



Santhome Voice



**Bulletin of
St. Thomas Province, India**

Claretian Missionaries

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Dear confreres and friends,

God entered into a permanent dialogue with humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. We continue praising and thanking God for His Love and Mercy (Jn 3:16). The New evangelization that is ongoing in the Church is nothing but a renewed effort to continue the dialogue here and now with the entire creation. Celebration of the Year of the Family and Consecrated Life Year are specific and concrete ways in which it ought to be made more effective.

Personalizing the Word is the sine qua non of this process. Forge in our daily Life has been a valuable tool and an opportune moment that the congregation offered us to make this personalization process meaningful and helpful in the life of each individual and community. It is worthwhile to evaluate honestly, whether each one of us took pains to go through all the stages of that journey up to the last one of Spiritus Domini. It would be good if that journey be continued. The invitation of Pope Francis highlights this aspect clearly. *“The preacher ought first of all to develop a great personal familiarity with the word of God. Knowledge of its linguistic or exegetical aspects, though certainly necessary, is not enough. He needs to approach the word with a docile and prayerful heart so that it may deeply penetrate his thoughts and feelings and bring about a new outlook in him”*. It is good for us to renew our fervor each day and every Sunday as we prepare the homily, examining ourselves to see if we have grown in love for the word, which we preach. Nor should we forget that *“the greater or lesser degree of the holiness of the minister has a real effect on the proclamation of the word”*. As Saint Paul says, *“we speak, not to please men, but to please God who tests our hearts”* (1 Thess 2:4). If we have a lively desire to be the first to hear the word which we must preach, this will surely be communicated to God’s faithful people, for *“out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks”* (Mt 12:34). The Sunday readings will resonate in all their brilliance in the hearts of the faithful if they have first done so in the heart of their pastor.” (Evangeli Gaudium 149)

Our Congregation celebrates her XXV General Chapter from 24 August 2015. The process towards the chapter is already begun. In a few days’ time, the ballots for the election of two delegates from the province will reach you. Along with the proper voting of the delegates, the Superior of each community should take sufficient attention to discuss the circular of the Superior General in the community and summarize the fruit of the discussion under the four points and sent it at the earliest to the provincial curia.

Our five deacons will be ordained priests in the week after Christmas 2014. Let us join together to thank God and pray that they become zealous and committed missionaries in the Lord’s Vineyard. We also gratefully acknowledge the sacrifice of the family of each one. Please be reminded of the personal obligation of each one to pray for good vocations to our Claretian family.

My dear benefactors and friends, on the occasion of the feast of our founder St. Anthony Mary Claret, I am glad to wish you all God’s abundant blessings through the powerful intercession of the saint. May his zeal and holiness continue to inspire us to go an extra mile for the love of Christ. May God bless you for your support, both spiritual and material, in the growth of our province.

HAPPY FEAST!

Fr. Thomas Vattukulam, cmf
Provincial Superior



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MISSION DARSHAN

BANGALORE, CLAET NILAYAM

Mar Raphael Thattil, apostolic visitator for the Syro-Malabar faithful outside the proper territory in India, made his pastoral animation visit on 2-4 October in the two zones of Syro-Malabar rite, namely St. Sebastian Mathikere zone and St. Alphonsa zone Sulthanpalaya. There are four parishes and one Eucharist centre under St. Sebastian zone and six parishes and three Eucharistic centres under St. Alphonsa zone, Sulthanpalaya.

All the priests participated in the both zones for the meetings conducted for them. Mar Raphael Thattil admonished them to keep up our Syro-Malabar identity in rendering pastoral service to the Syro-Malabar faithful in Bangalore.

There were also public meeting in both zones with priests, parish council members,



office bearers of different pious associations and faithful from all the parishes. Bishop in his message said that 60% of the younger generation of the Syro-Malabar faithful is outside Kerala, mostly in cities for either job or studies. And he said, if we do not care for the younger generation the future of the Syro-Malabar church is in danger. Thus he asked all priests and laity of the Syro-Malabar church in Bangalore to pray earnestly and plan and work for the establishment of a Syrian diocese in Bangalore at the earliest. People also expressed their happiness and joy in getting an apostolic visitator for them. They also shared their worries, difficulties and concerns for being under Bangalore Latin archdiocese.



KAGHAZNAGAR, FATIMA HOUSE

Zonal Youth camp: Fatima Parish, Kaghaznagar hoisted a Zonal level Youth Camp on 6-7 September 2014 animated by Fr. Byju, Youth Director of Adilabad diocese. Ignoring the heavy and continuous cyclone, ca 40 active youths from the neighborhood parishes attended the camp. Mar Joseph Kunnath, Bishop of Adilabad celebrated the Eucharist. In his class, he stressed the importance of love and forgiveness for youth. The camp was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Mathew Keechira, cmf, Claretian mission coordinator and it was gracefully concluded under the guidance of Fr. John Poovathanickal, cmf, parish priest.

Independence Day celebration:

The students and staff decorated the entire school and ground. We honored the motherland by hoisting the flag and by the patriotic songs and dances. Fr Jojo Pulinthanam, cmf delivered the Independence Day message on the occasion.



Teachers' day celebrations: St. Claret School, on 5 September celebrated the birthday of Dr. Sarvepally Radhakrishnan, former president of India, who was a great teacher, philosopher and political thinker. This day's programs were planned and well arranged by the little Claretines. They took up the responsibility of the teachers and organized a cultural fiesta to make the day meaningful. In the public meeting Fr. Lijo Pulickal, cmf spoke about the importance of the day.



Telugu and Hindi Language day celebrations: on 29 August and 12 September our school celebrated Telugu and Hindi Language days respectively. The aim behind doing this was to promote our State and National languages. We arranged programs in these languages to develop a filial attachment to these languages and conducted competitions to develop the literary skills among the students especially in these languages. Fr. John Poovathanickal, cmf, our manager, ignited among them the love for our mother tongue and our nation.

CSASC-2014 (Claret School Arts and Sports Competitions):

we arranged various competitions to bring out and develop the inborn talents in the little buds of our school. Fr. Manager inaugurated the competitions by kindling in the buds healthy competitive spirit.



KARUKUTTY, CLARETIAN PROVINCIAL HOUSE

Teachers' Day and Onam Celebrations:

We the Xavierites' were in a jubilant mood on 5 September as we had the joint celebration of Teacher's Day and Onam. The programme began with a warm welcome given to the teachers by the school band. The students with self-made greeting cards of various kinds and bouquet of flowers honored all the teachers.



It was reiterated by the students that teachers play a pivotal role in their life and everyone in different ways expressed their appreciation for the teachers for the committed and selfless service they are rendering in the school. Different programmes were also organized in connection with Onam to make the children aware of the great cultural tradition our state holds.



Xavierian Touch: In order to promote a sharing attitude in the young minds the management and staff together planned to start a charity fund in the school and it was named Xavierian touch. The little contribution that the Xavierites are making forgoing merriments especially the birthday celebrations and avoiding profligate expenses they place the amount in the charity box. This amount is used for helping the needy. Students could collect a good amount this way and recently a man in our neighborhood was helped by the students. It is truly a great experience for the students when someone is benefiting from their sacrifices. These acts will surely make the students more Christian in their behavior.

KOMBAZHA, CLARET NIVAS

The Feast of St. Alphonsa at Plakode was celebrated with due solemnity from 3-12 October with Rosary, Holy *Qurbana*, novena and *Ledeenu*. On 12 Oct., feast day, there was *Snehavirunnu* sponsored by the parishioners after the Holy *Qurbana*. The co-operation of the parishioners and the people around were very good. The Feast of St. Alphonsa was the feast of the people of the area.

MARTHIDI, CLARET HOME

Teacher's day Celebration: On September 5, to acknowledge the valuable services which our teachers are doing to our nation, the Mary Matha School, Marthidi along with the nation celebrated teacher's day. Teachers play an important role in the life of each individual to build a healthy nation in all aspects. For the students of Mary Matha School, this was an excellent opportunity to acknowledge and to respect their teachers' valuable services. As a gesture of gratitude, students felicitated the teachers, the cultural programs gave more color to the meeting. The meeting was presided over by Manager Fr. Saji Valiplaceal cmf, and Parish Priest, Fr. Jijo Pulinkunnel, cmf, gave a message. Celebration ended with distribution of sweets.



St. Alphonsa Feast Munchampally: On July 28 feast of St Alphonsa was celebrated at Munchampally. Fr. John Poovathanickal, cmf, vicar of Fatima, Kaghaznagar was the main celebrant for the festal Holy Eucharist. He described the importance of suffering in the life of each individual. Procession and the veneration of the relic gave more meaning to the celebration. Three days of St. Alphonsa feast celebration ended with the agape meal.



VALIATHURA, SANTHWANA

Onam celebration 2014: Sadhana Renewal Centre (Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Centre), Monvila celebrated Onam with great joy on 4 September 2014. The Day was blessed with the esteemed presence of Sri Omman Chandy, Hon. Chief Minister of Kerala, His Grace Rt. Rev. Soosa Pakiam, Archbishop of Trivandrum, Sri K C Joseph, Hon. Minister for Rural Development, Sri Anoop Jacob, Hon. Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Sri MA Vahid MLA.

During the inaugural address, Chief Minister appreciated and thanked the Claretians for their social commitment and promised all possible support from his Government to take care of the people wandering in the streets. He pointed out that it is not money that makes the society better but the attitude and willingness of the citizens to take care of such people. He highlighted the urgent need of giving special care for people who are marginalized in the society. He announced government's decision to give all the special schools aided rank. He urged all to collaborate with organizations like Claretians in taking up such social responsibility. Sri K C Joseph distributed wheelchair and invited everybody to collaborate with the government to make Kerala like in the time of Mahabali. Sri Anoop Jacob distributed Onakkodi to all our inmates and promised government's support in providing food materials. His Grace Most Rev. Soosa Pakiam during his presidential address gratefully remembered Rev. Fr Alexander Kureekkattil, cmf's initiative for the centre, acknowledged the great services of the Claretians, and appreciated the commitment and hard work of priests in the parish and in the centre in his archdiocese. He reminded the duty of Christians to see Jesus' face in orphans and street wanderers. Archbishop honored Rev. Frs Alexander Kureekkattil, Thomas Manamel and Sebastian Kochikunnel, former Director and Asst. Directors. Sri MA Vahid MLA, Smt. Vasantha Sukumaran, Councilor, Rev. Fr. Lenin Raj, Director TSSS, gave felicitation speeches. Around 500 benefactors and well-wishers were entertained with cultural programs performed by the inmates and our friends. Celebration ended with Onasadya.



Candle Making Unit: Sadhana Renewal Centre started a candle making unit to give the inmates vocational training. The centre distributes candles according to the order given by nearby parishes and local people. Inmates show great interest in putting up their effort to make candles.

One-day program for HIV/AIDS affected persons: Sadhana Renewal Centre arranged one-day program for HIV/ AIDS affected persons. It is a new opening for the Centre in extending its social commitment for building up a just society. Rev. Fr. Dominic Koottiyany, cmf, Director, inaugurated one-day seminar and distributed food kits for all those attended the program. Rev. Fr. Robin Pazhamchira, cmf and Dn. Joyis, cmf animated the program.

PATHADIPALAM, SANTHI NIVAS

Onam Celebration and family get-together: on 13 September, there were 155 persons, among them 13 who were settled as families gathered at Santhi Nivas. Fr. Yesusdas, state coordinator, gave the message of the day. There were many cultural programs, power point presentations, Claretian life promoting ministries, etc., were presented and explained. All the families received good gifts useful for them. The whole program ended by giving very good Onam meals to all. Thanks to all community members.



VYTHIRI, CLARET SADAN

Blessing of St. George Shrine: St. George Shrine of the St George Parish, Charity, was rededicated and blessed on 31 August 2014 at Old Vythiri. Marian devotion and novena to St George began in the shrine. It has decided to have novena and Holy Rosary on every first Friday of the month. The shrine on the national highway is a symbol of God's protection for all the travellers especially people who pass through the Thamarasserry Ghats.

Onam and Teachers' Day Celebration: The celebration of Onam 2014 in St. Claret School was combined with the Teachers' Day on 5 September with colourful programme such as Pookkala Malsaram and Onakkalikal. The students of Class X arranged Onasadhya for School management and staff. The teachers were honored with gifts. Fr. Joy Cheradiyil, cmf, Manager, gave the message of the Day, highlighting the importance of Onam as well as appreciating the dedication and service of the teachers.

PENCHIKALPET, CLARET VIHAR NIKETAN

Inauguration and blessing St. Claret tailoring training centre: Tailoring centre St Claret as part of the women empowerment project was inaugurated and blessed on 5 September 2014. The centre was inaugurated by Sri Koneru Konappa, MLA, Sirpur constituency and blessed by Fr. Mathew Keechira, cmf, mission coordinator and superior of Claret Vihar in the presence of local leaders, students and village people. It is a good initiative for the welfare of the local area. The function was blessed with other local leaders, students and village people. Sri. Konappa our MLA has promised his support in the future.



Onam Celebration in Charity, Olivumala Parishes: Charity and Olivumala parishes celebrated Onam 2014 in a colourful way. The KCYM members arranged a mega Pookkalam and variety programmes. Fr. Joy gave the message of the Day. He mentioned the



KCYM Meghala Meet at Charity: It was a great pleasure and a privilege for the KCYM members of Charity to host the Meghala Meet and Onam Celebration in the Parish. The day began with the KCYM flag hoisted by Mr. Shaji, meghala president, in the presence of Fr. Jilson Kokkandathil, meghala director, and other unit directors and joint directors. Various competitions were conducted to make the day memorable. The Mathrusangham of Charity parish prepared Onasadhya for all the participants.



importance of such a celebration. Unity, fraternity and love has to be the motto. There was a solemn celebration of Holy Eucharist followed by Payasam for all the parishioners.

FROM OUR FORMATION COMMUNITIES



KUNNOTH, CLARETIAN STUDY HOUSE

Claretian Week: As part of the preparations for the Claret feast, we conducted Claretian week, which helped the inmates to deepen their knowledge of our Founder and the congregation. The students were divided into 4 groups and each group presented a paper on various topics such as St. Claret an obedient servant of God, A Creative Missionary who made Use of the Media, Mystic who experienced God, A Man of Initiatives who challenged his own times, etc. The presentations were followed by a short discussion.

Onam Celebration: On 7 September Onam, traditional festival of harvest, was celebrated with grandeur. The hilarious onakkalikal occasioned a laugh-riot. The sumptuous onasadhya and the dramatization of the arrival of the legendary King Mahabali added special colour to the celebration.

Jeevitha Darshana Camp: Claretian Study house organized a Jeevitha Darshana Camp for the students of the nearby schools on October 11 Saturday. The camp was guided by Fr. Tomcy Palackal, cmf. The participants were initiated into different realms of missionary life through inter-active sessions, games and other activities. This camp was exclusively for the X Standard students who wish to join in our congregation in the coming academic year.



KURAVILANGAD, CLARET BHAVAN

Onam Celebration: The inmates together with the domestic staff celebrated Onam with pookalam, onakalikal, arrival of Maveli, Onasammanam and sumptuous Onasadya. In fact, the celebration proclaimed the unity and prosperity of the olden days and the need of hard work to create a better world.

Unveiling of Rachana: Rachana a literary work of students of Claret Bhavan was published on 3 September 2014. Fr Arsenius, cmi unveiled it and handed the copy to Fr Joseph Madavath. We appreciate everyone who took sincere efforts to bring it out. In fact, it was an act of literary talent show of our younger generation.

Jeevitha Darsana Camp: We conducted a Jeevitha Darsana camp for High School students from 8-10 September. 152 young students actively participated in it. Fr Tomcy Palackal, cmf and other members of Claret Bhavan animated them. Fr Robin Pazhamchirayil, cmf animated a session for them. The sessions contained topics like Personality Development, Values, Claretian Way of Missionary life, etc. At the end students evaluated the camp and noted their appreciation as the camp gave them a better and clearer orientation towards life.



WARDHA, CLARETIAN ASHRAM

Community Day Celebration: Claretian Ashram is enriched with students from seven states of India and each state have their own celebrations and cultural events. The celebration of the community day gave a platform to bring forth their cultural events to strengthen the unity and harmony amidst the varieties of culture. The celebrations began on the previous day by collecting flowers for the preparation of pookalam and on 7 September with the solemn Holy Eucharistic celebration. The afternoon was joyful by serving delicious food from five different states along with the Onasadhya, prepared by the community members. There was presentation of kings from different states along with Maveli during gathering and the lunch. The evening was cheered by the country games organized by the students and the celebrations ended with solemn rosary.

Volley Ball Coaching: Claretian Ashram provided an amazing opportunity for the students to improve their volleyball skill by providing a one-week intensive volleyball coaching by Mr. Thomas Thottakara, coach of the Sports Authority of India (SAI), working at Calicut. Along with the curriculum activities, Claretian Ashram provides good support for the improvement of the extra-curricular activities of the students ensuring the development of their skills. The coaching helped to improve the skills in volleyball by learning new tricks and methods.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Life @ LIFE: QUINQUENNIUM 2014

Quinquennium 2014, organized by the Province of Chennai, was held at LIFE in Dindugal, Tamil Nadu from 3-9 August 2014 in which 52 young Claretian missionaries from six major organisms working in two continents engaged in diverse missionary enterprises actively participated and returned to their missions refreshed and rejuvenated. It was in a word a celebration of Claretian Fraternity.



The first two days were exclusively dedicated for sharing in groups animated by able directors. After a brief session of self-introduction, the participants were divided into three groups and shared three dimensions of Claretian existence viz., Priestly/Vocational, Community, and Apostolic/Missionary. This was the best part of the Quinquennium as it opened, both for the sharers and the hearers, new avenues both to vent their feelings and to be encouraged by the sensational success stories and severe setbacks they suffered in diverse life situations as Claretian missionaries. The satisfaction and the disappointments, successes and failures, joys and sorrows of missionaries really helped one another to take stock of their initial years of priestly life and to march ahead with courage, determination, and a never-dying missionary zeal. There was also a special group discussion based on the ministries the missionaries are engaged in viz., Parish, Education, Special Ministries and Formation. This was a forum to share the experience of missionaries working in similar fields of action, to identify and assess the chances and challenges emanating from each, and to propose appropriate alternatives.

The next two days were for input sessions, on the Importance of Word of God, Crisis in Religious Life, Challenges of Priesthood, Art of Community Life, and Experience Sharing of Special Ministries. The participants also had a unique opportunity to visit, pray, and celebrate Holy Eucharist at the reputed shrine of Our Lady of Velankanni. There was also an evaluation sessions held in groups with specific questions that would make the best effect on the participants. The Province of Chennai in general and Frs Maria Das and Bhyju in particular definitely deserve a sincere note of appreciation especially for the brilliant organization, systematic arrangement of useful classes by experts, and perfect execution of the entire plan to the minutest details. Therefore, the Quinquennium 2014, held at LIFE, would remain live in the lives of these Claretians, forever for sure! Fr. Pettayil Jis, cmf



CELEBRATION OF ONAM AT GLASGOW SYRO-MALABAR COMMUNITY

On 7 September, the Glasgow Kerala Christian Community (GKCC) had their Onam celebration with the Holy Mass at 9 am celebrated by Fr George Thelliankal, cmf, chaplain of Syro-Malabar Community, in St James Church. After the Holy Mass as each member of the GKCC entered the St James hall, cheerful faces of their community friends

welcomed them. There were pookkalam that enabled the different units to set their artistic hearts free and the games that involved children from all age groups, starting from little kids, and right up to teenagers. The King Maveli was welcomed with chendamelam. Fr Jerrard, parish priest of St James, Fr George and others lighted the lamp. Thiruvathira dances were performed by the girls, which varied from unit to unit. Onasadya was served on plantain leaves consisting of 15 dishes. The tug of war was conducted after the sadhya in different groups; men, women and youth. Everyone enjoyed the GKCC Onam 2014.

VOCATION COUNCIL MEETING

The annual gathering of the Vocation Council was held at Provincial House in Karukutty on 14 September 2014. The members together with Fr Provincial discussed and evaluated the progress and challenges in Vocation Promotion. To keep the charism alive we need people who live it so the mission of promotion is of primary importance. Hence, we decided to seek again the help of everyone to promote young men of quality, filled with missionary enthusiasm, to give life to others. We also decided to apply the traditional methods together with new ways.



MY EXPERIENCE AT SEHION RETREAT CENTER

It is a matter of great joy for me to share some of the experiences in my life for the past two and a half years at Sehion Retreat Center, Attappadi. First of all I thank Almighty God for choosing me to be part of a preaching team led by Rev. Fr. Xavier Khan Vattayil, which is the most blessed retreat centre in our time wherein thousands of faithful gather and worship the Lord. It is a place where God really touches so

many people through wonders, miracles and conversion of heart.

I reached Sehion in February 2012. In the initial months, I was entrusted with a ministry to pray for the people who come there with various prayer

intentions. It was a time for me to listen to so many people who were really struggling in their lives with family issues, financial crises, various diseases, etc. Here I could see how God really works wonders in their lives and intervenes in their problems. Even in my own life, I could experience God's miraculous healing from a very bad illness (Varicose veins). It was after that I accepted to go for the ministry of the Word. The Lord gave me a complete healing from it and it was during a retreat led by Rev. Fr. Xavier Khan Vattayil of the Sehion team.

I could see in Sehion thousands of people seeking God in the midst of struggles and sufferings of their lives. They come with a very strong faith that the Lord will do wonders for them and very surprisingly, our Lord does touch so many. I was able to see by myself hundreds of miracles which sometimes-human reasoning cannot even understand. My concern here was to help these people in the best way possible. I could do this in different ways mainly by being with them, listening to them, praying for them, helping them to make good confession, etc.

After spending a few months doing this ministry I was asked to accompany Fr. Xavier Khan for various Bible conventions. Thousands of people gather to hear the Word of God and the Lord confirms the Word through signs and wonders. For me it was really a wonderful experience to go for such a large conventions and be a part of the preaching team.

I was also blessed to go to UK for six months for preaching the Word of God mainly to the migrants from Kerala and to English people as well. In UK my ministry was mostly preaching the Word of God going from one place to another. I consider this as a great blessing for me in my life.

As a whole, my life with Sehion team was a great blessing and a God given chance. Very specially living with Rev. Fr. Xavier Khan Vattayil was marvelous. His simple way of life, Holiness, hard work for the Kingdom of God, his love for others etc. are something to be learned in our lives too. It was here that I really felt the power of a priest's prayer and the authority given to us. It was from here I felt the need and deep desire to live a life of prayer, a life of penance and a holy life. I thank Very Rev. Fr. Provincial Superior and his team for granting me permission to be part of the Sehion preaching team for two and a half years. Fr. Sebastian Pottananiyil, cmf



CONGRATULATIONS

Fr. Roy Vattakunnel, cmf successfully completed his LLB studies. Congratulations and best wishes to him!

PREFECTS OF APOSTOLATE MEETING

The Prefects of Apostolate encounter with 38 participants was held from July 26-August 5, 2014 in Lisbon convened by the General Prefecture of Apostolate as a culmination of the five encounters held in the conferences. Reflections and discernment were made to identify



the constituents of Claretian Missionary Style, Priority Lines, and Strategic Positions rooted in the reality of each continent were discussed. Conducted in two phases, the first phase was the presentations of the apostolate and missions from each Conference and its Major Organisms. The second phase focused on presentations, group wise reflections, and plenary assembly discussions on four major priorities of the last sexennium: youth and vocation ministry, solidarity and mission, biblical apostolate, and e-tics (evangelization through technologies of information and communication).

The Encounter has proposed the following five characteristics of the Claretian Missionary Style: Centrality of the Word, Being missionaries in a missionary Church: that is, a mystery of communion, Dialogue as the locus of Mission, Solidarity and prophetic mission from the perspective of the poor and excluded, and Mission as the key.

The four mission priorities proposed are: Prophetic solidarity with the poor, marginalized, vulnerable in their human rights and migrants; Evangelization of children, youth and families with special attention to the vocational dimension; Evangelization that is centered on the Word of God that creates life, builds Christian community and transforms the world; Dialogue with the people, even using internet, who do not believe, who are religiously indifferent and who are not Christian. To achieve this, the views, ideas, dreams of the whole Claretians are necessary.



SUPERIORS MEETING

The annual meeting of all the local superiors with the provincial superior and his council got under way from 15-18 September 2014 at the Provincial Curia, Karukutty. The proceedings began with a half day input session guided by an expert theologian of Syro Malankara Catholic Church, Rev. Fr. Mathai Kadavil, OIC. Both the provincial government and the communities presented brief annual reports on the life and mission of the province in general as well as of the

individual communities and activities. They were all evaluated and appreciated and where necessary corrective guidelines were given. The Plenary session was dedicated to discuss issues raised by the members as well as issues from the reports. Ways and means of strengthening community life, celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life and revitalizing our missionary presences were some of the major topics discussed. This annual appointment of living and sharing together strengthened our resolve to carry on with courage the Claretian Mission.





III CONGRESS OF CLARETIAN EDUCATORS

The III International congress of Claretian Educators was held in Bangalore from 29 Sept. to 5 Oct., 2014 in Bangalore, I have heard of theoretical discourses on what constitutes the role of educators in children's learning. But during the week long sharing and input sessions in the Congress, we could get a more broad definitions of an educator, ranging from career, guide facilitator, scaffold, co-constructor, spiritual mentor and role-model. The Congress, in which 95 Claretians and Lay Claretian Delegates from 23 countries participated,

strengthened the professional, Claretian and spiritual identities of our educators, empowering their role and capacity to teach young children of the new generation, reinscribing the previously absent emphasis on educator as a spiritual mentor.

The Congress mainly focused on certain core themes, namely: the Congress and its significance, who are the educators and the pupils in our schools? Educating the educators (contents and objectives of teaching), School management support teams and charismatic animation teams. The sessions and experience sharings of the Claretians in 7 days from the continents could really capture the minds of the delegates to carry the rich inputs to shape a new pedagogy in their own countries and missions by employing the strategies such as guiding, facilitating, scaffolding, supporting and co-constructing, spiritual and holistic mentoring through innovative adaptations.

From the St. Thomas Province, Frs. Joseph Kindangayil, Prefect of Apostolate, Soji Cherusseril, Dominic Kunnappally, Joby Parathanam, Ajoy Valiyamyilil and Siby Njavallikunnel were the delegates. The Congress was convened and moderated by Rev Fr. Miguel Angel Velasco, General Prefect of Apostolate. Apart from the input sessions and experience sharing, group discussions in continental groups on implementation strategies of the outcome of the Congress were very fruitful and enriching. The final Document of the Congress was approved in the last session on 5 October. This document will be a guide to all those involved in the Education ministry of the Claretian Congregation.



MEETING OF THE LOCAL ECONOMES AND ADMINISTRATORS

From 10-13 October 2014 Fr. Jose Pulinkunnel, Provincial economer, organized Economers and administrators meeting at Claretian Provincial House, Karukutty. Prof. Joby Cyriac, HOD, Human Resource, Marian College, Kuttikkanam enlightened the participants to use the administrative resources of each one for the better management of activities. It was well attended and useful for understanding the financial situation of the communities and of the province.

40 YEARS OF PRIESTLY SERVICE: Interview with Fr. Jose Koonampampil, cmf

How do you evaluate the gift of Vocation and your Claretian life in these 40 years of Priestly service as the first Claretian Priest ordained in India?

From early childhood I had the desire to become a missionary priest. However, my parents wanted me to become a diocesan priest in the diocese of Kothamangalam, and, after my High School studies, I had to yield to their desire. Thus, I joined the Minor Seminary at Kothamangalam in June 1965, and after two years, I proceeded to St. Joseph's Major Seminary at Alwaye where I completed the three years' Philosophy course. During these years, my original desire to become a missionary priest grew stronger and I was seriously thinking about taking a decision in that line.

But in the second year of Philosophy something happened that made a deep impact on me. Alwaye Seminary was staffed primarily by the OCD fathers from Spain. There was also a Belgian Carmelite among them. He was seriously sick and died in the year 1969 in the Seminary. All the Carmelite members of the Staff behaved themselves as if the one died was a close family member of them. That explicit expression of family – community – spirit and sentiment made me to think of religious missionary life.

In those days the first Indian Claretians ordained in Germany came back to India and I heard that they were planning to start the novitiate and a Minor Seminary in Kuravilangad. I made a couple of visits to them, and their friendly and open mentality, as well as their cordiality and hospitality attracted me very much. Moreover, the definition of the Claretians as a missionary Congregation and the fact that it is a religious family made me to decide to join the Claretians. Thus, I was among the first batch of five Claretian novices in India. After the first profession in May 1971, I completed my Theology course in St. Peter's Pontifical Seminary, Bangalore, and was ordained a priest on 24 October 1974. What attracted me to the Claretian Congregation was its missionary charism and my desire to form part of a religious community. Looking back, I think that my decision was the right one for me and I feel fully realized and I remain happy over my decision.

I am completing 40 years of priestly life as a Claretian Missionary. Looking back, I can only exclaim: "How beautiful are your ways, O God"! All that I am and all that I have is a unique gift of God. He has been too generous with me with His graces. If one asks me, whether I have always responded positively and properly to the gifts of God, my answer should



be in the negative. In spite of my ingratitude and lack of faithfulness, He remains always faithful to His calling and kind towards me! I am content with what I am today and what I am called to do today. It is not my merit, but His grace and kindness. What I am called to live and do now is far more beyond all what I have desired for or even dreamt of.

Can you describe a memorable event in your priestly life?

In my personal life as a Claretian missionary priest, one memorable event that remains in my memory is the sacramental confession of a penitent in an Italian parish church. It was Christmas time and I was in the confessional, an open structure where the penitent and confessor can have a face-to-face dialogue. A middle-aged man came and began to make his confession telling that for many years he had not approached the sacrament of confession, and that he was practically away from the active faith-life. He narrated his story and I could notice that there was a lot of sincerity and innocence in his heart. We had a long conversation on faith matters. After the sacramental absolution, he stood up and shook his hand with me and said: "Thank you very much, Father. I am glad that you were here today and I could make my confession to you". I thought that the life of a priest finds its realization just in one such single experience.

In my professional life as a canonist, there were various occasions where I felt myself realized. To be frank, I have never thought of myself as an extraordinary canonist. But the encouragement and appreciation that I have received, have made me feel myself professionally realized. For example, when after the class some students come and tell me that they had a very negative attitude towards Canon Law, as a very abstract and dry subject, but my classes have made them change their attitude, and that they are now interested in further deepening their canonical knowledge. In 2004, Cardinal Crescenzo Sepe, then Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda Fide, has given me some juridico-theological material to study, asking me to give him a written opinion on the matter. The following day I presented to him my opinion on the subject, but with a remark that I was not feeling competent to give a considered opinion on the matter. He looked at me and said: "I know that you do things well. Your opinion gives me a sense of security". I was so surprised to hear such strong words of appreciation from a Cardinal Prefect. On some other occasions, his successor, Cardinal Ivan Dias, has taken me with him for some very important and delicate meetings with some other Cardinals, introducing me to them, telling: "I have taken with me my canonist". On another occasion, during a private audience, the same Cardinal Dias introduced me to Pope Benedict XVI, telling: "This is Fr. Joseph, Canonist of the Propaganda Fide". These were all great moments of great self-realization and incentive to work more seriously and committedly in the matters entrusted to me.

How do you evaluate the growth of Claretian Missionaries in India?

Many look at the growth of the Claretian Congregation in India with admiration. For me it is indeed a gift of God; it is a work of God and God helps it to grow. As human contribution, the role of Fr. Franz Dirnberger, as the one who laid the foundation of the Indian Claretian Congregation, can never be forgotten. Equally important and decisive was the very generous and unconditional support and love of the German Province



Cardinal Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, presents Fr. Koonamparampil to Pope Francis.

that was always present. The first Claretians, together with Fr. Dirnberger, lived as a true family, with a very strong sense of belonging. The further growth and development of our Congregation and the success of our mission in India and abroad depends very much on maintaining that same love towards the Congregation and the sense of belonging as a Family of divinely called missionaries, after the example of St. Claret. Faithfulness to our vocation and a strong sense of community are necessary for the success of our individual mission as well as of our community mission.





Fr. Jose Koonampampil; born on 19 March 1949, at Pallickamury, Kothamangalam diocese. After a few months of pastoral experience in the diocese of Kothamangalam, he was appointed in Claret Bhavan Kuravilangad in June 1975, as Prefect of students and then as house Econome. In June 1979 he left for Rome for higher studies in Canon Law and in 1985 obtained Doctorate in both Canon and Civil Law (J.U.D. - Juris Utriusque Doctor) from the Pontifical Lateran University, Rome. He has a post-doctoral diploma in Ecclesiastical Jurisprudence with the title "Rotal Advocate", the second Indian to ever get that title from the Holy See. He was professor of Canon Law at St Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore from 1986 to 1989.

He was appointed to the community of "Juridicum" in Rome, in 1989-1991. During that period attended the Canon Law Institute in the State University of Munich, Germany, for two semesters. He returned to Bangalore and continued his career as professor of Canon Law in St Peter's Pontifical Institute and other theological faculties.

Appointed as Superior of the International Claretian Priest-students' community in Rome for a period of three years he left for Rome in September 1998. From 1999 till today he is Professor of Canon Law in the "Institute for the Theology of Consecrated Life" (Claretianum) in Rome and in January 2000 joined the Vatican Dicastery "Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples", where he served as Desk Officer for South Korea and, later, for Nigeria.

At present, he serves as Desk Officer for Sri Lanka and as Senior Canonist dealing with juridical and disciplinary matters, as well as matters concerning the Religious. On different occasions, he has represented the Vatican Dicastery in International Meetings held in Canada, France, Ireland, Kenya, Nigeria, South Korea, Tanzania, United Kingdom, USA, etc.

Moreover, he is a regular invitee to give class during the two-week's Seminar for newly appointed Bishops from mission countries (ca 100 Bishops each time), conducted in Rome by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples every two years, where most of the classes are taken by the Cardinals who are Heads of the different Vatican Dicasteries.

The Vatican Dicastery sent him in 2010 and 2012 to Hong Kong to give five days' intensive courses on Canon Law to a group of priests from China. In November 2014 he was sent to Taiwan for a similar formation programme for Chinese priests. From 2004 he is also a visiting Professor in the Canon Law Faculty of the Pontifical Lateran University, his alma mater.

Thank you very much father for your sharing and we wish you God's abundance blessings and let Him be glorified through your ministry and service.

Upcoming Events

- 27 Nov. Regional Assembly Adilabad at Kaghaznagar
- 06 Dec. Regional Assembly North India at Chimur
- 13 Dec. Regional Assembly South Kerala at Karukutty
- 14 Dec. Council Meeting
- 27 Dec. Priestly Ordination of Dn Jenner Vakayil at St Mary's Church, Peramangalam at 2 pm by Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy
- 28 Dec. - 28 Feb. 2015 General Canonical Visit
- 29 Dec. Priestly Ordination of Dn Bibin Pazheparampil at Sacred Heart Church, Poovarani at 9.15 am by Mar Joseph Kallarangatt.
- 30 Dec. Priestly Ordination of Dn Tuby Kunnath at St George Forane Church, Moolamattam at 9.15 am by Mar Joseph Kunnath
- 31 Dec. Priestly Ordination of Dn Danish Manjaly at St George Basilica, Angamaly at 9.30 am by Mar Sebastian Adayanthrath
- 03 Jan. 2015 Priestly Ordination of Dn Joyis Urubumkuzhiyil at Holy Family Church, Mudiyoorkara at 9.30 am by Mar Joseph Perumthottam



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