



# PUNECAR

CHAVARA YEAR SPECIAL EDITION  
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**St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara** has left legacy 150 years back and even today it has its pristine glory and relevance. Hence Chavara Jubilee Year is another golden opportunity to imbibe the vision of St. Kuriakose Elias and to share with others his noble vision for the growth and welfare of the family, Church and the society at large. His Golden Rule was 'Let there be no day in your life in which you did no good to others'. He initiated the religious movement in order to do all the possible good guided by the Spirit. Being so committed to the Church and its mission, he thought and felt with the Church to do all the good for the greater glory of God.

If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. St. Chavara looked at the society and had the altruistic eyes to see the pain in their hearts and tears on their cheeks. The silence of the helpless and the violence of the powerful, the divisions within the society, lack of opportunity for education, and the kind of darkness within the society disturbed him and the holy disturbance took him to the Lord. The Lord guided him and the Lord went ahead of him. He chanted, "God's will always and everywhere". He had a life truly immaculate and he was inspired by the inner voice of the divine echoed during the time of the meditation and prayer in front of the Eucharistic Lord. He defended the faith, established seminaries and schools, founded religious congregation for men and women, designed the printing press. He wrote poems, drama, history and all what is required to develop the then Catholic Community.

Chavara is no more a name of a family. It is a legacy, a legacy of integrating the mystery of the prayer and mastery of our apostolic mission and ministry. His fervent, recollected prayer life which activated his apostolate and the apostolate which enriched his prayer life – is the true model for a religious missionary. While we celebrate Chavara Jubilee Year, let us tune our ears and hearts to the music of the Lord and dance with him to a gospel of joy to all.

Congratulations to the editorial team of PUNECAR. May St. Kuriakose Elias of Holy Family intercede and bless you and your family in order to make your family the heaven on earth. Though St. Chavara left us in 1871, his legacy never dies. "Do you not know that a man is not dead while his name is still spoken?" (Terry Pratchett)



# He is Ever Alive & His Legacy Goes on



**Rev. Fr. Paul Achandy CMI**  
Prior General



# ST. CHAVARA A MAN OF DEEP AND INTENSE GOD EXPERIENCE



**Fr. Joy Puthussery CMI**  
Rector

**St. Chavara** is a person of manifold achievement. What could be the reason behind his manifold achievement? It's his intimate fellowship with Jesus endowed him with a graceful existence. He had nothing except the joy of belonging to Jesus. St Chavara writes in one of his letters; "Above all learn the art of loving Jesus, stay constantly in his presence, and walk along with him, converse with him continuously."

St. Chavara built up his life on the foundation stone that God was his loving Father and he was His beloved son. The merits of his Abba experience brought abundance of blessings for the people of God in various ways of all the ages. The life of St. Chavara extends an inspiring invitation to all the people of God to be spiritually deep rooted. St.

Chavara lived for everyone in the society especially for voiceless and weaker sections. He was tireless in his mission and fearless in the face of obstacles for the expansion of the Kingdom of God in his life time. Even today his life remains a source of inspiration for all of us.

The late Archbishop Mar Mathew Kavukkattu wrote about Chavara, "Fr. Chavara was a great Christian and a very holy monk. While he most scrupulously lived the life of a religious, dedicated to the love and service of God, the same divine love inspired him to dedicate himself as much as he could, to the lives and service of men".

Let this issue of 'PUNECAR' inspire its readers to achieve an intimate personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus.





# CHAVARA A TRUE MORALIST



Dr. Sony Chundattu CMI  
Principal



**O**xford advanced learner's dictionary defines the term moralist as a person who has strong ideas about moral principles, especially one who tries to tell other people how they should behave or a person who teaches or writes about moral principles. St. Chavara was a true moralist who wrote on the common moral norms that every Christian family should keep. Before one hundred and fifty-two years ago he wrote these things in a very significant letter in which he addressed his own home parish community at Chennangari.

In the preface to this letter he says, 'a disorder family will cause much more sorrows and tears'. Even though this letter was written to a particular Christian community it doesn't mean that it is not for all Christians and in the same way since it was written to a Christian community it does not exclude other religious groups from it.

He had such strong moral fiber to build a new and morally reformed community. For, St. Chavara had strong conviction that the building up of the society should begin from the family and also from the individuals.

From this insight he wrote these things to the families where a person is being molded of. In this letter which is being considered as his death sentence he is giving the moral tips to different realms of life such as precepts for families, love, humility, relatives and friends, industriousness, act of charity, desire for justice, fear of god, patience, good books, days of obligation, daily routine and upbringing of the children.

St. Chavara wrote this by realizing the social situations and the minds of the people of his time. It is true that man is being evolved every now and then. But the moral norms that St. Chavara put forward even before one hundred and fifty two years ago is very important even in today's context. Mar George Cardinal suggested this as the Magna Carta for the families. Let this moral norms inspire us to lead a moral life and to become a good examples of morality in our society.





**Fr. Anish Cheruthanickal CMI**  
Administrator

# A SALUTE -DEAR FATHER!

I admire St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara for his '*Iswara Sadhana*' and '*Paropakara*'. He lived for the glory of God, sacrificing himself for the welfare of the all. I would like to summarize my thoughts on him as follows:

St. Chavara was an ardent seeker of God. He dedicated himself to a '*Sanyasa*'. His vision and mission are fulfilled with the establishment of CMI and CMC religious congregations, where hundreds aim for '*Iswara Sakshatkara*'.

St. Chavara had the wisdom to realize the need for sensitivity in society. Therefore, he was deeply involved in the spiritual enlightenment, social empowerment and economic well-being of the poor. The life of Chavara is an invitation for me to live an active, caring life.

He was a virtuous man, who always stood for love and unity. His inclusive way of life is a great inspiration for me. His '*Nishkama Prema*' made him available for all and his '*Nishkama karma*' was his adoration for God. I feel the need to express unconditional love, whenever I think about him.

The interior silence of St. Chavara is the beauty of his spiritual life. He spoke to God in silence and spent long hours of meditation. He was not a man involved in social work, but his '*Paropakara*' was the expression of his constant God experience. He motivates me to seek proper darsana to see God and recognize Him in others.

I feel the compassionate heart of Chavara is like a lighted candle, which eradicates the darkness. The brightness of the life occurs in a heart filled with love, care, concern and compassion. I know that adding CMI to my name, does not make me a religious man. It is the life of love, that I lead, that proves my existence as a religious.

St. Chavara was a man of joy and contentment. He has written several books in prose as well as in verse with a unique spiritual vision.

St. Chavara for me is not only the founder of my congregation but also a real inspiration and motivation to lead a life with a God experience and to share these good experiences with others.

A Salute to you dear father!







Remi R. Vadakkan CMI

## Editorial Message

# *If not we, who then?!!!...*

“Do whatever he tells you.” (Jh. 5:2b)

This is a very familiar verses for all of us by Mother Mary in the gospel. St. Chavara the spiritual son of Mother Mary listened to His voice every now and then through his contemplations and tried to implement all the inspirations that he had received from Him, by saying “kannil kattapetta nanmakaloke”. His uncountable moments of meditative reflections with the Eucharistic Lord turned in to uncountable virtues for uncountable number of people and generations.

Today (10/02/2020) we are in two hundred and fifteenth birthday of this great saint and more over that we are celebrating this year as the Chavara Year; in commemoration of his one fiftieth death anniversary.

This special edition of ‘Punecar’ is a special invitation for all of us to read, meditate and reflect, and

proclaim the person of St. Chavara to this world. If not we, who then? It is our duty and privilege to proclaim his life and work through our actions and deeds.

To this world St. Chavara was dead and gone before 150 years ago, but, he is immortal in the minds of many. He was born to this world by the union of two human minds and body but he was born in many human minds by the union of his mind with the divine Will. Through his life St. Chavara invites us to reflect up on each and every Christ incidents by giving us a model through his own writings. Yes, we need more young and creative minds to read and reflect more about our own father who called the Heavenly Father as ‘Appa’ in order to unravel more secrets. We hope this could be a source of inspiration for many for the very same.



Dn. Subin Kottoor CMI



# Investment of Time

It says, “When you cherish time, you cherish the very soul of this world”. In this busy world it is better to be reminded of that old saying, time and tide waits for no one. As we celebrate 150<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, it would be nice to listen the words of this great soul, regarding the reality of time. In his letter St. Chavara says, “The Lord has given me more time than my ancestors. Though so, this time has not been given for me myself alone, but for others. However, I have not justified this through my actions, is a constant prick to my conscience now.” This reveals two things to us. Primarily the time that is given to us and secondly the task towards the other to be fulfilled within this time limit. Whether we

believe it or not, every one of us has got a time limit and no one of us is powerful enough to stop the march of time or slow it down. That is why the Holy Bible warns us, “For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven” (Eccl 3:1). There is no doubt that we have been given more time and if we are given more, we will be asked more. The key is not in spending time, but in investing it. Now the question is what we invest in it? If we spend time for others, that would be a great investment, since what we do for ourselves alone dies with us but what we do for others lives beyond. Always remember, it is better to die for something than live for nothing.





# THE SIGNET OF THE SPIRIT



Dn. Bobin Kalapurackal CMI

**“You** are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world.” (Mt 5:13-14)

The metaphor of salt and light by Jesus can be used to portray the image of St. Chavara who led both social and spiritual life truthfully. St. Chavara through his social life gave zest to the lives of people as salt add flavor to food and extent spirituality to the world as light on the lamp stand. Therefore his life can be addressed as social salt and spiritual light.

Proper mix of salt with dishes creates more delicious palatable food. St. Chavara was with people and he took dare steps in Kerala irrespective of religious boarders even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His initiatives shows that he was real social salt of the then Kerala who added flavor to the lives of common people. Institution of schools, fight against schisms, activities for woman empowerment, congregations for the church, literature for culture are worth example for his social face. Therefore with

joy we can say that St. Chavara was a social salt for Kerala society.

Light must be placed on lamp stand and it cannot be hidden. Though St. Chavara was among people through his apostolates, he was a spiritual light to the society. Through canonization he was placed on the lamp stand. He was seemed to devote hours before Blessed Sacrament and found as a man of prayer.

Literary works of St. Chavara reflects his spirituality. He lived in a close communion with God and addressed as man of God by people. So in spite of his apostolate he raised himself as spiritual light to the society through Retreats for priests, forty hour adoration, printing pious books and excellent meditations.

St. Chavara is challenging and inspiring us to lead both spiritual and social life truthfully. He was a men with signet of the Spirit.





## chavara - prayag

**Radiance of the merciful prince of God**

**My heart longs to behold!**

**Highest God born of the Virgin Mary**

**My heart longs to behold!**

**Emmanuel, God being united with us**

**My heart longs to behold!**



Dn. Don Edattukaran CMI



# The Twilight before Enlightenment: the Emergence of St. Chavara as a Religious Visionary of Modern Kerala



Dn. Antony Pandikasalavalappil CMI

**St. Chavara** was ever alive to the one 'New' commandment, "love one another as I loved you". An over whelming charity was his characteristic Christian trait. He never grew tired of exhorting others to be extremely desirous of being more loved than feared by others and to count those days as empty which were not filled with services to others. True to his own advice, he saw to it, that his days were spent charitably in works of social uplift, restoration of faith and salvation of souls.

In the Chronicles we meet the honest attempts of Chavara to write only those things that are truthful according to his conviction. Whenever he is in doubt, he leaves little space in the page to be written afterwards. And also in chronicle we meet St. Chavara as a man of vivid memories filled

with gratitude towards his benefactors for his goodness even in little things. Chavara never reasoned whether the people come in to contact with him were poor or rich.

St. Chavara was especially blessed by God who showered on him extraordinary gift. Like Jesus, he was also obedient to his master. He saw Jesus in his neighbors, loved them and helped them. What gives a special character and unity to all his writings is the pastoral and mystical dimension permeating all, whether he wrote chronicles, poems, colloquies, letter or liturgical books. Above all he was a man of spirit. St. Chavara was a religious priest who dedicated himself to love and serve the Lord. At the same time, he committed himself totally with the same love, to love and serve humanity.



# St. Chavara the New Moses of the Indian Christian History



Dn. Kelwin Alookkaran CMI



**Moses** life in the Old Testament history is an iconic figure in terms of Israel's destiny. He was chosen among the thousands to save the people of God from the clutches of Egyptians. 'The red sea bed documentary' by National geography channel, shows the shreds of evidence of the reality that happened 3000 years ago.

As we know that this year, we celebrate the 150th year of the death anniversary of the founder of CMI congregation, St. Chavara. I was sitting and flipping through the pages of the life history of St. Chavara. I amazed at the personal discovery of the similarities found in these two characteristics and that entertained me to write on this topic.

Beginning of Moses life is filled with wonders and difficulties. He was saved by his mother by making infant Moses flow in the River Nile in a basket. He lost his real family and had to live in a palace. St. Chavara had to leave his family even when the plague killed his family members, he took a bold step to be with the Lord and away from his family wealth.

On finding that justice is not prevailing in Egypt prince Moses started fighting against the odds and the cruelties done by Egyptians. In the course of time, Moses had to flee away to another place, as an exile, to save his life. St. Chavara had to move away, in obedience to the bishop, to another parish, leaving the supervision of the construction work at Mananam incomplete.

By the Grace of God Moses saved Israelites from the clutches of Egyptians and took them to the Promised Land. St. Chavara's whole life is a guaranteed witness and example of how he saved many souls from their sins and helped them to climb the eternal ladder to reach the eternal kingdom. Here the land of Canaan is found similar to that of the Kingdom of God.

At Last, Moses had direct experience of God in the burning bush. St. Chavara had direct experience in the living tabernacle of our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus, St. Chavara is the New Moses of the Indian Christian History. We have a lot to learn from his simple, humble and mesmerizing witnessing of our Lord Jesus Christ. May all understand this faith and life. Amen.





# UNTOLD SOCIAL REFORMER: SAINT CHAVARA



Dn. Antony Vallavanthara CMI



**The** Church in India has entered into the 150th death anniversary celebration of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara. He was a spiritual leader unparalleled and unique in the Indian Church history on account of his intense love for the Church and the initiatives he took for its integral growth. His greatest pioneering contribution to the Church in India was very much notable and appreciable, even though, as a paradox, they are forgotten by our flocks. The real source of his entire life, however, of all his services, was his deep spirituality which is developed from his God experience. He turned the impossible into possible by striving for the good of the least which is what a Christian should be. Being a clergy, he never withdrew from the problems of the laity and was the helping hand of Jesus in their lives. That is why he was called ‘man with the signet of the spirit’. The social obligation of every Christian is explained by living his life for others. Here, we can see the liberator role of Jesus played by St. Chavara. The socio-economic life and institutions existed in the traditional society of Kerala in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are not an easy one to understand, especially when we compare it with current scenario. Many social evils have been prevailed in that period and even it is impossible for our generation to understand the seriousness of those practices. Caste system played a huge role in their social system it had withheld a group of people always under the dirty clutches of certain privileged - so called ‘high class people’.

Life becomes meaningful when we live for others. St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara was a man for others, not only for his own time, but also for centuries. He stood for the upliftment of women and the downtrodden. He took pains to bring them to the fore front of the society and proceeded chances to make them educated. St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara is a man who deserves appreciation for the insight, foresight and efforts he made to pinpoint such problems and draw the attention of the society towards it. The reforms he introduced in this field are very significant and relevant. He was the first one to introduce and institute a house of charity (*Upavishala*) for the orphans irrespective of caste, creed or religion. Today everyone pays homage to Mother Teresa for her charitable works. To bring a change in the customary injustice and social discrimination against the poor and the women, he made new steps towards which none had dared or dreamt at that time. He introduced the system ‘Education for all’ irrespective of caste, class or gender. Indeed, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara was an untold Social Reformer who lived an exemplary life for every Christian. The way of social work he showed us was not to become publically attention seekers, but to be with the people in their darkest hours of life and being a part of their lives. The life lived is the biggest speech that a priest can give. I hope that this exemplary life of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara may help us to become a social reformer of our times.





Bro. Bonis  
Karottukizhakkal CMI

## ST. CHAVARA: A Sainly Hero with Thousand Faces

**M**illions of ordinary people are born and die almost every moment, but the heroes of the era and epoch are born out of the sheer stipulation of the rolling wheels of time. God works and He knows how and when the heroes are sent and how they become what God wants them to be. Chavara, a true heroic son of the Church and era in the 19<sup>th</sup> century India, was also chosen and sent by God to manifest His will on earth. Just as every hero of the story has unique stories to offer the world, even Chavara, the source of Ishwara Bhakti, Jnanam, sanctification, inspiration and also the shepherd of his own flocks, dared to take new paths and spanned horizons to show the world how to walk ahead of time by walking hand in hand with God through spiritual sanctity against the vanity of the world without losing out one's baptismal grace until one is called to eternal rest.

The stories Chavara told the world were the stories of change, of devotion of God, of sanctification and salvation of souls and

reformation of society to set it free from its prevailing system of order and belief. He through his stories inspired many to think a new and shared the compelling message which he carved out by his constant companionship with God at the tabernacle and fellowship with his companions. Thus he becomes God's hero, becoming His instrument in sowing the seeds of Gospel in the barren land of 19<sup>th</sup> century Kerala by telling the winning stories of change and sanctification of one's own self.

The heroic journey of Chavara started from the little known place called Kainakari, and grew out of his ardent longing to see the divine which was an amalgamation divine will done through the human hands. It is therefore twofold: an outer journey and an inner journey. The outer journey is his realization of God's will in the mundane everyday existence and the inner journey is his spiritual purification through reconciliation and his longing to see the divine.

St. Chavara was the one who dreamt big things in his brief life. The vision of Chavara transcended time and space. Chavara decreed to start a school attached to every church. This movement

erupted from the thinking that only mere worship and rituals do not constitute spirituality, instead spirituality is significant when there is total liberation of oneself and others.

Chavara was born on par with any ordinary man but proved that he was more than his equals through his constant effort to have the perfection that of his Nalla Appan and now the world remembers him for his sainthood. He indeed was a saintly hero, who knew that he was unworthy and repented for all his infinitesimal mistakes committed before the Lord, his Portion and Cup. The spiritual energy he drew out of his companionship with the Lord fuelled his social apostolate which brought about social transformation at large. Its effect was overwhelming for the spiritual and social transformation of the era he lived in. Chavara indeed knew the Source and was able to bring about spiritual and social changes to the society. This heroic journey he made was not abrupt and impulsive but an unchanging conscious effort to attain perfection through sanctification of one's own soul. It was gradual and impacted the different stages of his life.



# CHAVARA & PRIESTHOOD



“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20).



Bro. Lijo Kumblumootil CMI

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes Holy Orders as ‘The sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time...’ (CCC 1536).

St Chavara was a great visionary, evolutionary and erudite, who played a vital role to change the low face of Kerala culture, into an upbringing face of growth. By having completed of his studies, ordained as diocesan priest to be served the caller, yet deeply understanding the call within a call, looked for a life, which would be more fruitful and meaningful for the needy. That’s why not as diocesan priest, but by becoming a religious priest, joined as well fulfilled the goal of the founding fathers. Thus, being religious, he walked out of the room, where he realized the true need of the people.

He was always ready to teach others and he firmly believed that there will be a radical change in the community and society only through the proper education to the younger generation; focusing this he started a school in Mannanam when there was only the higher class was promoted to gain education. His school was open for all irrespective of caste, creed and gender. When he became the vicar general of then the Nasarani Church he ordered to start a school each close with the parish churches. Above all he was a holy priest who knew the mind of God and the needs of the people and responded towards it in a positive way. So he is loved and respected among the millions of the people in their hearts.

“A priest who is not just fulfilled the entrusted tasks, but went out of the entrusted duties.”





Bro. Linston Olakkengil CMI

## ST. KURIAKOSE ELIAS CHAVARA: MISSION

**The** Catholic Church's mission is to carry out and continue the work of Jesus Christ on Earth. So, all are called to be part of this mission. The Church, and those in it, must share the Word of God and lead a life with full of strength. There are many means to carry out this mission according to the circumstances. St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara was the one who is being aspired by the word of God and produced the effects of grace through whole of his actions. These actions showed the mission of Catholic Church through which Jesus handed over the mission of heavenly Father. Let us see what is meant by Mission. Mission means to do the will of Father. Sometimes we think that mission is something done far away distance from our native places. It shows the wider perspective of human work with respected to the place and culture. It is true that we should do the mission faraway places where there is nobody to take care the faithful. But there is another dimension for the word "MISSION".

Fr. George Kulangara CMI, Rector of Darsana Institute of Philosophy, once in his talk he mentioned the word mission in a different manner. Mission has nothing to do with distant places rather it is the wider perspective of individual response to the society and culture. We have to include and welcome everything unconditionally. Unless or until we understood our people and culture, without any conditions, we cannot get in to the inclusive response in the day today life.

St. Chavara was the one who has the inclusive mind towards the people. Because of that he could open the windows to all and open all the possibilities for the people without discrimination. He was the missionary who took step forward for the new possibilities of lives. Let us imbibe the different mission perspectives of St. Chavara and try to aspire that before we expire from this world.



# CHAVARA: A UNIQUE AND VIBRANT EDUCATIONAL VISIONARY OF KERALA



Bro. Alex Muringayil CMI



**St. Chavara** was a visionary, an innovative front runner and enthusiastic educationalist with prompt initiatives and strategies. His vision of human beings and society are originated from a divine vision. The one who sees God in oneself recognizes the same God in others too; such was his experience. True education is an all inclusive in essence. The education structure and methodologies must respond to multi segment learners with varied approaches. Such education will promote society with equity and dignity. St. Chavara was born and brought up in Kerala at the beginning of nineteenth century. Chavara a man of unique vision and personal charisma could identify the abnormalities existed in the society and the power of education for establishing equity and justice in the society.

The first step of Chavara in the field of education was the establishment of a 'Sanskrit School' in 1846 at Mannanam. As English education of foreign missionaries and common schooling government were denied to poor by the authorities, Chavara's creative mind found Sanskrit the most ancient languages of the world as the best substitute. It is recorded that the Sanskrit school was open for all people irrespective of caste, gender or religion. The concept of universal education of St. Chavara opened a new path; it was an invitation for marginalized to rise to main stream of society. Considering the social situation of the nineteenth century, St. Chavara took commendable steps to raise the living standards of women, Dalits and the downtrodden by educating them and thus enabling them to rise above the clasps of discrimination. Even when the public schools had admitted only upper caste children, Chavara established school for all, invited all students and accepted them under one roof.





Bro. Jibin Kulamkombil CMI

## CHAVARA: A GREAT VISIONARY

The visionary life of St Chavara, the first men saint of Indian Soil, was nothing but God and His Will. It is this God experience that made him consider himself as the person who always wanted to be for Jesus and his people. He felt that even at the moments of pain and fear of death, his good Lord is there to protect him and His hands are extended to embrace him. Today we all enjoy the fruits of the hard work of our father, St Kuria-kose Elias Chavara, Who took the courage to take the road less travelled by others for following the divine master to fulfil the dreams of God in everyone's life.

All visionary actions done by St Chavara resembled his love towards God and His people. The force of his love was overflowing in all his actions and it showed that he was not only a great visionary but a

man of God as well. The shadow of his divine personality falls on all people even now irrespective of any discrimination like caste creed and sex. By looking at the footsteps covered by the life of St Chavara, undoubtedly we can say that he was a man of God.

St Chavara, the servant of God, walked ahead of us showing the divine path, the path of the word of God. The divine words incarnated in him and he became part and parcel of this divinity by his powerful words and humble visionary actions. St Kuriakose Elias Chavara was a great visionary who made immense contributions to the community and society. The spiritual life of St Chavara was extraordinary. His contributions towards education are remarkable. His contributions as a social reformer are unmatched and the same legacy is being continued by us even today.





# St. Chavara's Concept of Christian Family



Bro. Clement Perumbully CMI

**In** Familiaris Consortio, St. John Paul II refers to family as the most important and fundamental unit of the Church and society, at large. St. Chavara, a century back, defined a good Christian family as the image of Heaven on earth where members live together by the bond of blood and affection, duly respecting and obeying parents, living peacefully before God and people, seeking eternal salvation according to each one's proper state of life. This definition comprises all the aspects of a Christian family. He instructs that both blood and affection is important to bond the members of a family. Absence of blood relation is as dangerous as absence of affection in a family especially in this scientific era. St. Chavara's visionary outlook about the ideal Christian family is remarkable in today's context.

St. Chavara considers that the intimacy and love among family members is an imperative that de-

termines the potency of the family. He advises that "the blessing and honour of a family consists in its peaceful existence without quarrel ...any litigation ruins the family" and "the most valuable possession of a family consists in fear of and devotion to the Lord. A family in which the fear of the Lord pervades will enjoy the fruit of divine blessings in this world as well as in eternity." In today's fast paced world where success is equated to "having more" than in "being more", it is very common to see unethical work and financial practices, extravagant spending, pride and imbalance use of wealth and power. Many families have been victims of this epidemic of greed which is sustained by an attitude of "possessing something" than "being someone". It is in this situation St. Chavara says, "The wealthiest family is the one which is not in debt. The wealth of a family does not lie in amassing innumerable possessions, but in their quality".



# St. CHAVARA: AN INSPIRATION OF THE MODERN WORLD



Bro. Melbin Parappuram CMI

**Saint** Chavara is a challenging personality in the modern scenario, and he is inspiring the present generation. How Chavara becoming the inspiration of the modern world? He is known as the man of faith in God and also a true trust worthy servant of God. In today's context young generation is interested in developing science and technologies. Hence people lose their faith in God and they become more skeptics about spiritual matters. When we look in to the life of St. Chavara, we see that

he did great things for the socio economic development of the society with the help of God. He started the first Sanskrit school in Mannanam, house for the destitute, printing press etc. He had a great faith in God and trust in the providence of God and only that which enabled him to do great things for the betterment of the society. Saint Chavara teaches us that a true believer can do great things for the betterment of the world. It is very necessary to reflect upon why Saint Chavara is still living in the hearts of many people? One of the rea-

sons is his contributions for the society and the another is his life itself which is an example of a true faith in God. The faith experience of Saint Chavara is God as a father and he trusted in Him like a child. Saint Chavara is putting forward a question in front of us that weather we are able to follow the Christian faith in a challenging scenario? So, let us follow the footsteps of saint Chavara who could inspire even today's generation by his far vision.





## St. Chavara

envisaged every family to be an earthly replica of the Heavenly Kingdom. Drawing inspiration from the Holy Family and from his own family he came up with an instructive work Oru Nalla Appante Chavarul that comprised a series of instructions to family life. It had a never-ending relevance at all times. Introducing this Magna Carta of family life he built an invincible fortress for all family that no evil could trespass and vandalize it. This remarkable work alone is enough to address him as the patron of families. Nevertheless, the sad thing is that he has not been given his deserved honour. In a milieu where social evils were promoted and practiced, St. Chavara had pristine ideas for the wellbeing of families for its sustenance and sanctity. St. Chavara considered and believed family as the base unit of the society from where an individual's personality gets shaped. St. Chavara, understanding the important decisive role the family can play to build a civilized nation he offered through his testament invaluable directives on leading an ideal family life. The ideals that he put forward were qualities of chastity, modesty, interdependence within the family members, trust, humility, unfailing love, emotional attachment, mutual help, forgiveness, sincerity and so and so forth. These ideals in the form of directive principles can serve as a lamp that can dispel the clouds that hinders the growth of the family to a full-fledged unit. This timeless, precious contribution of St. Chavara affirms his greatness as the true champion and patron of families.



Bro. Mathew Judit CMI

SAINT  
CHAVARA  
THE PATRON  
OF  
FAMILIES