the way I look at them may be wrong according to my ideals and these youth never thought about it? Or shall we label all the youth with tattoos and modern trending styles are adulterous and sinners? Even if they are sinners and searching for Christ who am I to judge them? We fail to look at their inner being. Once one aspirant asked me, father, I was wearing jeans and this smartwatch for 12 years and serving at the altar for many years and nobody found this unfit in God's eyes! It never mislead anyone to sin. But I know people wearing saffron dhotis and never come for prayer. Actually, they lead others to sin. "Judge not; you will not be judged." How can we search for the same smell (fragrance) from the Pepper and Jasmine? Are we looking for grapes in the fig trees?

I wonder why God created a lot of diversity in this universe! He could have created only human beings so that they may love him and serve him. Then it would be a homogenous community where there is a limit to creative sharing. In the heterogenous community, we have a lot of chances for combinations or traits. Each and every moment, these traits are undergoing a kind of evolution and transformation to confirm the power of God's creativity. Be one among them and stand unique and praising His name.



*Arunachal* Mission

**Mission  
Villages**



I reached Tuting on 23rd May 2022. As I reached, many of our parishioners were walking back to their home. Fr Cejo introduced me, and they said they had gone for 'paani kheti', which means cultivation in water. Every household on the land cultivates rice, their staple food for each home. Growing rice is an integral part of their life. Rice is inevitable in their lives. They eat rice all three times; they gift rice for marriages and other auspicious occasions like the offertory gift during Holy Eucharist. Buying rice is a matter of disrespect for them. The paddy cultivation in the land of Arunachal is quite different from the other mainlands, especially the plains. One day, Fr Cejo, Fr Lijo, Dn Umesh, and I went to help in the paddy cultivation on Mr Olik Tangu's land. Since the land has an abundance of rain, there is plenty of mountain water, and they channelise this mountain water to their fields. The day before we went, they had removed the weeds and tilled the land. The land was divided into small plots six to eight feet wide and a hundred feet long. Since it is like steps, it is easy to control the water flow. When we reached, we levelled the plots and planted the paddy. To my surprise, they did not add any manure, neither chemical nor organic, and not even cow dung. The land was so fertile and untouched by the pollutants that it always yielded a good crop.

Arunachal Pradesh is a fertile land, not only in agriculture but also pastorally. After the diaconate, I was assigned to Arunachal Pradesh for my diaconate ministry. I was thrilled to go, but as we were getting close to the day of departure, there were many hiccups. A week before I was supposed to go to Arunachal, there was heavy rainfall in the North East region of India, resulting in a flood in Assam. In those days, the vehicle of Tuting Church was stuck in a landslide on their way back from Yingkiong. And on the day before we were supposed to go, our train was cancelled due to a flood in the Silchar region. All this made me sceptical about the journey, and I was half-hearted about going there.

At last, Dn Umesh and I got a tatkal ticket, and we started to Arunachal. We went to Guwahati, from there to Dibrugarh and then to Yingkiong. The off-road journey from Yingkiong to Tuting in a Tata Sumo through the bank of Siang River till Tuting was unforgettable and fantastic. We reached Tuting by evening 4'O clock.

On the same day, there was a sector prayer. The Christians in the Upper Siang district are in their infancy in Catholicism. They have been Christians only for about thirty years. So, if we expect the traditional Catholic customs and practices, we will be disappointed. Since they did not practice family prayers, the priests introduced sector prayer and fellowships. Where in the members of a sector gather together in a house in the evening, and recite a rosary. Each sector has a papa pastor (abbu pastor) and mama pastor (anne pastor). They led the prayers and said the intentions. After the rosary and other prayers, the day's gospel passage was read, and the priest gave a short homily. There were sector prayers on three days of the week. On the remaining days, if any families had special prayer requests, all the people gathered at their place and prayed for them. All these bonded them tightly. So all the parishioners thoroughly knew each other and prayed

and supported each other in difficulties.

On the first day, we went to a house for sector prayer, and there was the rosary. The people there belonged to the Adi tribe and spoke their tribal language, Adi, which is written in Latin script. The sector prayers were conducted in both Adi and Hindi languages. The Latin script of Adi language made it easy for us to read. Since they pronounced every word nasally, there were significant differences in how we spoke. They were tolerable in this regard and very happy when we prayed in their language. After two weeks of our arrival, we learned the prayers Hail Mary and Our Father in the Adi language. So for the concluding prayers in Sector prayers and fellowships, we started praying these prayers. On many occasions, they commended this attempt, which was a boost for us.

The Holy Rosary Church is a large parish geographically. The parish Church is in Tuting, where there are around a hundred families. Then we have sub-stations in a village called Ngaming in the north and villages Ningging, Panggo, Migging, and Mossing in the south. Tuting to Mossing is seventy kilometres, and it takes three to four hours to reach there. The government is building a two-lane road, and they are cutting mountains and hills as part of it. As a result of this cutting, the possibility of a landslide is much higher in the rainy season. But that does not evade our pastoral responsibility. So the priests from Tuting visited the places and cared for their pastoral needs. Since most of them are new to the Catholic tradition, every sermon, homily or message had to be catechetical and pastoral.

The best pastoral experience for me was on Sundays. On Sundays, we visited the substations. The second Sunday after my arrival, I was asked to go to Ngaming, the closest station in the southern direction. I went on a bike with one of the youths. Since it was raining, the road was muddy, and at the core of my heart, I was terrified and hardly knew what would happen if there was a landslide. It took more than one hour to reach the place. On reaching there, the people were very welcoming and caring. Even though they had difficulty understanding Hindi, they listened carefully to what we spoke and were very attentive. Soon after the prayers, they came and greeted me. Some asked for the prayer requests and informed me that they are all going to a field for prayer. I was curious, so they informed me that wild animals attacked the field, so they all would go together and pray there and erect crosses at the boundaries. Even though we may feel this incident is silly, it shows us how they depend on God in all their problems and troubles.

The following Sunday, I was asked to do the Easter blessing there. As usual, it was raining, and I was all alone this time. There was mainly a place where the majority of the cutting was done. Once that place was crossed majority of the problem was solved. When I went to Ngaming, there were no problems on the way. While blessing the houses there, it was raining incessantly. The people said it was the most extensive rainfall of the season.

After the blessing, I took the motorcycle and started my journey back. The pastor of the village requested that there is a house on the way and asked me to bless it. This family had shifted to a place where the road workers resided. They had a shop there. The abbu of the family was sick, and the mother and son ran the shop. After the blessing, as I was heading to Tuting they informed me that the road was blocked. And being a Sunday, the chances for the GREF to clear the landslide is minimum. A family of our parish was also with me on their way back to Tuting on their bike. And the abbu informed that we have to park the motorcycle before the landslide and walk to the village, and once the road is cleared, the bikes shall be retrieved. I called Fr Cejo and asked him what to do, and he enquired who it was with me. I did not know that person, so I asked him and informed Fr Cejo. Upon hearing his name, Fr Cejo made a laugh of relief and told me that he is the best person to guide me.



Planning that we would park the bike before the landslide and walk to Tuting, we continued our journey. On the way, I saw a bamboo grove in the middle of the road, covering the entire course and blocking every passenger. A few workers were cutting and clearing that grove. The abbu who was travelling with me stopped the bike and helped them to clear a few bamboos. There was a stream of water between the mud, and he asked me to ride the motorcycle through that stream. The whole area was covered with mud about two feet deep, and the stream was around three feet wide. I just followed him and somehow reached the other side. With much relief, I said, “We had crossed the block!”. Then he laughed and said it was not the block they spoke about; it was two kilometres ahead. Then we continued and reached the spot. He informed us that the mud would be almost three feet deep, so we would park the bike and walk ahead. However, a few passengers

from the other side informed us that we could ride our motorcycles back to Tuting. Here too, I merely followed him through the stream of water and reached the other side. That was an everyday experience for the people there, but for me, that was a nail-biting experience where I could experience the providence of God.

At the end of my deacon ministry, I had the privilege to stay in Boleng for five days. The experience in the Boleng was entirely different from that of Tuting. Since Boleng is ADC headquarters, the resident parishioners of Boleng are a few, and the majority are floating residents. Moreover, the main work is centred around villages. Fr Paulson Muthupaediaka CMI and Fr Martin Kallely CMI go around the villages, celebrate the Divine Eucharist, and took care of their pastoral needs. There too, they had the custom of sector prayers; people there often call the priests for prayer requests. During the short visit to Boleng, I could experience the zeal of the priests there at its peak. The energy and time they invest in the field are praiseworthy, and the people really appreciate it.

I arrived there in the early morning. Fr Paulson told me we have the sector prayer in the evening. We went to a family where all the family members were non-Christians except a sick daughter. They tried to treat her, and there was no progress. So they brought her to Catholicism. We had rosary at her house, a big family with grandfather, grandmother, three daughters and their children. To my surprise, the whole family was there for the prayer. Fr Paulson was well acquainted with them and called them by name. After the prayers, I was introduced to them. On the way back, Fr Paulson said that we would go to a village in the morning, and I had to be ready by 5 am.

We started from our house at 5 am and reached a village called Lorging by 8 am. In that village, there is only a Catholic family. The catholic family was out of the station, so we were invited to the house of a lady called Martha. Her whole house believed in Donyi Polo, a local religion, except her. Unlike the previous day, it was a hostile situation for us. Since the Holy Mass was only at 11 am, we had to bear the unfriendly stares of the other family members for about two hours. But we stayed there, celebrated the Divine Eucharist in their house, and baptised Ms Martha. By 2 pm we started to the next village called Pessing and reached there in an hour. There too, we celebrated the Divine Eucharist in a house. Two catholic families were there for the celebration. A lady who was their neighbour also joined us. After the divine Eucharist, this lady invited us to her house to bless the house. Then, we travelled for another two hours and reached Rumgong. It was a small town, and there were a few Christians. They had gathered in the quarters of Mr Joseph, a Hindi teacher in the higher secondary school. He had made a partition in his living room and had made a prayer room. We celebrated the Divine Eucharist there. After supper, we all talked for a while, and by 10 pm, they left for their respective homes. Fr Paulson and I stayed in their house. The next day morning, we blessed the house and went to Boleng.

That day we rested, and Fr Paulson informed that we would be going to another two villages tomorrow. We started to those villages in the early morning. And we reached a bridge by 7.20 am. It was a hanging bridge made of bamboo across Siang. There was a village across the river called Sissen, and the road connectivity is from the other side, which will take an extra twenty kilometres each side than this route. So we crossed the bridge on foot and climbed mountains almost four kilometres to reach that village. Four families in that village gathered together in the house of the abbu pastor. We celebrated the Divine Eucharist there, and by 3 pm, we moved to another village called Pangin. We celebrated the Holy Eucharist in a family, and about seven people were there. A lady from the Baptist denomination had come with her niece suffering from autism and requested our prayers. We left there by 7.30 pm and headed to Boleng. On our way back, we received a call from the anne pastor of Boleng, who informed us that a girl of our parish was sick and requested our prayers. So we went to her house and prayed there for two hours. The whole days were tiresome, but the joy we find in the faithful gives us pastoral contentment. We may not be able to visit them regularly, but a few such visits can charge up our days.

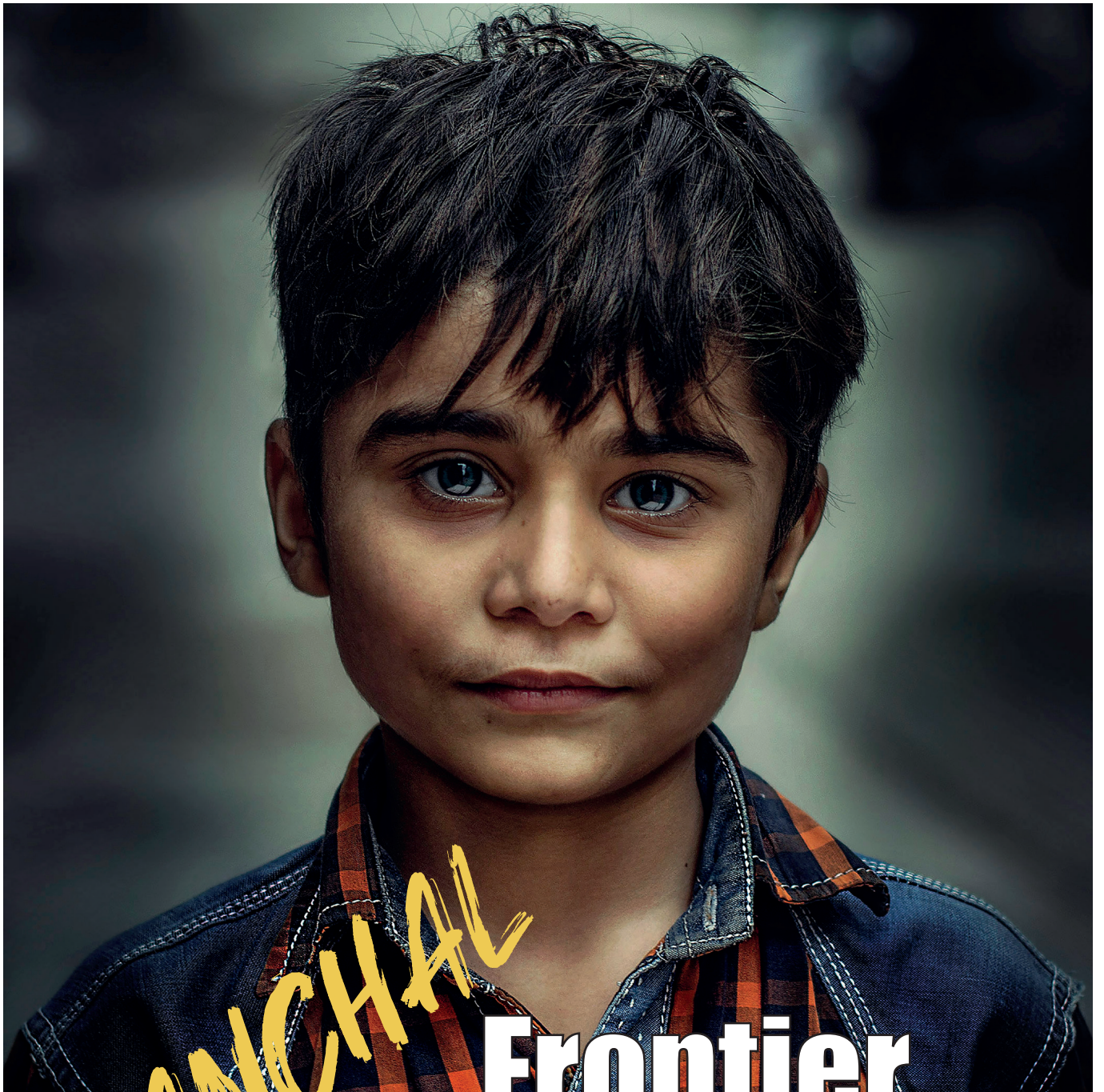
In the first incident about paddy cultivation, I said how fertile the land was. Nevertheless, my experiences made me realise that the land was fecund to sow the Word of God. The people are very receptive, and they are very cooperative. The only thing is that we need to adapt ourselves to their culture and devise an appropriate methodology. People are ready to take care of us; they will provide everything for us, but all we need is dedication and commitment. Frs Paulson, Shaju, Cejo, Martin and Lijo are doing a great job there, and I could experience the fruits of their effort. However, as the evangelist says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Mt 9:37).



**Paul Manikkathuparambil CMI**  
Delhi







AANCHAL

Frontier  
Missionary



**Anil Mathew CMI  
Bhopal**

Children are an indispensable resource for the future, and never a threat toward the environment,” said Pope Francis. The very inception of Aanchal is deep rooted on the command of Jesus and in tune with the teachings of the church; ‘do not stop the children because they are indispensable resource of the future’. The relevance of Aanchal as a frontier mission proves its existence when it caters its service to the most vulnerable children of the society.

‘Aanchal’ is the frontier mission of CMI St. Paul’s Province Bhopal, initiated in 2010 for rehabilitating street/ slum/ railway platform children in and around Bhopal. Aanchal is a Hindi word which means the edge of saree and defines as mothers love and care extended to children in distress. This word is often referred to Mother Mary who protected and nurtured Infant Jesus in difficult circumstances beneath her Aanchal.

The major thrust of this initiative is to integrate them to the mainstream of the society. In this process Aanchal provides wings to their dreams by addressing various issues related to them and reinstating their lost childhood. Today the government has some institutional services provided to street children, but that covers only a meagre part of the total street children in Bhopal City. Street children are regularly arrested and referred to child welfare centres but these centres function more like detention establishments where opportunities for real social rehabilitation are lacking. Presently Aanchal is collaborating with the government, non-government organizations, well-wishers and guardians who are engaged with the similar activities for children especially those who are in need of care and protection and with those juveniles who are in conflict with the law. We are addressing the issues related to health, hygiene, shelter and formal and non-formal education.

## Learning through Participation

Frontier mission with most vulnerable children was a long-cherished dream of St. Paul Province Bhopal. In 2010

when we initiated this mission, we were in an infancy stage. Therefore, we collaborated with likeminded organization and childcare institutions to learn the basic requirements and legal process of working with children. Initially we collaborated with the organization named Bachpan which was involved in the activity of rescue and rehabilitation of children who are in need of care and protection, in the vicinity of Bhopal Railway station. Thereafter we collaborated with the Government Childcare institutions in order to enhance the activities and programmes of the centre. Our collaboration with the government childcare institutions enabled us to built-up rapport with the Department of Women and Child Development.

## Network with Child Care Institutions

The juvenile Justice Act has categorized children in difficult circumstance in to two categories. One ,Children who are in need of care and protection. Two, children who are in conflict with the law. At the very early stage of our frontier mission we were privileged to get an opportunity to formally work with both these categories. We were formally invited to work with these children which was running by the government agencies.

The inmates of this institution are who are in need of care and protection, mostly platform children, street children, abandoned children and those who ran away from the families for various reasons. From this institution the Child Welfare Committee initiates the process of rehabilitation in consultation with the parents and the children, giving priority to the best interest of the child. These children remain here till the process of rehabilitation is completed or until they reach the age of eighteen. These children were not having any opportunity to interact with the outside world due to the legal issues. Our intervention made a breakthrough in this institution when we planned sustainable programmes for the inmates. Since 2011, we were focusing on such programmes that can sustain and have lasting effect on the life of these under-privileged children. Our initiative is to reinstate the lost childhood of these innocent blooming buds and bring them back to the main stream of the society. Activities in the Centre are Summer Camp, Winter Camp, Skill Trainings, Health Camp and Home Placement.

The inmates of this centre are those juvenile (under 18) who are in conflict with the law, some are habitual offenders and some of them are victimized due to the circumstances. We provide our services in the centre in order to create an atmosphere where children can enjoy their childhood and absorb constructive values. Since 2011, we have been regular in providing our service to this centre. We have consciously decided to work for the welfare of these children because seldom to people turn up to this institution due to the social stigma. Activities in the Centre are Motivational Classes, Yoga & Meditation, Celebration of the Festivals, Awareness Classes, Entertainment Programmes, Health Check-up and Treatment and Training for self-employment. On a regular basis, we bring resource persons to the centre



to train the inmates for self-employment. Such trainings are useful for children as they can make use of these as a source of income in the future. Our personal interaction with staff and children reveals the nature of individuals in the centre. As per the need, we take up each case in order to address their issues within the limit of our capacity. There are children in the Observation Home who come from very poor families. Some are here for a long time with minor issues. With the support of the local authority, we make frequent home visits to such families and counsel the parents and neighbours to accommodate them into the family and community. In this process of community-based rehabilitation, we realize the need of participation of family and community or else such deviant children may tend to become habitual offenders.

## Programme for Slumdweller

Aanchal has selected seven slums in Bhopal city and one in Narsinghpur to implement child protection programmes and address various issues related to children. Through various activities we cater to the needs of the people with a special focus on Education, Food and Health. The slums are: 1) Kakada Crusher Slum, Ayodhya Bypass, 2) Aderi Crusher Slum, Ayodhynagar, 3) Govindpura Slum, 4) Arjun Nagar, 5) Kolua 6) Padariya and 7) Mushran Van Narsinghpur.

Around three hundred children and their families are benefiting from the programme.

**Aanchal provides wings to their dreams by addressing various issues related to them and reinstating their lost childhood. Today the government has some institutional services provided to street children, but that covers only a meagre part of the total street children in Bhopal city.**

## Aanchal Railway Childline

Amidst the competitions between the NGOs Aanchal has been selected from Bhopal to implement the newly launched programme, Railway Childline Project. I understand it as a reward to our frontier mission Aanchal for its selfless services extended in the field of child protection. It was in 2016 the CHILDLINE India Foundation appointed us as collaborative agency to implement the new project called Railway CHILDLINE - Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) at Bhopal Railway Station. Basically, it is a joint project of the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Railway Board of Government of India. The team consists of 12 staff to provide 24x7 service at the station conducting outreach programmes and open house meetings. We have established an office (Child Help Desk) at platform num-

ber one. The financial assistance is provided by the Ministry of Women and Child Development Department through CHILDLINE. Since December 2016 onwards we have been actively involved in the project and we have rescued 2000 children from railway station premises. Most of the children except 20, we have restored to their own respective families.

It was a great recognition for frontier mission Aanchal when we were asked to take up another CHILDLINE project in Narsinghpur. Since the CHILDLINE India Foundation was greatly impressed by the performance of Aanchal Railway CHILDLINE Bhopal they have requested us to extend our service to another district, Narsinghpur, from 2018. This project is slightly different from Railway CHILDLINE. It is a district CHILDLINE covering the entire district of Narsinghpur, i.e. five tehsils and 1052 villages. The major interventions are awareness generation among the public regarding the 24x7 emergency help line 1098, Child Protection Programmes, Rights of Children, Rescue and Rehabilitation, Campaign against Child Marriage and Child Labour. Till the date of reporting, we have rescued 1200 children.

The focus of outreach programme is to spot those children who freshly land up at the railway station/bus stands from their families and to address the issues of those children who need care and protection. The main rationale behind this initiative is to reduce the rapidly increasing number of street children and save them from nefarious elements existing in the society. Every day a number of trains pass through the city railway stations. Our effort here is to identify those children who freshly land up at the station and save them from the malicious elements. We have appointed staff 24x7 who observe the movement of children found in difficult circumstances. We identify such children, approach them in a friendly manner and tactically enquire their details. After identifying the need of the children, we register their names and details and initiate the process of rehabilitation. If it is a runaway child from home for trivial reason, we immediately contact the parents and entrust the child with necessary counseling.

The family tracing is initiated by the very information received from the child. If we get proper information, we contact the family directly. If the information is vague, then we contact the nearby police station and collect the details of the family. If the child is a minor and unable to reveal the details of the family, we accompany the child to the destination and get the help of local authority to trace the family. After tracing the family we ask the guardian / parents to bring along with them a valid identity proof to substantiate the relationship with the child. If the provided information is correct then we entrust the child to the parent after giving adequate counseling to them. In case parents are unable to reach the child then we take the child to his / her home town and place the child after gathering the necessary document from the family. If the child is not willing to go back home due to extremely unfavorable living condition, then we keep the child in the Child Care Institute.





A residential rehabilitation centre was the dream of our frontier mission. The children who are rescued and rehabilitated from the Railway platforms remains with us only a short span of time. As they are legally bound with the formal procedures, we don't get sufficient time to address their real issues. The purpose of establishing this centre is to create some role models from the peripheries to empower their communities. The inmates of this centre is meant for girl children especially from slum / platform / street etc. We will provide formal education integrated with Multi- skill training and job oriented programmes. Aanchal Children's Home, Tharasevania, Bhopal was inaugurated on 23rd February 2020 by His Grace Most Rev. Leo Cornelio SVD. The powerful intercession of 'Aanchal Mata - Mother Mary' performed a wonderful miracle by inspiring Fr. Thomas Arakkaparambil and Mrs. Gabrele to mobilize resources to build the home for children. The Aanchal Children's Home became function since 2021. At present we have 26 girl children residing in our Children's home from slum street and area and having formal education in Prakash Vidhyalaya and one is enrolled for Diploma in Mechanical Engineering.

Aanchal Aasra is sheltering home for the cancer affected children and their families situated near AIIMS, Bhopal. This center has been functional since 1st July 2021. The purpose this centre is to provide accommodation and food for the families of cancer affected children who are undergoing treatment at AIIMS Bhopal. This initiative is a humble effort in participating the healing ministry of Jesus "At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them" (Lk 4:40). Most of the patients who are coming from faraway places face difficulty in finding a shelter for the temporary stay due to financial crisis and related issues. Such families are already facing lots of challenges to meet the both ends. At a time, we can accommodate 16 families together with decent accommodation and food. So far 50 families have been benefitted from these humble initiatives and the beneficiaries experience it as God's own blessing.

This humble initiative is to reach out to every child who is in difficult circumstances. As per the command of Jesus "never stop the children", we would like to enable children to dream for their future. Aanchal is destined to provide wings to their dreams. We are privileged to get the wholehearted collaboration of a good number of well-wishers in nurturing the future these vulnerable children. As a resource centre a good number of social work students are gaining motivation and professionals social work from Aanchal. We also sensitize people to create a child friendly nation by being sensitive to the issues of children.





*My Peru*  
*Mission*

**For**  
**Mission**



**Jimmy Kalathil CMI  
Kottayam**

Peru is a unique country in terms of its mesmerizing architecture and fascinating cultural diversities. It is the third largest country in South America situated in its western part and shares borders with Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, and Chile. It is home to 12 UNESCO World heritage spots; some of them are, Andes mountains, Amazon rainforest, Colca Canyon, Coricancha, Cusco, Huaca Pucallana, Machu Picchu, Lake Titicaca, Lima, Pisco, Santa Catalina Monastery, Sacred Valley, Trujillo, mind-boggling festivals, etc. Spanish is the official language though it has 40 plus dialects. Peruvian independence was declared in 1821 from the Spanish colonization. But this country still holds the reminiscence of its incredible Inca Civilization.

The foreign mission in Peru started with the hard work of the three pioneering CMI missionaries, Fr Mathew Alphonse Chakamkunnel, Fr Jose Mundackal, and Fr Joseph Malayampuram in 1975. Peru mission has been entrusted to Kottayam St. Joseph province and a new team of missionaries under the leadership of Fr. Mathew Alphonse was sent to the mission in September 1989. They started working in Arequipa diocese. From the 1990s onwards missionaries were sent to Peru to revive the mission effectively and efficiently. During the period from 1990-2003, a few more priests were sent to different parishes of various dioceses in Peru. In 2003 the mission was erected as a subregion (San Mateo Sub Region) which got legal identity in Peru. At present, 17 Priests are working in Peru in 9 parishes in the dioceses of Chosica, Arequipa, Piura, and Kamana. For effective training and enhancing mission aptitude among Scholastics, brothers under formation are also being sent to Peru mission for Regency and Theological studies; so far 9 brothers have gone to the mission and spent their time very effectively acquiring quality experiences.

Peruvians are friendly and enjoy their diversity and culture with immense preparation and importance. They are thrilled to welcome visitors and Priests to their country and find great happiness in helping them. Peru is a Catholic country with a catholic population of 90%. But only less than 10% of them come to Church and participate in church activities. Baptism is com-

mon and almost all get baptized. Catechism and faith formation are part of their curriculum. Holy Communion and Confirmation are celebrated solemnly but at times as a routine because the basic religious education is not transferred properly. More evidently, we can sense that family bonds and relationships are fragile. It is the fundamental cause behind the deterioration of the Church. Peru has no sufficient Pastors to take care of the faithful. The Catholic Church in Peru is suffering from the scarcity of priests and religious. This country thirsts for true Pastors. There is a tremendous possibility and space for evangelization in Peru. The Church in Peru as well as the entire Latin American countries are waiting for committed Pastors.

Agricultural diversity and multitudes of global culinary influences have helped to make Peruvian food one of the tastiest and most interesting cuisines in the world. Peru was named the “World’s Leading Culinary Destination” for the sixth year in a row by the World Travel Awards. Peru’s cuisine evolved through the fusion of indigenous Peruvian cultures, Spanish colonization, Arab/Moorish influences, the arrival of slaves from Africa, and Japanese and Chinese immigrants. This historical integration led to unique food cultures and cuisines. Peru has the widest variety of potatoes in the world. Peruvian food consists of all kinds of meats, seafood, spices, vegetables, carbs, and dairy products from all around the world. At the same time, many of their ingredients only grow in Peru, like aji amarillo (Peruvian yellow pepper), which is present in most dishes and give them a characteristic flavor. It’s a tradition to eat on the eve of Christmas turkey, applesauce, and, of course, the Peruvian national cocktail, Pisco Sour.

Peru has a very rich culture with varieties of grand celebrations. Typical dances, acts of religious devotion, food, music, and drinks are the important elements of each festival in Peru. Since it is a catholic country almost all the feasts are related to Catholic traditions like Christmas, Easter, Semana Santa-Holy week, Corpus Christi, Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, various Feasts of Mother Mary like La Virgen de la Candelaria, La Virgen de Chapi, La Virgen de Carmen, Pachamama Raymi (Mother Earth), Santa Rosa de Lima, San Martin de Porres, all saints and souls’ day, Fiesta de la Vendimia; a 10-day long festivity that takes place in Ica, comprising of colorful street processions, dancing, grape stomping, etc. “Fiesta del Señor de Los Milagros” (Feast of the Lord of Miracles) is celebrated all around Peru, especially in the capital city Lima with one-month-long celebrations which conclude with a 24-hour long procession of lakhs of people. October is MesMorado (or purple month) in Lima, Peru, and the faithful dress from head to toe in purple as a sign of their devotion to El Señor de Los Milagros (the Lord of Miracles). Tens of thousands of the faithful dressed in purple tunics, sing hymns and pray as they accompany a huge two-tonne litter that bears the painting of Christ from the church of Las Nazarenas. The smell of incense and the steady beating of drums add to the solemn atmosphere as the procession winds its way along the nar-



The culture of celebration has highly affected their morality and even religious feasts are an occasion for enjoyment and mere fun. Though this culture of celebration and drawbacks alone should not be the grounds on which we evaluate Peruvians, morality is indeed weak in almost all walks of life and it affects their family life, the mental health of the children, religious observances, and marital bond. Increasing divorces point to instability in families. This is where the relevance of mission work comes in. We need to look forward to making the Peruvian Church sustainable and fruitful through committed and qualified missionaries. We serve them in religious matters, help them grow and mature in faith, mold them in day-to-day life, and cater to their holistic development. Paying heed to the mission mandate of Jesus we nurture this mission land. It is a divine yet challenging call to be instruments in the hands of God. No matter whether the situations are favorable or not, God can do wonders. We put in our best and God makes it Zen percent. That's what the great saga of the CMI mission in Peru reveals. In the letter to the Romans, St. Paul writes: "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:14-15). People cannot look to Jesus for eternal life if they don't believe in him. They can't believe in him unless they have heard about him and they can't hear about him unless someone tells them. We the CMIs are in the land of Peru with this spirit of St. Paul, cherishing a profound legacy and the noble heritage of the forefathers of our congregation and the Church. Let the zeal and passion of these forefathers continue to inspire us.





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*Ashram  
Experience*

**Best  
Practices**





**Jose Eroorickal CMI  
Jagdalpur**

Karunyagiri, the Mount of Mercy, an ashram, near Vagamon, Kerala is worth visiting to make spiritual nourishment and to feel the touch of God in nature. It is initiated in 2006 by George Edayadiyil CMI, the present Provincial of CMI St. Joseph province of Kottayam. Personally, I feel that Karunyagiri has some significance to the first religious house founded at Mannanam by our founding fathers. It is symbolically known as Besrauma. St. Chavara called Besrauma passionately describing it as a zone where heaven and earth meet. Consequently, it became the epicenter of the spiritual revolution initiated by St. Chavara. Besrauma literally means 'a house on the hilltop'. It is a zone for the seekers of God. It aims to provide for people who are in need of God's mercy. This article is a result of my personal visit and stay at Karunyagiri on many occasions. The recent one-week life there inspired me to share my personal experiences.

Karunyagiri is situated on the side of Vagamon - Pullikkanam - Kanjar - Thodupuzha way. One could find its location between Pullikkanam and Kanjar, right 10 km from Vagamon and 2 km from Pullikkanam. It is 32 kms away from Thodupuzha on the way via Kanjar to Vagamon. The Ashram is surrounded by a lot of mountains with tea plantations and valleys. Vagamon is very famous for a long time due to the presence of the Benedictine Ashram founded by the late Francis acharya, a Belgian missionary. This ashram is popularly known as Kurishumala ashram. From my infancy days, I know that there was a tradition of our faithful from faraway places going to Kurishumala on Great Lenten time, especially on the 40th Friday of the Lenten season. I have also gone many times there during my childhood days.

Normally, Vagamon and Pullikkanam are filled with clouds, fog, and freeze winds. The particular weather attracts a lot of tourists. They come from different parts of the world to enjoy its enchanting sceneries and several beautiful resorts. The weather and nature are very conducive for fruitful spiritual nourishment for people who are in search of spending some time in peace and silence. The careful listening to the chirpings of different birds, and the serene flow of water streams through the valleys down around the ashram are some special features. They lead us to reflect and experience the beauty and value of God's creation. The people here are mostly employed in tea plantations and they are mostly from the nearby state of Tamilnadu. Some are hired from the northeastern part of India.

Formerly, as we know collecting tea leaves by people was done so calmly by hand, but at present, the tea farmers make use of a particular cutter to harvest the leaves. The sounds of working with these cutters by hundreds of daily workers, give a particular rhythm that echoes in our ears so beautifully.

## **BETHRAUMA- Community on the Hilltop**

For CMI religious, Besrauma is a spiritual condition, in which people are set apart to lead a life of Contemplation. It is entirely meant for people who profess the vows of charity, obedience, and poverty. They consider community life as a fourth vow, but not professed as a vow. The inner sense of Besrauma 'house on the hilltop' leads us to ponder over a life different from the ordinary. The founding fathers of the CMI congregation visualized the lifestyle of the inmates of Besrauma as different from the ordinary life in the world. The religious life itself is a life of renunciation rooted in intense prayer and contemplation for a life aiming at the union with God. When the founding fathers approached Bp. Maurellius Stabilini, the vicariate of Varapuzha for the permission to start the religious congregation, he had some displeasure for their choice of religious life because they were prominent priests in pastoral ministry in those times. Bishop advised them, but not hurting their dreams of a religious community- Besrauma, to lead a life simultaneously making themselves available for the pastoral needs of the people. Hence our founding fathers continued the pastoral ministry keeping religious life as their priority. For St. Chavara, life in Besrauma was a call to live in a mystical union with Christ. Fr. Paul Kalluveetil CMI in his talk in reference to the Letters, VII/6 written by St. Chavara gave a very meaningful interpretation: "Abiding (pŕrkal) in the love of Jesus Christ, sitting always before His eyes (kanmunbilirikkal), walking near to Him (arikenadakkal), and conversing always with Him (thannodukûde samsarikkal)". These four acts of prayer are the fundamental lifestyle in the spiritual symbolism of Besrauma.

## **KARUNYAGIRI - Mount of Mercy**

It is a mountain for experiencing God's mercy through spiritual reflection. This centre is open to all. It welcomes Christian and non-Christian people alike who desire to spend their time in silence, prayer, and interiority focusing on and sharing the compassionate mission of Jesus. The chaotic, confusing, busy, and complex world disturbs the life of many. Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" [Mt 11:28-30]. Again, the assuring words of Jesus to the seekers of peace we read in the gospel of St. John, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" [Jn 14:27].

Jesus Christ was merciful and compassionate to all who approached him. The sinful woman; tax collectors like Mathew, the apostle, and Zacchaeus; and lepers and others who were disregarded, rejected, and marginalized in society found peace in the merciful and compassionate heart of our Lord.

Our forefathers were limited to do certain social ventures in their times as they were limited to the walls of religious life. Though they were very zealous in their pastoral ministries, they had their own limitation in attending to the needs of the common man. Karunyagiri is a symbol of the realization of our forefathers' zeal for facilitating spiritual needs.

Karunyagiri, as the motto, "Seekers on the Way" suggests, is a place for the seekers of God. It aims to provide the people who are in need and in search of God's mercy. Karunyagiri has four Ashrams, namely, Sangha Ashram (Community Zone), Mauna Ashram (Silent Zone), Vana Ashram (Forest Zone) and Karunya Ashram (Mercy Zone). These four together constitute the vision of Karunyagiri: "All from God, All to God." This centre is a gift of God and all are welcome to experience their own life and the life in Karunyagiri as gifts of God.

## Objectives of the Ashram

Karunyagiri has outlined the objectives based on the following aspects. It is a place open to all seekers (of God) who are in search of integral renewal and awakening - cultural, psychological, theological, intellectual, and spiritual. Anyone who is searching for renewal and awakening is welcome to come and stay in Karunyagiri without any charge: "God will provide". But all are welcome to share their resources to sustain and develop the various zones and their functions for the benefit of the people and for the glory of God. Karunyagiri focuses on simple living and noble thinking. The ashram follows a simple lifestyle with vegetarian food and there will be only minimum needed physical structures.

## Lifestyle

The ashram is well maintained by the inmates there, namely, the Animator and the two scholastics. At present Fr Joice Madukkakuzhy CMI is the Animator. He is assisted by Bro. Shanto and Bro. Arun. Fr Animator is a regular professor at St Joseph's College, Arakulam which is about 15 kms away from Karunya-giri. The college is run by the CMI fathers of St. Joseph province Kottayam. Scholastics are regular students at the same college. The simple, friendly, open, gentle, and welcoming behavior of the animator and scholastics are really remarkable and one experiences Jesus' merciful and compassionate presence there. The ashram provides simple and tasty vegetarian food. One will enjoy the food that they serve. The cook, Mr Manoj is a happy, generous, and welcoming person who enjoys people's presence in the centre. Karunyagiri provides moderate, but useful and

needed facilities. The accommodation facilities are very much commendable and appreciated.

## Spiritual Nourishments

At present, the ashram has no organized retreat schedule of its own but permits any Christian groups to have preached retreats provided the group finds the resource persons of their own choice. The ashram makes available space for praying, preaching, food, and accommodation facilities. The ashram also permits people to have self-recollection. There are different huts and houses to stay according to one's own timetable but in tune with the common timetable and the rules and ways of the Ashram. Even the lifestyle of the birds of the Ashram gives us the feeling that they are involved in the proclamation of good news.

## Way of the Cross and the Way to Glory

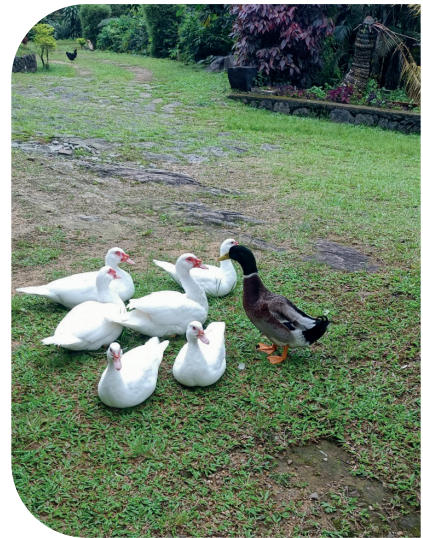
Another attraction of the ashram is the experience of passing through the way of the cross, which is designed by the local parish. Adjacent to the Ashram, there is a small Capella of the parish at the beginning of the way of the cross to the high mountain peak. I think this way of the Cross is a unique one because of its height which is rarely found. The people who visit this place would be more passionate and adventurous to climb on this mount by reflecting on the passion of our Lord.

Within Karunyagiri there are fifteen stations of "the way to glory" beginning with creation and reaching Parusia designed based on the key events of the Bible. Some huge stones are placed on the way to the end far extreme of the land. But they are yet to be completed. The stations are Creation (Gen 1:31); the Call (Gen 12:2b); Slavery (Ex 8:1b); the Way (Ex 13:21); the Kingdom and the Temple (2 Sam 7:12-14); the Exile and Return (Jer 31:10b); the Promise of the Messiah (Is 53:5); the Birth of Messiah (Lk 2:12); the Baptism of Sinners (Lk 3:22); the Mission (Lk 4:18-19); the Passion and the Death (Ps 22:1); the Resurrection (Rom 8:21); the Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4a); the New Community (Acts 4:32); and Parousia (Rev 21:1-3).

I happened to visit Karunyagiri about 10 years ago. My friend George Edayadiyil CMI, the founder of Karunyagiri invited me to visit the place. In my curiosity, I made up my mind to visit the place and stay for some days. As I was working in Chhattisgarh the months of April and May was a suitable time for me to visit Karunyagiri. I spent two days with Fr George there in its infancy stage. It was a great time to be there and I enjoyed going around the captivating and serene hills and spending time in prayer. My second visit also happened to be at the same time during the last summer season. I went to spend a week in prayer and reflection. At that time, there was also a group of scholastics belonging to Kottayam province. Many come to Karunyagiri to experience the nature-friendly area and to taste silence and serenity. I think they all enjoy the serene and solitary nature of Karunyagiri.



A genuine and sincere determination to spend time will result in a positive outcome. You are the light of the world. No one can hide the house on the hilltop. Karunyagiri is dedicated to the Lord of Mercy, Jesus the Word Incarnate. Karunyagiri is a testimony for many seekers of God to experience the compassionate heart of Jesus in a nature-friendly, silent, and serene atmosphere. In a broken world that seeks peace and joy, Karunyagiri is a symbol of Christian witnessing of the compassionate heart of Jesus. As CMI brethren, let us encourage others to visit and make use of this Mercy Mount, Monte Pieta. Everyone who seeks true peace, joy, and silence of the heart let them have it.





## Pan African Conference and Jubilee at Namibia

The silver jubilee celebration of St Charles Lawanga seminary, Namibia as well as of the CMI presence was held on 13 January 2023. Archbishop Peter Bryan Wells, the Apostolic Nuncio to Namibia was the main celebrant for the jubilee Mass. Archbishop of Windhoek Archdiocese and Chairman of the Namibian Bishops' Commission, Rt Rev. Dr. Liborius Liborius Ndumbukuti Nashenda along with the Bishops of Namibia and from the neighbouring Southern African Countries concelebrated the Holy Mass. Rev. Fr Thomas Chathamparampil CMI, Prior General, Fr Josey Thamarassery CMI, Vicar General, Rev. Fr Biju Vadakkal CMI, Councilor for social work, Rev. Fr James Thayyil CMI, Provincial- St Xavier's Province, Rajkot and many CMI Priests participated in the celebration. Representatives from the central cabinet of the Ministers, civil authorities and political leaders of Namibia attended the celebration. Congratulations to Rev. Fr Taiju Thaliyath CMI, Rector and the entire team for your selfless mission work!



Please send information on releasing books, videos, Apps and its images for the next issue before 25 November 2020

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## Silver Jubilee of St Theresa Mission, Kenya

The silver jubilee of CMI presence of Preshitha Province in Kenya was celebrated with great sense of accomplishment and gratitude. Reverend Bishops of Meru and Embu, Rev. Fr Biju Vadakkal CMI- General Councilor for Social work, Rev. Fr Saju Chakkalackal CMI- Provincial & Council Team, Rev. Fr Anto Thekudan CMI- St Thomas CMI Regional Superior and members, political leaders and benefactors of the mission participated in the celebration. The blessing of the foundation stone for St Chavara Orphanage Home to be built at Jua Kali also took place during the Jubilee celebration. Congratulations for the teamwork of missionaries in St Theresa Mission, Kenya.



## Chavara Museum, Mannanam

The launching of the first phase of Chavara Museum at Mannanam was held on 20 January 2023. Mr V N Vasavan, Minister for Cooperation and Registration, Kerala Government was the chief guest and inaugurated the launching ceremony. Rev. Fr Thomas Chathamparampil CMI, Prior General, Fr Josey Thamarassery CMI, Vicar General, General Council, Rev. Fr Sebastian Chamathara CMI, Provincial- St Joseph's Province, Trivandrum blessed the ceremony with their presence. An agency called MagicTail is helping to realize the project of the Museum.



## Image Gallery



The Launching of Chavara Museum



With Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Peter Bryan Wells and Pan African Meeting in Namibia



Renewal Programme in USA



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