



XAVIER DARPAN



St. Xavier's Province, Rajkot

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Provincial's Message

WITH THE HEART OF A FATHER



Fr James Thayil CMI
Provincial

Another Advent is here, heralding a time of Divine favour in the arrival of a Divine-human birth. In a time when we traverse through the foggy and fuzzy terrains of life with confused and distracted minds, fatigued frames, sunken spirit augmented by pandemics and struggles—both internal and external, Christmas comes instilling hope and joy, freshening our beings. We, as a province, crossed over many hard and challenging experiences the Lord permitted in the year 2021. Three of our veterans have made their passage into eternity. The Christmas bells, still ring, announcing a fresh flow of grace in the Ordination of Deacon Rijin, the first profession of four of our novices, and the arrival of nine vibrant, enthusiastic and motivated aspirants into our mission... Where the trials manifest, grace increases!

“Father” is a beautiful title. Even more, it is a divine role. To be a father is a gift—a gift that begets all other gifts. By the grace of God and His eternal mysterious plan, we are called to share in His Fatherhood. It is a matter of grace, then, that all people—young and old, natives and aliens call us “Fathers”. This blessed year is dedicated to St Joseph, a man whose heart is perfectly aligned with the “Heart of the Father” (Patris Corde). Our Holy Father Pope Francis invites us to re-examine our identity as “priests with the heart of the Father”.

We CMIs are bequeathed with a special legacy of “Father Spirituality” (Appan) lived and propagated by our Founding Father St Kuriakose Elias Chavara. The “good Father” (Nalla appan) is both an icon and living example that we are all called to become. At the end of the day, when I stand before the Lord, would there be a greater fulfilment than the realization that I reflect in my face and heart the true image and light of my Father? Let us, then, live up to the nobility and grace of our vocation as Fathers with a heart!

Our Province is truly blessed with many such Fathers. In fact, all of us are trying our best to be “graceful fathers”.

One of the ways we realise this is by the connection of heart in “compassionate communication”. As the CMI Mission in Gujarat is radiating a golden glow, turning 50 this year, our lives and mission would be measured on the scale of connection we have built in the fabric of compassion in the human-divine spheres of Saurashtra and Kutch region. Indeed, we have extended this mission even to the ends of the globe—to Brazil, Germany, U.S.A, Namibia, Canada, Philippines, Ecuador, and other lands. Even so, it is time that we make a soul-searching to see how much we have grown in our fraternal love and enthusiasm for evangelization. May the veteran missionaries of our province, whose memories evoke in us reflections of the true face of the Father continue to strengthen us with their prayers and blessings.

I hope the effort to revive our news magazine Xavier Darpan would help us keep connected and informed of the vibrations of our mission and musings of our missionaries.

Wish you a grace-filled Christmas and New Year!

Eloquent Silence

In the beginning there was silence.
In the end silence will prevail as well.
Silence is the first word in creation.
It's in silence that the whole creation came to be.

It's silence that makes words possible
It's in silence that meanings arise from words and codes.
I knew silence even before I knew any human languages
It's in silence that I come to know the rhythm of my being.

Without silence music would just be a noise
Without silence art would but be a distraction
Oh silence! Who has ever known thy depth?
Oh Silence! Would I ever touch thy soul before my death?

Silence conceals all mysteries.
Yet, it's in silence that all mysteries are revealed.
For many a mortal silence is a nightmare
Fear of silence drowns peace in many hearts!

Befriend silence, my friend.
For silence is strength, not a weakness!
The silence of Jesus before the Pilot,
and the silence of the Cross
They have spoken more than any word would dare.

Troubles galore caused by words spoken in haste
Hearts remain bled in words malicious blurted out
A crafty loving word may cure
Yet, healing is possible in the fabric of silence alone.

Polyglots are not hard to be found
Crafty words n' eloquent speeches envelop our world
Yet, silence is the language of the heart
Love would thrive n' peace would flourish in a silent stroke.

Let me wake up, then to the sound of silence
Practicing the art of listening to the hearts
Let me enter the chambers of my heart
And commune with Thee, Oh God of silence!

Keep smiling—Jesus loves you; I love you, too!

Fr. James Thayil CMI

CONTENTS

Eloquent Silence (Poem)	02
Editor's Note	03
Retired But Not Tired	05
News Section	
Rajkot Zone	06
Surendranagar and Morbi Zone	10
Jamnagar Zone	12
Kutch Zone	15
Pune	18
Delhi	19
Kerala	20
Vinayalaya, Bhanpuri	21
Wardha	21
Dharmaram, Bengaluru	22
Samanvaya, Bhopal	22
Germany	23
Philippines	24
Brazil	25
Namibia	27
Triviality of Life (Poem)	28
Behold A Hermit	29
Born In Heaven	30 - 35
Bible Reflection	36 - 42
CMI Rajkot Mission In Golden Glow (1972-2022)	43
Prior General's Visitation to the Province (Photos)	44

EDITOR'S NOTE



Hold Each Other

We have almost reached the end of the terrifying year 2021. I think it would be good to bring to our mind the past days. When we think about the year 2021 in relation to our province it was an unfortunate one. We lost three great persons; Fr. John Fisher, Fr. Joseph Kattikaran and Fr. John Naduvatherry. We lost many friends and relatives, the pandemic brought before us things which we can't even imagine.

This pandemic challenged our faith and life itself. People were shattered at the thought of life. We became miserable and helpless. We questioned everything even the existence of God. It also increased/ escalated our anxiousness about many things.

The history of mankind proves that man is a survivor of all types of disasters by nature. They survived terrible natural calamities, wars pandemic etc. Problems, difficulties and sufferings are all part of life-they will keep coming, but we never give up. They add strength to our life and that is what makes us who we are. The strength of humanity is that we are not alone, we fight together.

As religious the uncertainty and crisis which we had faced probably had never been that grave. The reason is that we are safe in the providence of God. Yet, let us not forget our responsibilities towards this society and to our world.

We were living in a time when personal relationships and communitarian aspects of life were becoming less important. But this terrible year has brought us close to each other in heart. To an extent this crisis and the difficulties in our lives are urging and motivating us to be united. Let us preserve this unity in our province. We do not know how long we will be together. There was a time when we never knew each other and no one thought we would be together as members of a CMI Mission Province. We were not belonging to each other. But now we belong to each other. What holds us together is our faith in Jesus Christ and our CMI Congregation. So let the conviction that we are one in Christ and in the Congregation grow in us even more.

May we be able to love, support, shield, encourage and hold each other together. We shall not miss any opportunity to come together. May the birth of the One who reconciled heaven and earth unite us more with one another. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Fr. Jojo Thalikaasthanam CMI



***Congratulations and Best Wishes
to Rev. Dn. Rijin Kurialapuzha CMI***



Who's Ordination on
Thursday, 30 December 2021
at Infant Jesus Church, Cheekad,
Kannur, Kerala



**May Almighty God grant him
strength and wisdom
for his forthcoming Pastoral / Missionary
life in Our Province**

Retired but not Tired

Fr. Thomas Kolamkuzhiyil CMI, who is one of the major educationists of our province, joined the provincial house community after 27 years of service. He mainly served at St. Mary's School Rajkot and St. Mary's School Gondal. Many people retire with pension funds but a very few only retire with respect and love.

“If you want to change the world start with yourself” (Mahatma Gandhi) and then of course focus on children for they are the latest messengers from God. Fr. Thomas in his long years of teaching experience felt that if children get true affection with right direction, regular support with timely correction and proper encouragement, they will grow as good citizens of the country. Vidyodaya Publication, Marian Service Wing and Marian Service Society were a few steps Fr. Thomas had initiated to impart quality and value based education to the students. Students, who were part of these various organizations during their school life, did perform commendable works during the time of corona pandemic. His students at various prominent walks of life are signs of his selfless service and success. He never compromised his priestly ministry with his profession. His dedication and hard work were greatly appreciated. He was loved by all his staff, students and their parents. We pray that Fr. Thomas never gets tired of a retired life.



RAJKOT ZONE

નવવિધાન પરિવાર ગોંડલ

- ૨૦૨૧-૨૨ શૈક્ષણિક વર્ષનું પ્રત્યક્ષ શિક્ષણ ઓગષ્ટ મહિનાથી શરૂ કરવામાં આવ્યું. આ સાથે જ પ્રેમયોગ બાળાશ્રમ અને સુકૃતિ કન્યા છાત્રાલયના બાળકો પણ તબક્કાવાર આવી પહોંચ્યાં. હાલ ૬૦ બાળકો આશ્રમમાં રહી શિક્ષણ લે છે.
- નવવિધાન વિદ્યા સંકુલને વધુ લીલોછમ બનાવવા માટે ૫૦ થી વધુ ફળના રોપો રોપવામાં આવ્યાં એની સાથે ઘણા બધા અન્ય વૃક્ષોના છોડ પણ વાવવામાં આવ્યાં.



- નવજીવન ટ્રસ્ટ રાજકોટમાંથી બે વખત શિક્ષણ અને તેના ફાયદાઓ વિષે બે શિબિર યોજવામાં આવી અને ચિત્ર સ્પર્ધા પણ રાખવામાં આવી હતી.
- નવવિધાન આશ્રમમાં રક્ષાબંધન, સંત કલારા, અસીસીના સંત ફ્રાંસિસ, માતા મરિયમના જન્મ જયંતીના તહેવારો ધામધૂમથી ઊજવવામાં આવ્યાં.
- જામનગરથી ફાધર મેથ્યુસ અને બ્રધરો, કેરલથી CMI સંઘાના વડીલો સૌરાષ્ટ્ર અને કચ્છમાંથી ઘણા ફાધરો આશ્રમની મુલાકાતે આવ્યા હતા.
- આશ્રમ પરિવારમાં દરરોજ તેર ઇસ્ટપંથીઓ ખ્રિસ્તીયજ્ઞમાં ભાગ લે છે.



CMI KARMAYOG ASHRAM VINCHHIYA



The Navvidhan Rural School started offline classes after the Covid break. Students from Classes 6 to 10 are attending the school regularly. The boarding houses too are functioning well.



Fr. Paul Kannarkat CMI took the teachers of Navvidhan to a fantastic phonetic expedition from 14th to 20th October. All our teachers are now aware of their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses and the latter is more prominent.

On the Vijayadashami holiday our boarding boys of Class 10 took up on themselves the duty of cooking food for all. They prepared delicious food for about 80 boarders, and after eating to their full they collected two baskets.



Frs. Joy Elamkunnappuzha CMI and Paul Kannarkat CMI shared some quality time together after their formation days in Dharmaram. Almost all the CMIs, both dead and alive, featured in their friendly and brotherly discussion.



The CMI General Councillors Rev Frs. Martin Mallath, Biju Vadakkell and the Secretary to Prior General Fr. Geo Karuvely visited us. Fr. Kallamby was their guide.

The Navratri celebration was mainly limited to the Garba in front of the graceful statue of Mother Mary on the football field.

MSI sisters from Delhi Delegation visited us. Their Superior Sr. Ancy Joseph was accompanied by Srs. Arul Jyothi and Santhoshi.



Smt. Jinalben, the judicial magistrate of Vinchhiya with the participants/ students of the essay writing competition directed by the apex court for promoting legal awareness among women and children.

St. Mary's School, Rajkot

Distribution of food kits to those affected by Covid

The school distributed 400 food kits to the needy ones through Marian Service Wing (MSW) of the school in the months of April/May 2021. The whole hearted support and generous contribution of the staff and well-wishers is praise worthy.

New Computer Lab for High School Section



It was a matter of joy that Alumni of St. Mary's School helped to renovate the computer Lab of High School section. The renovated computer lab was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. James Thayil CMI, the Provincial on 1st August 2021 in the presence of donors, well-wishers



and a few of the retired staff. St. Mary's school extends sincere thanks to all of them.

Visitation of Rev. Fr. Prior General and his General Councillors

On 11th of October 2021, Rev. Fr. General Thomas Chathanparambil CMI and his team visited St. Mary's



CMI House. They were accorded a warm welcome by Fr. Vincent Kallamby and were briefed of our CMI house and the Schools. Fr. Prior General visited the Schools too.

St. Paul's CMI House, Munjka, Rajkot

The community welcomed its new member, Rev Fr. Jinto CMI who is pursuing his MBA at Christ College Rajkot. He also serves as the chaplain of the Devpriya Generalate.



colourful posters to mask paintings. The students were dressed up as national leaders which added to the patriotic fervour.

Welcoming High School Students

With new plans and aspirations to restore normalcy to school life, we hoped the new academic session would



St. Paul's School, Rajkot

Saint Paul's Day Celebrations

Online teaching and learning had brought with it not only several deliberations and challenges, but also creative work and a door to new possibilities. Nothing prevented us from celebrating Saint Paul's Day this year. The day dedicated to prayer service in the honour



of the liturgical feast of St. Peter and Paul is observed as Saint Paul's Day by the school on June 29 every year. The entire event was aired live through the school YouTube channel for all the students and parents to witness the grand celebration from the comfort of their home.

Independence Day

The online classes did not dampen the spirits of our young citizens while celebrating the 75th Independence Day of our nation. The week was marked



with interesting competitions across all grades- from patriotic skits to declamation competitions, from

commence with all the students back in school. However, due to the surge in Covid-19 cases, our hopes were shattered. Recently, we have had our high school students attending regular classes in school. On their part, the students are showing excitement about the new journey by coming dressed in the school uniform on time and all set for new learning each day; and with that, we are planning to open school for middle school as well after Diwali.

Navratri Celebration

The primary school celebrated Navratri by organising a dandiya and garba event on October 9, 2021 with the aim of spreading happiness and joy. The students, parents and teachers were all dressed up in traditional Gujarati attire and danced to the rhythmic dandiya beats through the virtual celebration.

Pre Boards Examination- October 2021



By its high blow, the pandemic made the education system across the world go through a paradigm shift. Online examinations had become a new normal, until this month when the school decided to conduct the Pre-Board Examination for classes 9, 10, 11 and 12 offline with all necessary precautions and safety measures.

School is a Temple of Learning -The Saint Paul's Jigyasa Intra-School Quiz

Success means having the courage, the determination and the will to become the person you believe you were meant to be. Paulines proved their mettle at the quiz competition organised in association with Skills Sphere Education, a pan Asian educational organisation. The Jigyasa quiz was conducted for students of grades 6 to 8. The quiz consisted of 3 rounds, with the semi final and final rounds being conducted live by a quiz master online. The winners were awarded with exciting prizes and certificates.

St. Xavier's School, Rajkot

Established in the year 2018, the School has 78 staff members and 1668 students, (K.G - Std. 8). The academic year 2021-22, was started on the 1st of June with Orientations and Training Programmes for the teachers and with a virtual Prayer service for the students on 10th June. We are using Zoom & Google Apps for all the academic matters and extra-curricular excellence. Parents are provided with Semester Planner with all the schedules in advance. On 30th October, we concluded the Semester-1 on a cheerful note, by celebrating both Garba and Diwali. The



management feels that the staff, students and parents were happy and content with the new academic package for Semester-1.

Provincial House

Provincial house was vibrant with the pioneers and youngsters. However the pandemic corona has taken away the most vital part of our community and the very source of its vibrancy. Fr. John Fisher passed away on

16th April 2021. Fr. Joseph Kattikkaran CMI also left us on 27th April. And, then the ever joyful member of our community, Fr. John Naduvathussery CMI left us for his eternal reward on 26th October. All the members of our provincial house had corona except Frs. Varghese, Pradeeksh and Jojo. The time of pandemic was an eye opener to each one of us as we experienced the mutual love and concern for each other. It was a time that we could experience the special blessings and providence of God.

In the month of June after completing his college studies Bro. Jibin left for theological studies. Fr. Jerry was transferred to Kerala as vocation promoter. On October 1st, 2nd, and 3rd we had the renewal programme. Fathers from Rajkot zone gathered in the provincial house. We had the Canonical visitation of Fr. Prior general from 11th October to 16th October 2021. Fr. Paul Vithayathil left for Kerala to take classes for the newly joined brothers. He had an angioplasty surgery on 4th December at Rajagiri Hospital, Kerala and is getting better now.

Constant visit of members of our province keep our community vibrant and active. Bp. Gregory and all the members of provincial house community are getting ready to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



A Shepherd is always available, whether to people or animals he is on fire. Bishop Gregory who is known for his love for Nature and animals fondly interacting with his pets

SURENDRANAGAR AND MORBI ZONE

Dhrangadhra

A New Look for the Army Church

It was due to an initiative from Brigadier Anthony Grocy and the team that the army church now has a new



look. A long cherished dream has been fulfilled. Access to the Army Church was not granted for the past one and half years. Now the religious communities along

implemented. All the communities of the Zone joined this celebration.



Construction of the new phase of the school is nearing completion.

St. Xavier's School, Kuda

St. Xavier's School, Kuda re-opened on 18th July 2021 with the 12th standard students having offline classes. A few days later the offline classes for 9th, 10th and 11th standards began. All the students come regularly to the school. The school successfully conducted a meeting for all the parents of our students.

Since this year teacher's day fell on Sunday 5th September we had an anticipatory celebration on 4th September, Saturday. Many of our students took up teaching, thus relieving their teachers of taking classes for the day. Cordial interaction between teachers and students was the hallmark of this day. Students felicitated their teachers with gifts. Fr. Joseph Vadakkekara CMI gave the message of the day and also congratulated the students who participated in the teacher's day programme.

Rosary Devotion

The month of October is especially dedicated to the rosary devotion. There was a joint celebration of two centres, Dhrangadhra and Kuda, for ten days of solemn rosary devotion. It was conducted in each family. All the faithful joined the rosary devotion and prayers. On 12th the celebration was concluded with the solemn Eucharist concelebrated by Fr. Joseph and Fr. Sijomon.



with all the Catholic people go to Church every Sunday. Thanks to Brigadier Anthony and the team for their support.

The zonal level Onam celebration was arranged on 21st August at Saint Hilary School. Under the leadership of Fr. Sebastian Kalathil it was well planned and

Navjyoti Prayer Center

Navjyoti Prayer Center was able to accommodate different groups for their annual retreat. Spiritual



programmes were conducted for sisters, juniors and aspirants/ postulants of different congregations as per their requirements under the expert guidance of Fr. Dr. George Ouruliyannickal CMI and Fr. Dr. Thomas Paickattu CMI.



All the CMI fathers of SUMO (Surendranagar and Morbi) Zone attended the online three days Province renewal Programme at Dhrolia under the leadership of Fr. Jose Mangalamkunel CMI.

Fr. General and his Councillors visited Navjyoti Prayer Center and they were very positive and happy about having a prayer center in the CMI mission.

St. Mary's School, Chotila

The School has reopened after the Diwali vacation. As most of us know the School started in 2018-19 with 10 students for LKG and HKG. In 2019-20 we started



Std. 1st and 2nd with 100 students. Off line classes with 50% attendance as per the government instructions are going on with 160 students attending the classes up to the 4th standard.

Blessing of the New Convent Petra Nikethan



The DSS Sisters (Deena Seva Sabha) known as Pattuvam Sisters from Kannur help us in our educational apostolate at Chotila.

A convent was constructed and christened "Petra Nikethan" after their Founder, Mother Petra a Servant of God. The blessing of the new convent took place on



12th September 2021 at the hands of Rev. Fr. James Thayil CMI, our provincial in the presence of all the council fathers and other invited guests.

The CMI inmates, Fr. Jose Mangalamkunel and Fr. Joby Mylikal, got shifted from the makeshift residence in the school building to their permanent dwelling place, St. Mary's CMI house.



JAMNAGAR ZONE

JAMNAGAR

St. Xavier's Aspirant's House

We are blessed with four aspirants; Bro. Amal Enchanimalayil and Bro. Tibin Naluparayil are busy meticulously preparing for their 12th board exam, while Bro. Ashwin Puthanveetil and Bro. Chris Kochuvetil are diligent at study in Std. 11, under the paternal care of Fr. Mathews Vallomkunnel CMI.



Canonical visit of Fr. Provincial was held on 28th and 29th September.

The special rosary devotion was commenced on October 1 and concluded on October 10, Sunday. St. Xavier's community joined with the aspirants for the special rosary devotion.



Fr. Prior General and two of the General Councillors visited the aspirants on 15th October.

St. Xavier's School

The academic year 2021-22 started on 6th June in St. Xavier's Jamnagar with the online mode. Later government permitted to have offline classes for higher secondary section with 50% attendance from 15th July onwards and subsequently for the high school section; from 1st August onwards there were offline classes for the upper primary section as per government instructions.



The school band took part in the district level as well as the state level competitions and stood first. Congrats to the champions.

St. Francis School

The academic activities are on in full swing in spite of the Covid-19 situations. The School is functioning with both online and offline modes of classes. From LKG to Std. 5 students are attending the Virtual Classes and the students of Std 6-12 attend both online and offline education simultaneously. After the initial reluctance due to the covid-19 situations around, the students have now started to come in good number for the offline classes and the Semester Exams.

Teachers Day Celebration

Teachers' Day was celebrated on 4th September on a small scale in the absence of students. Teachers came up with a two-hour entertainment programme, which brought a meaning to the celebrations of the day. Fr. Mathews Vallomkunnel was the Chief guest of the programme.

Independence Day Celebration



We too joined the whole nation in paying tribute to our nation and the freedom fighters on the occasion of the 74th Independence Day of our nation. Teachers and the other staff members of both the schools participated in the joint celebrations held in St. Xavier's Campus. Dr. Wasim Alware, one of the former students of St. Xavier's School and a well-known Physician of Jamnagar City was the Chief guest of the occasion. Fr. Cyriac Kannezhath CMI, the Manager of the Campus also graced the occasion with his presence and an enlightening Independence Day message. After the common celebrations we had the classwise virtual celebration of Independence Day incorporating the students.

Canonical Visit of Fr. Provincial

Fr. James Thayil the Provincial was on the Campus for Canonical visitation from 21st - 23rd of September. He visited the school and interacted with the staff in a short meeting held on the 21st of September and met some of them personally.

Navratri Celebrations



The teachers of St. Francis School came together on the evening of 9th October for the Navratri Celebrations. And there was also a combined celebration of St. Xavier's and St. Francis schools on 14th October in the premises of St. Xavier's School.

St. Xavier's School, Khambhalia



The School is going great under the able leadership of the principal Fr. Benny Thakarapalli CMI. He took charge of the school last year from Fr. Dionish Thazhathuveetil CMI. The CMC sisters' invaluable cooperation is praise worthy.



This year Navaratri, Rakshabandhan and Teacher's day were celebrated in the school with gusto. Special prayer service was organised for the staff members.

The construction of the priest-residence is in full swing



Mother Teresa School Jamjodhpur



The New academic year 2021- 22 began on 7th June as per Covid protocol. 85% of the students used to attend the online classes.

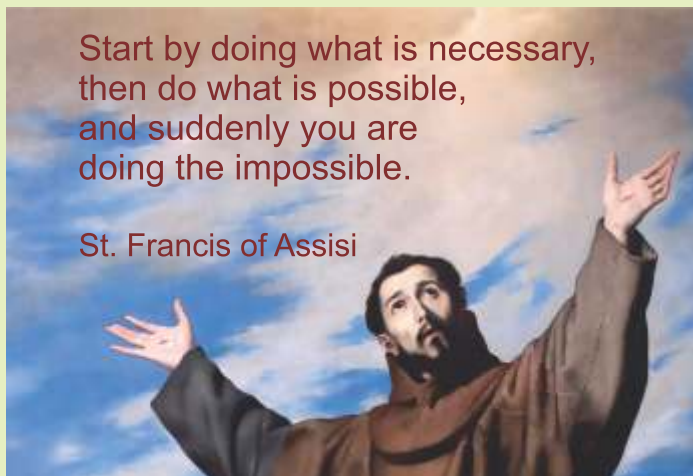
After two years of service at Jamjodhpur Sr. Rashita DP went to Indore for the preparation of her final profession and in her place, Sr. Ann Maria DP took charge.

Our newly appointed principal Fr. Dionish left for Bangalore for learning the German language. He was given a befitting send-off on 13th June.

The school was given a new look with a bit of modification to the building.

The Offline classes started in August for Stds. 9 and 10 witnessed full attendance.

Offline classes were started in September for the upper primary with full attendance. At present there are 65 Students in the boarding.



Fr. Jody Elavummootil CMI was appointed the new principal of the school in the middle of September 2021.

Fr. Thomas Kolamkuzhiyil was here for two months to brush up his Gujarati in the eco-friendly atmosphere.

*New book form
Fr. Peter Kochalumkal CMI*



KUTCH ZONE

ANJAR

Chavara Bhavan

The renewal programme for the CMI's at the KUTCH Zonal level was conducted at the centre. All the CMI priests from Kutch Zone were present and sat through all the sessions. All of us were enriched and renewed by the excellent and scholarly input sessions by the experts and speakers. The expenses of the programme were borne by St. Xavier's Mundra. We thank them for their generous and kind gesture.



The Birthdays of Fr. Tomy Ekkan CMI and Fr. Jose Karakunnel CMI were celebrated in a befitting way. The presence of the CMI fraternity, even from far and wide, was appreciated.

St. Elizabeth's School

As usual the school started with online and offline classes from June and August respectively. The result of HSC and SSC was 100% as the government cancelled the exams; all the students were given promotions to the higher classes. Fr. Tomy, with the staff, is making an uphill task to collect the fees and to improve the overall status of the school. Four of our students lost their fathers due to Covid – 19. Our heartfelt condolences to them and their bereaved families.

St. Mary's Hostel

The Hostel was opened only for the SSC students during the last academic year. All the hostel children passed the exams and were promoted to the higher classes. As the Corona subsided, a few students, who

have offline classes and exams, are called back to pursue their studies.

News from the Borders, Dayapar



The First Batch of Dayapar Xavierites got cent percent 10th board results.

St. Xavier's family was highly elated and thrilled by the success of its first batch of students who passed the GSEB Board exam 2021. The school had 100% results with high percentage of marks. We gratefully remember the former principals, Fr. Shijo Kotteparambil CMI and Fr. Sijomon Chirattavayalil CMI as well as the CMC Sisters who worked tirelessly with commitment to make the first and second generations of students from this remote locality fly high realizing their dreams.

Teachers' Day Celebration

The students and staff celebrated the teacher's day with cultural programmes and games. Students arranged the entire day's function and gave gifts to each and every member of the teaching and nonteaching staff.



Farewell to the First Batch of Students

The first batch of Xavierites was invited for the farewell party and all were extremely happy joining it. The students were awarded with certificates and shields for their success. They were quite thrilled to share the vivid memories of their school life, as they bid good bye to their alma mater. Their junior batches and their teachers took the responsibility of arranging for the cultural programmes and the lunch.

New Manager

St. Xavier's school is blessed with a young, vibrant, enthusiastic and energetic manager Fr. Bijo Manjalil CMI. He joined the CMI St. Xavier's Family on September 8.



A New Feather in the History of St. Xavier's School

One of our students, Kumari Nandini Shah participated in the Zaverchand Meghani singing competition and reached the district level competition. Best of luck to Nandini!

New Idayan at Panandhro

Fr. Roy Chennakkadan CMI is appointed in charge of Panandhro Church, the farthest parish of the Diocese.

Canonical Visit

Fr. Provincial had the Canonical visitation of the center. He actively engaged all in the discussion for the development of the center. He was very much happy and appreciated everyone for the growth and development of the institution. He desired that with the arrival of the new manager the institution would grow to greater heights.

Philip AIDS Care Centre, Vada.

Happy Re-union

"What fate has separated let Paulachan unite". One of our inmates Mrs. Razia from Suidi, in West Bengal was re-united with her family on 15th September 2021.



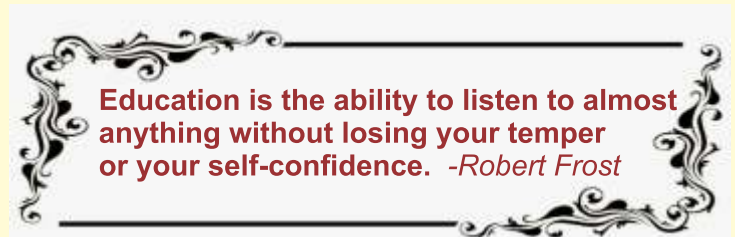
Thanks to the tireless effort of Fr. Paul and another inmate Mr. Soumitra who is also from West Bengal.

Razia reached our centre through S.D sisters of Gandhidham before 2 years. Beside HIV she was also a psychiatric patient. Several times she had expressed her desire to go home where her children and brother were waiting and had made attempts also for the same. In one such attempt she landed up in a shelter home in Bhuj run by an N.G.O who brought her back here.



In the fullness of time, God send another patient Mr. Soumitra Sarbar who also hailed from West Bengal to our centre. Fr. Paul asked him to find out the details of Razia based on the little information she herself gave. Through internet Soumitra contacted the concerned police station in Suidi, who gave the details of Razia's family. In fact they also had searched for her in various places but in vain. They were ready to accept her back. Thus Soumitra took her by train to her home town and handed her over to the family in the presence of two policemen. The re-union was really an emotional event. The joy and happiness on the faces of all could not be expressed through words.

Our only fear and concern is whether she would continue with regular medicine and proper food, the failure of which could be disastrous for her life!



Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence. -Robert Frost

Come Let Us Celebrate

Celebration adds joy and cheer to our life and the month of August is known for celebrations too. Even though there are not many celebrations in Vada, the



feast of Saint Augustine, which is also the great feast of Augustinian sisters who are our collaborators, was celebrated in a moderate manner involving only the HIV family members on 28 August 2021. Fr. Paul was the main celebrant at the Mass in the morning. Cutting the cake and sharing of ice cream were done with the inmates in the afternoon. All the inmates joined in the dancing with the rhythmic music under the leadership of Meenamma - the co-ordinator and choreographer of the programme.

The Silver Jubilee

The silver jubilee of the religious profession of Sr. Kiran Dung Dung was celebrated on the same day.

Old house in a New Look

The interior of our residence is so fresh and new now with walls whitewashed and doors and windows painted. The one who is behind the venture is none other than one of our inmates Mr. Patel Giri. He was assisted by Neethu (holding the ladder) and Bhavin (providing ground music). It is almost one year since the work started but still it is not completed – 'slow and steady wins the race.'

If you're helping someone and expecting something in return, you are doing business, not kindness.

MUNDRA

St. Xavier's Parish



St. Xavier's Parish, Mundra had the First Holy Communion and Confirmation of 11 children on 10th of October.

Silver Jubilee of the Ordination of Fr. James Katteth CMI was also celebrated on the occasion.

Bishop Jose Chittooparambil CMI presided over the liturgical celebration. Many priests from the Kutch zone and Sisters from the nearby mission stations attended the function along with 140 parishioners.

Silver Jubilee of the wedding of two couples from the parish was also celebrated.

St. Xavier's School

St. Xavier's School Mundra, participated in the High School Section Science fair at the district level with the project on innovation in agriculture and secured the first position in Kutch district thereby getting selected for the State level competition. Congrats to the students Krishna Patel, Soham Alhat and the Teacher in charge Mrs. Neelima Tanna.

On Teacher's day the Mundra Rotary Club felicitated our school for its contributions in the field of education especially in the Mundra region.

Raise Your Mic (RYM). Western Region Gospel singing was conducted at the National level in which three students of the school got selected to the Second level.

One of the students Ayush Khaire of Std. IV became the National Winner in the Class Four category of the Science Quiz competition organized by Zee News from Delhi.

Inter- House Basket Ball tournaments were conducted at St. Xavier's School

Cultural Fest- 2021 was conducted in the school for around 3.5 hours. Various programs/competitions were conducted for students, teachers and parents.

The School is limping back to normalcy with the routine curricular and extra-curricular activities which include Basketball coaching, Karate training, Music classes, etc.



Heer Joshi of Std. XI secured the 2nd position and was selected for the second level in the "KNOW YOUR INDIA" Quiz competition conducted by the Kutch District Education Department.

St. Xavier's School, Shinai



Fr. Antony Puthussery CMI left for Kerala after serving Shenai School for some time as it's Director. He is currently engaged in a post doctoral research project. Best of luck Fr. Antony CMI! Fr. Joseph Kattakayam CMI is back to Shenai as it's Director.

PUNE



Fr. Shobin Mankudiyil CMI is pursuing his doctoral studies in Systematic Theology in Jnana Deepa, Pune. He is progressing well in his research works after the easing of the lockdown restrictions. The classes are going on in online mode. Best wishes for his studies ahead.

**When diseases,
trials and difficulties
face you,
resign yourselves
to the will of God.**



Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara

DELHI

CHRIST (Deemed to be) University Delhi

Service Learning: In the footprints of Mahatma

Inspired by the motto of CHRIST (Deemed to be) University, Delhi NCR - 'Excellence and Service' - the Centre for Social Action organized a clean-up drive cum awareness campaign on 2nd October 2021 to



commemorate Gandhi Jayanti, which yester generations cherish as Sevanavaram - a week of service. Around 40 studious and dynamic student volunteers along with their mentors participated in the event, held at Nadgram in Ghaziabad around two kilometers from the CHRIST campus. The awareness rally was flagged off from what we call "Happy Park" and marched on to various localities in Nandgram covering two kilometers. The placards and slogans used in the rally heralded the importance of a clean environment for healthy life and people's proactive role in maintaining it. The message of the day reached hundreds of residents in Nandgram thronged to the slogans and music chanted by our students. Followed by the awareness rally, the volunteers engaged in an intense group discussion and reflected upon the theme campus networks for service learning. Core deliberations were on the benefits of service learning and the significance of different cultural practices to promote sustainability. Students also discussed various courses of action to achieve the Sustainable

Development Goals, particularly in the local context. Afterward, the student volunteers marched to F Block of Nandgram visited a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) being installed to understand the mechanism of waste management. Such good sustainable practices they themselves would implement becoming leaders in the future. Thereupon they assembled at the Mother Dairy Park. Armed with brooms and gloves, our volunteers started to sweep and clean the park. While sharing his experience, Priyank Nagpal a second year student of

BSc Psychology told "I was nervous when we started cleaning outside. I have never done it before as it was considered as a kind of 'taboo'. When we were washing our hands after work, a poor elderly lady brought a pot of water, poured it to our hands as our mothers do. This incident touched me to the core." We learnt that this participatory action inspired the volunteers and people in the vicinity, as action speaks more than words. Sakshi, a student of final year BBA told "The clean-up drive instilled in the students and the residents a sense of responsibility and an empathetic

perspective on the invaluable service of the cleaning workers. It provided us with an opportunity to experience the 'dirt' that pollutes the environment, for which we are directly or indirectly responsible". Adarsh Manoj, a second year student of commerce was overwhelmed to buy the idea of service learning and the ways with which university has encouraged youngsters to remember and continue to live the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. I, on behalf of the university community spent an hour with the student volunteers, applauding the dedication and untiring efforts that they exhibited to make this clean-up drive a success. While CHRIST (Deemed to be) University strives hard for achieving excellence in academics, these service learning opportunities that we offer equip our students with aptitude and skills to become better human beings and to serve the humanity passionately with the indomitable spirit of service that the Father of our nation bequeathed.

Fr. Sunny Vettikuzhichalil CMI

KERALA

Rajkot Bhavan, Aluva



Nine of our first year aspirants began the first phase of their formation at St. Xaviers Bhavan, Aluva. They reached here in the month of June 2021. Fr Jerry Malayilparambil CMI was their incharge. Now, having completed the first phase of their language course, on 30 November they have moved to Rajkot, where they will be resuming their studies. We wish them God's blessings.

New Grotto

In the month of October, the community conducted 10 days of solemn Rosary with utmost devotion and piety. Towards the end of this Month, specially devoted to Mother Mary, we could construct a beautiful grotto in



the premise of our house. And it was inaugurated on the occasion of the culmination of Rosary Month celebration. A good initiative by Rev Fr Naiju Thaliyath CMI.

Warm Greetings From Puliyanam Farm House, Kerala



Under the able leadership of Fr. Siju Padayatty CMI our farm has become a garden of Eden; cohabitation of animals and plants provides a different look and to explore the same many people are visiting the farm to enjoy its cool and pure atmosphere. The visit of Fr. James Thayil CMI our provincial added more vigour to the inmates of the farm. Fathers Naiju and Antony from CMI Aluva House also take keen interest in the



development of the farm. Sadly Fr. Siju and a helper were affected by Corona, but are stable now.

Wish him the very best! Fr. Siju may export the fruits of his labor to Rajkot.

VINAYALAYA, BHANPURI

Vestition and First Profession of four of our novices namely, Abi Tom Therakamnilkkunnathil, Ajil Kappalumakkal, Jibin Manjalil, and Vimal Vilangupara were held on 8 December, 2021, the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception of Mother Mary, at the Vinayalaya Novitiate House, Bhanpuri, Chhattisgarh. Mar Joseph Kollamparampil, Bishop of Jagdalpur officiated the Liturgy in which Fr Josy Thamarassery, the Vicar General of CMI Cingregation and the provincials of Bhopal, Rajkot, Jagdalpur and Adilabad were present. Frs Mathews Vallomkunnel CMI and Bijo Manjalil CMI also represented our province at the celebration. The parents and other family members of the novices came over from Kerala to witness the first profession of their beloved ones.



WARDHA

Darsana, Wardha

Darsana Institute of Philosophy is indeed very happy with the presence of Fr. Jino Valiyaparambil CMI, Fr. Wilson Vettumanickal CMI and Br. Prince CMI.

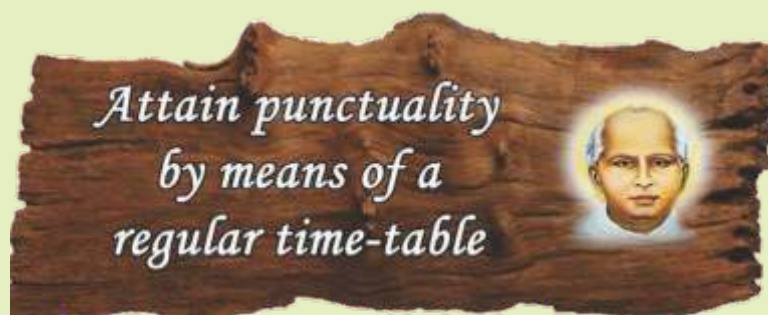
Gujaratis, be it the Adanis or Ambanis, be it Fr. Jino or Fr. Wilson, believe in making their presence felt very soon by bringing new changes. A face lift for Darsana Institute of Philosophy is being carried out by erecting a boundary wall from all the four sides of Darsana campus. But wild cats still find a way in, to the campus of Darsana. All the Darsanites were held captive for five hours because a leopard was spotted in the neighbouring medical college campus in the morning. But to our great relief it was captured by noon from the hospital campus itself.

The Darsana community has 7 fathers and 64 brothers this new academic year. Fr. Jino is of the opinion that all the brothers should look like him, fit and fat, hence a new fish pond is getting ready, so that brothers can enjoy fish every day.

Fr. Jino is very happy because there are many Gujaratis in Wardha market and so he is able to improve his Gujarati language.

Fr. Wilson is happy because he is able to see the faces of a few students every day. The school is re-opened for the students of standard five and above, and 95% students are regular in attending the classes.

Campus development works like making of the basketball court, renovations of computer lab, office and library are in full swing. Affiliation for the secondary and higher secondary sections is obtained, and NOC from the state government is still awaited.



DHARMARAM, BENGALURU

News from Bengaluru Dharmaram



Even at the age of 85, Fr. John Marius Manickanamparambil CMI, continues as the compassionate and merciful face of Dharmaram. He is part and parcel of DASS and ASWAS, the powerhouse of Dharmaram in reaching out to the poor and

the needy. Fr. Marius continues to be an ever vibrant, active, energetic and inspiring presence for the Dharmaram family. He is an inevitable part of the spiritual nourishment team of the Dharmaram Community.

'A crowd puller at the confessional' is what best defines Fr. Peter Kochalumkal CMI. He is a faculty in the Institute of Vinayasadhana, DVK. He serves as the animator of the students doing Diploma in Spirituality and also as the master of the 2nd-year theologians at Dharmaram College. He is a much sought-after Confessor, Retreat Preacher, Spiritual Father, and writer. 'Nasrathile Yathrakkari' is his latest work published by Sophia Books.

Fr. Johnson Parayil CMI, pursuing his studies in Diploma in Spirituality, has completed his 1st semester. He is enjoying his studies and stays at Research Centre, Dharmaram College.

Fr. Dionish CMI is ardently preparing for the German mission. He is currently pursuing the B1 level in German course. He is enjoying his studies and stays at Research Centre, Dharmaram College. Though issues of Covid were there in the Research Centre, fathers Johnson and Dionish could survive by God's grace without being affected by the pandemic.

Fr. Shijo Kotteparambil CMI

Fr. Shijo is doing his first-year Licentiate (M.Th.) in the Theology of Consecrated Life from Sanyasa Institute, Carmelaram, Bengaluru run by the Claretian congregation. He is refreshing his religious studies, Spirituality and theology after a long gap of 15 years. He feels very comfortable to be in the classrooms. He is just back with ten days of Christian Ashram experience at Amaithi Ashram Nagarcoil. All is well with him there.

SAMANVAYA, BHOPAL

Warm Greetings from

Samanvaya Theological College, Bhopal

We are happy to have two of our province members in Samanvaya Theological College Bhopal. Fr. James Kachappilly CMI is appointed as the administrator of the campus. Bro. Jibin Manakuzhiyil CMI after completing his graduation in B.A Literature in English joined Samanvaya for first year Theology. He had to come back for the final semester examination. Bro. Jibin has secured Distinction in the final semester and in all total of the semesters. Congratulations and best wishes to Bro. Jibin.

The Milieu of an integrated theological formation is evocative of the values of a basic human community as found in the life and mission of the early Christians. The Samanvaya programme of theological formation is characterised as contextual, the objective of which is an experiential understanding of Indian reality. A cordial community inspired with a single purpose and motivated by shared concerns began its new academic year with the positive aura in Samanvaya, where the administrative body is formed in a way that the students are well taken care of their physical, mental and spiritual needs. The administrative team consists of Dr.Davis Varayalan CMI(Rector), Dr.Cyril Kuttiyanikal CMI(Dean of Studies), Fr.James Kachappilly CMI(Administrator), Dr.Naiju Kalambukattu CMI(Master), Dr. Lawrence Padamadan CMI, Dr.Jacob Marnagatt CMI, Dr.Savio

Thekkekara CMI. Samanvaya has three batches of 1st, 2nd and 3rd year Theology students, a total of 25 students who make the campus vibrant and harmonious. Poornodaya Training Centre and Christ School began their social and educational activities post the severity of covid-pandemic. The Parish Church also started functioning with its normal pastoral activities with a good number of faithful and religious communities. We cultivate vegetables, fruits, kappa and other farm products in our campus. The effort taken by Fr. James Kachappilly for the agricultural development and the administration of the entire campus is well appreciated and the fruits of his industriousness are enjoyed by the entire community. Also, the canonical visitation by Fr. General and councillors brought a fresh charm and vibe for all of us on the campus. Recently, the brothers involved them

selves in charitable social activities for the needy and marginalized in the society, systematically planning things out and reaching out to the ones who are in need. The weekly pastoral activities in different parishes also are engaged by the brothers and creative efforts are made to integrate the subject matter of prayer, meditation and daily celebration of the paschal mysteries. Thus, learning is no longer limited to the classrooms; everything that the students do becomes part of the theological formation which moulds the overall formation of the students. The lifestyle is the fruit of a greater interiorization of the gospel values through the internal discipline of silence and prayer. The Samanvayic life and spirituality is a happy blend of the concern for the human beings and the concern for the divine.

GERMANY

Our German Mission

It is reported that all our German Rajkot CMIs are doing well by the grace of God. They had very hard time during the Covid-19 pandemic. Fr. Joseph Korackal CMI, Fr. Francis Akkappady, Fr. Paulose Pottanpuzha, Fr. Joseph Kuzhikkattu, Fr. George Ottalankal and Fr. Jaimon Thandappillil are safe and strong. They are tending their sheep in the midst of the pandemic.

Warmest greetings from Augsburg, South Germany! Currently Fr. Joseph Korackal is in charge of a huge Parish which has thirteen thousand Catholics. The parish has three old-age homes, three schools and a hospital.

He toils day and night to cater to the needs of his people. The corona virus had affected his place so hard that many of his parishioners left for eternity, but the providence of God really kept him safe and healthy to give hope to the hopeless. He finds more joy and happiness in administering various sacraments for the people of God. Though he is busy, as a dutiful zonal coordinator, he makes it a point to visit all the fathers of the province in Germany to enhance the CMI bond.

Due to the corona virus the government is enacting different laws for each day and it becomes a herculean task for the priests to update and study these laws.

Fr. Jaimon Thandapally CMI is doing his pastoral ministry in St. Michael parish in Ketttershausen, in the diocese of Augsburg. During the time of Covid they did not close the church but the liturgical services were going on regularly following the covid protocol. The



number of Holy Masses per day was increased to cater to the needs of the faithful.

At Christmas and Easter people have to register their names in the parish office to participate in the ceremonies. In summer the holy masses were celebrated outside the church, so that more people could participate. It was very difficult to visit the old and the sick people to administer the last sacrament and give the Holy Communion because antigen tests were

mandatory before every visit. This year the number of children receiving the first Holy Communion and confirmations has gone up significantly. Since 65% of Germany is vaccinated, the parish activities are back to normal.

Dear and loving all, we hugely appreciate your valuable services to the German Church and to our Province. We gratefully acknowledge your relentless service to the province. Stay healthy.

PHILIPPINES

Fr. Manu Cherumuttathupadi CMI has successfully completed His Licentiate and Master of Arts in Theology in December 2019 and is now pursuing his Doctorate in Theology from the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in Manila, Philippines. He is writing his dissertation for his doctoral defense at present. As a student, along with his studies, he assists in St. Joseph Shrine Parish, Anonas,



Manila. This parish is a Diocesan Shrine of the Diocese of Cubao. Being the year of St. Joseph, there are many pastoral programmes in the parish. There had been Eucharistic Processions on every Sunday in all the zones of the parish during the lockdown. The communion was brought to the streets by the priests and distributed to the people who were kneeling down on the roads to receive Jesus.

St. Joseph Table is a programme through which the poor people are given food once a month. The food is sponsored by the good souls in the vicinity of the parish. St. Joseph Community Pantry is another programme through which every Monday poor people are given free groceries. Different items are placed on the table in front of the Church and those in need can collect them.

85% of the total population is Catholic in the Philippines. They are simple people who have simple faith. This is a cluster of more than 7,000 Islands easily prone to natural calamities like typhoons, earth quakes, floods, storms etc. Though they suffer a lot in their



daily lives, they are very resilient and very generous by nature. All are equally given importance in the parishes. All people, rich and poor work hand in hand in the parish activities. People are ready to give their entire time for the parish service without seeking any remuneration. They love to serve God and priests. There is a lot to learn from these simple and humble people each and every day.

BRAZIL

Fr. Joby Virippamattathil CMI from Brazil



Currently Fr. Joby Virippamattathil CMI works in the diocese De Santarem in Amazon.

After learning the language and culture of the land this has become a second home for him. As a true pastor he goes to the people, sits with them, consoles them and brings them back to the original flock. He looks after the spiritual needs of around 7000 faithful and he enjoys his mission work. The main Parish has 13 sub stations in the cities and 54 small communities on the river banks of Amazon. He is working together with Fr.

pastoral care. Fr. Joby takes care of the people in the cities and the other priest goes to the substations which are around 250 kms. away from the centre. Through pastoral visits, good rapport with the faithful, praying together and blessing their houses, he has created an ideal Christian atmosphere for the Amazon Church to grow.



With the support of the parishioners he renovated the church, and the faithful are very happy with their pastor. He organizes various programmes to reach the unreachable in that land.

He says, though there are some family problems, they do take care of their parents and children. One cannot find any old-age homes there, many people adopt children and that shows their commitment to the creation and to the humanity.

Drug mafias are very common in Brazil; when a person was shot dead right in front of Fr. Joby he could not do anything. Such incidents often trouble his mind. But one can only be a silent observer.

He is extremely happy that two of our province members joined the Amazon Mission and will be working for the greater glory of God. We wish our beloved Fr. Joby all the best!!!

New Rajkot CMIs in Brazil

When Fr. Jose Varkey Paily Pallickapparambil (Pattathil) and Fr. Tomy Pothanappara were delayed by the pandemic from proceeding to Brazil, they decided to proceed towards Goa where they were welcomed, accommodated and taken care of by Mr. & Mrs. Wilson Rodrigues and family. There they found an original Brazilian, Ms. Nilza Pelentir, an instructor in one of the language institutes in Goa, whom they



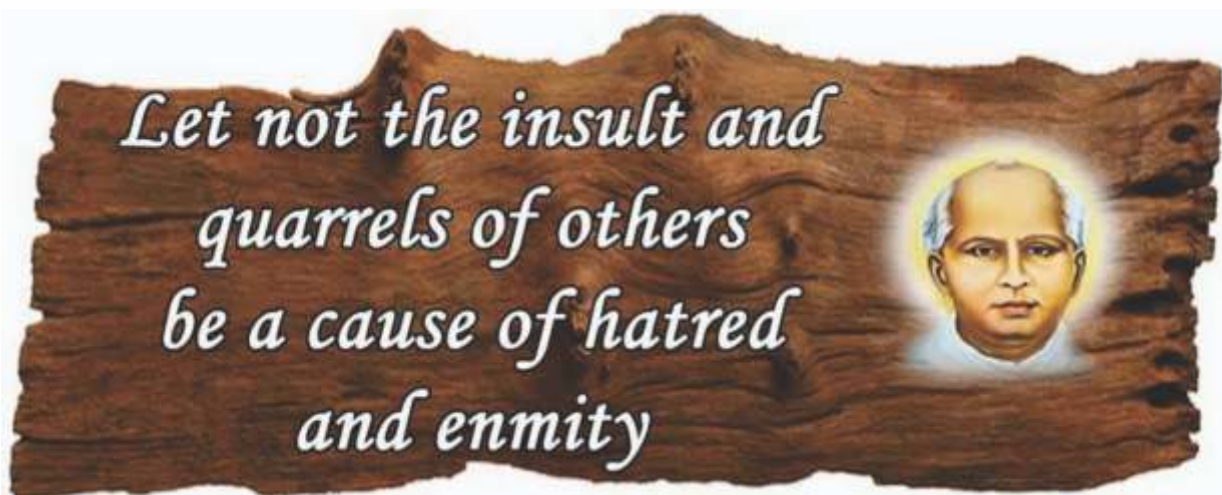
Saji Valamangalm of the Moovatupuza province, fulfilling the Parish duties which are divided for better



to the Prior General's House for Visa purposes. They landed in Brazil on 24th November 2021. May their commitment and courage be an inspiration to many more CMIs. Shubh-Shubhechhao Bhaio!!!



accepted as their teacher of the Brazilian Portuguese language. She, being a genuine Brazilian Catholic lady and a good teacher, was of immense help in teaching them the language and the culture of Brazil. As they were living in a rented building and cooking for themselves, there were many occasions of food exchange programmes among themselves where Kerala food was exchanged for Brazilian food. A few neighbors used to join them for the celebration of the daily Eucharist. Corona made them study from home. The second level of the language course was at Pilar, where they stayed with the Pilar fathers, praying and enjoying the Goan delicacies. Their teacher was so generous that she offered to take classess at their residence. Having completed the Portuguese language course in Goa, Frs. Tomy and Pattathil had moved over



NAMIBIA



Where ever Fr. Taiju Thaliath CMI goes he brings in full results. It is informed to us that Fr. Taiju holds various posts as part of his mission in Namibia. He is in charge of a parish and a full time chaplain of poor Clare sisters. Under his paternal guidance the church in Namibia once again regaining her lost spirit. The seminary is full and many priests are underway to rejuvenate the church. The CMIs mission and charisma is very much felt. We wish all the best for Fr. Taiju's mission



*The beginning is the
most important part of the work.*

Plato

TRIVIALITY OF LIFE

The sky was so dazzling and spotless
Early dawn filled me with invigorating joy
I thought—it will reside with me forever
But the sudden gloomy mist transformed this dazzling beauty

As I often do, I looked at nature
The newly sprouted leaf
Gazed at me, inviting me to kiss her surface
I looked down to see her beauty
But was stunned by the wrinkle on her stem

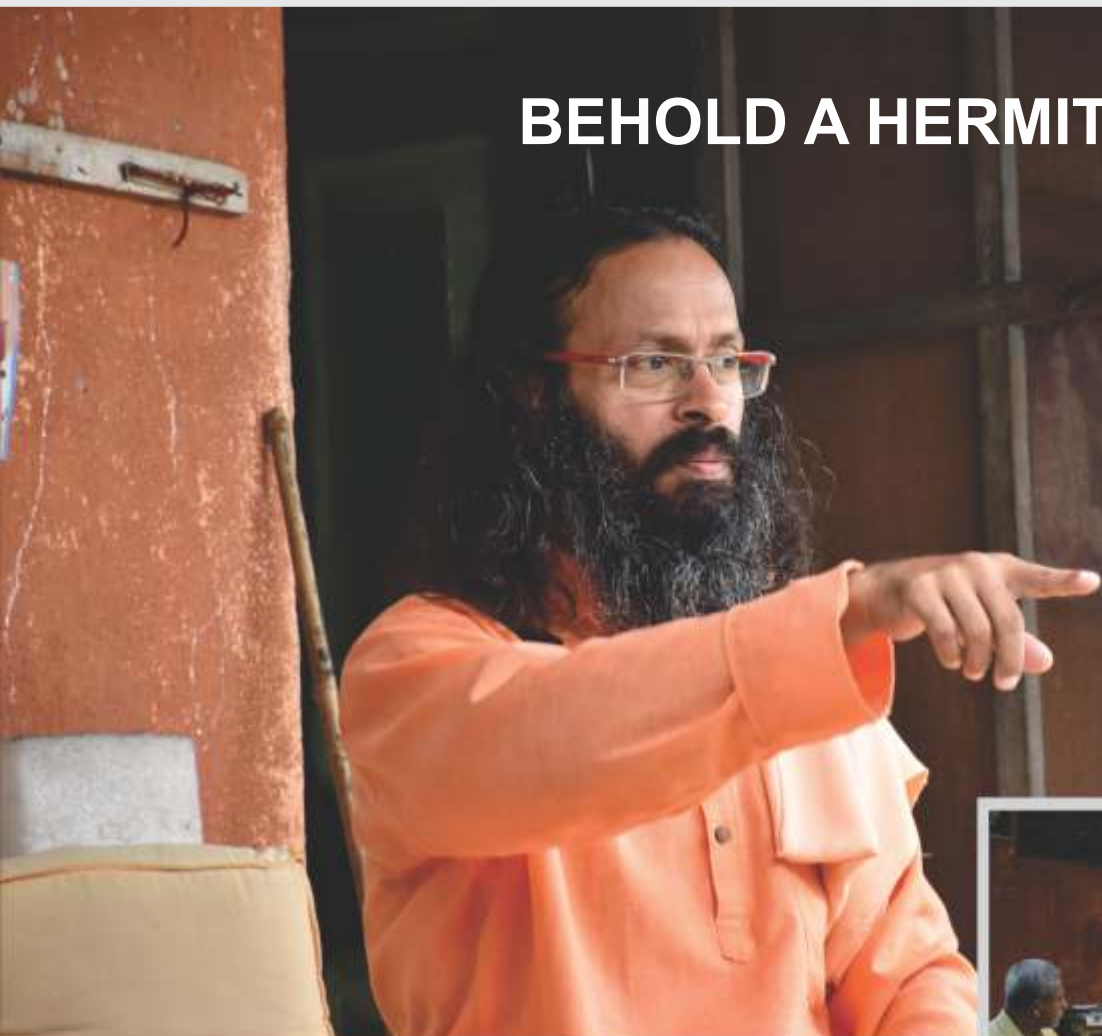
Something has happened!
I need to recover my joy!

But I am totally confused
Tossed between the hot and sour soup
I lay down—quietly—to ponder over the triviality of life
It is somewhat hot, cold, sweet and sour.



Fr. Joby Mylickal CMI

BEHOLD A HERMIT



Fr. Sebastian Maliyekal CMI, now known as Christhanand is the only Hermit of our Province. He is finding joy in radically following Christ and is burning with zeal for God's Kingdom at Atmeshwar, in Girnar, Junagadh. Like St. Anthony of Desert, St. Benedict, and St. Dominic he chose a life which is a great challenge to the modern religious life. The roaring of the lions only add passions to his commitment and his roaring success.

His is a call within the call. That is a path in which the religious life was originated in the Church. That is the path many followers of Christ have chosen and many feel embarrassed to embrace., Fr. Christhanand attracts a good number of devotees and pilgrims, whom he guides and leads through the right path. He becomes a channel of Christ's love and peace. His challenging mission is really a need of the time. May he show millions of people the way to the Fountain of Living Water.



BORN IN HEAVEN

Rev. Fr. John Fisher Painadath CMI (1929-2021)



Fr. John Fisher Painadath CMI (92), one of the finest, most revered and loved religious in the CMI St. Xavier's Province, Rajkot breathed his last at 9.20 p.m., on 16 April, 2021 at Christ Hospital, Rajkot. He passed into eternity in serenity, leaving behind a legacy of deep spirituality, through his exemplary personality, simplicity of life and a well ordered and committed spiritual life that touched everyone who came across him. He has been the spiritual fortress of many religious—men and women, in Kerala, Gujarat and elsewhere. He is cherished with an innocent smile, warmth of spiritual fraternity and an aura of holiness.

John Fisher, the fifth among the seven children of Lonappan and Rosa of the Painadath family, was born on 28 June, 1929 at Karukutty in the Arch Diocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly. After the primary education at St. Joseph's Convent School Karukutty, and St. Joseph's School, Angamaly, he joined the CMI Congregation at Pavaratty. Having completed the initial formation at St. Berchman's Aspirant's house, Pavaratty (1944-46), St. Berchman's Aspirants house, Elthuruth (1946-47) and the Syriac-Latin course at Mannanam (1947-48), he joined Novitiate and the Juniorate at Ambazhakad and made his first profession on 15 October, 1949.

He completed his philosophy (1952-54) and first 3 years of Theology (1954-57) from Chethipuzha and got Ordained Priest on 06-04-1957 by Bishop Mathew Kavukattu at Chethipuzha. After the Ordination he moved to Dharmaram college, Bangalore (First Batch) for the fourth year of Theological studies.

Fr. Fisher has served the Congregation in Sacred Heart Province, Kochi, St Thomas Province, Kozhikkode, and St. Xavier's Province, Rajkot and the Church in various capacities. Most part of his life was dedicated to the ministry of spiritual animation and formation. The initial stage of his life was spent at Koonammavu (1958-61), Neleeswaram (1961-62) and Karukutty (1962-63) as a teacher of Syriac and Latin. In 1963 he was appointed Assistant Rector of Aspirants at Rajagiri, Kalamassery for few months. Thereafter, he was sent to Rome for studies in Spiritual Theology from the Gregorian University (1963-65) which he commendably accomplished.

Upon returning from Rome, he served as the Novice master at Karukutty (1966-72) and Kodathayi (1972-75), Rector of Aspirants at Vazhakulam (1975-77), Superior of the CMI house at Kothamangalam (1977-78), Prior of St. Joseph's Monastery Koonammavu (1978-81), rendered pastoral service in the parishes at Koduvely, Akapparambu, Kottarappally and Pothy (1981-83), served as Director of the CST Novitiate House and Pro-Vicar of the parish at Putherncruz (1986-87), Rector of the postulants for brotherhood at Koonammavu and the confessor of S.D. Sisters at Kuzhuppally – Vipin (1986-87), Director of Carmel Bhavan - Egmore, Madras (1987-89), and the Superior of Carmel House, Kottarappally, Vaikom (1989-90).

Responding to an inner call for mission, Fr. John Fisher moved to the CMI Rajkot Mission. He began his mission endeavor as a teacher and confessor to the Dev Priya Novitiate House at Rajkot (1990-92). Thereafter, he was appointed the Superior of St. Mary's CMI House, Rajkot (1992-94).

Fr Fisher served a period of 9 years as the prefect of Bishop's House, Rajkot from 1994-2003. During this time, his lively, jovial and generous presence made an impact on all, especially the major seminarians and regents of the diocese whom he creatively animated; he also served as the Confessor of the many religious congregations and convents. One of the commendable services he did was as the First Director of the Newly formed Pious Union of Sisters of Blessed Alphonsa in 1997 (SBA), which later became the 'Society of St. Alphonsa' (SSA). He continued to cherish the SSA community with his guidance and examples till the year 2008.

In the year 2010, Fr. Fisher moved to the St. Xavier's Provincial House, Rajkot and remained as one of the most sought-after figures in his hospitality, fraternity and strength of prayer. He always remained a man spreading positive vibe in the provincial house community. During his retired phase of life, he was an inspiration for the members of the provincial house and all those who visited the house. He can be termed as a man for the community, as he always tried to make himself available for all the community activities and the get-together programmes in the neighbouring communities, in spite of his weak physical mobility.

The last phase of his life was marked with many afflictions to his physical health. The last four months rendered him in an almost complete bed-ridden stage. By the end of December last he asked for the anointing of the sick, and was well prepared for the ordeal of the Lord. His lips kept repeating the names of Jesus and Mary the days and times he was bed-ridden. The members of the house found it a joyful experience in serving him when he was bed ridden. The second wave of Covid 19 struck us hard. Fr Fisher was hospitalized on 08th April 2021 due to Covid-19 infection. His health condition was satisfactory until 15 April, but as his health deteriorated, he was put on ventilator. He suffered three cardiac arrests, to which he succumbed at 9.20 p.m., on 16 April at Christ Hospital, Rajkot.

Considering the very special situation, Fr John Fisher was given a silent adieu and his mortal remains were laid to rest at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Church (Prem Mandir), Rajkot on 17 April 2021. As Bp. Jose, Bp Gregory, Fr Provincial and many other members were nursing their Covid infection in Isolation phase, only few of our fathers could attend the funeral services. The funeral services were officiated by Rev. Fr. George Muttathottil CMI, the Vicar Provincial, assisted by Fr. Varghese Chiraparambil CMI, Councilor for Finance, Fr. Saji Koodakattu CMI, Councilor for Education, and Fr. Pradeeksh Palliyan CMI, Prefect of Provincial House. The services began at 11 am on 17 April, 2021 at the Christ Hospital and the services at the Prem Mandir Cathedral got over by 12.00 p.m.

Fr John Fisher was a religious who lived his life to the brim. He loved the Lord, the Church and the Congregation to the core. He is an ever inspiring missionary religious priest.

What made Fr. Fisher dearer to all of us was not just the many responsibilities he held during his 64 years as a priest, but his innocent presence in the community and his care for everyone. Even in his advanced age he was very much concerned about the members of the province and all those who visited the Provincial House. He used to be so generous to all the religious who approached him for spiritual nourishment. He was so meticulous about keeping the timetable of the house and used to spent a lot of time in prayer and reading.

Let us thank the Lord for this saintly-gentle soul who lived among us and for all the contributions he made to the Congregation and the Church. Let us pray that the Risen Lord may grant him everlasting Joy and Peace!

BORN IN HEAVEN

Rev. Fr Joseph Kattikaran CMI (1934-2021)

St. Xavier's Province, Rajkot
Birth : 27 May 1934
Profession : 1958
Ordination : 01 December 1964
Death : 18 April 2021



Rev. Fr Joseph Kattikaran CMI (87), belonging to the CMI St Xavier's Province, Rajkot, having completed a contented and holy life passed into eternity on 18 April 2021 at Christ Hospital, Rajkot. Following the Covid-19 protocol, his funeral services were conducted on the same day at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Church (Prem Mandir), Rajkot. Bishop Jose Chittooparampil officiated the funeral services which just a few of our members could attend.

Fr Kattikaran hails from Ouzhacode, Chethikode, Kanjiramattom, Kerala. He was born on 27th May 1934 to Mr. Kuruvillila and Thressia Kattikaran. He did his primary education at St. Mary's School, Chethikode and had his high school studies at St. George's High School, Arakkunnam. After his High School studies he joined the Aspirants' House at St. Antony's Monastery, Aluva, in 1955, fully accepting His Master's Call to lead his people on any troubled waters. He had his Novitiate and Juniorate at Christ the King Monastery, Karukutty from 1957 to 1958. He had his Philosophy-Theology studies at Dharmaram College, Bangalore, from 1958–1966. God, in his loving providence, chose to make Rev. Fr. Joseph Kattikaran his ever enthusiastic CMI Priest on 1st December, 1964, by the 'laying up of the hands' by His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil of the Archdiocese of Ernakulam, at the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay which was presided over by the Saintly Pope, His Holiness, Paul VIth.

The long 57 years of active ministry of Fr Joseph was enthusiastically and committedly accomplished in pastoral, religious and missionary engagements. As a parish priest he tended the sheep of Christ well in the communities of Little Flower Monastery, Koduvally (1966), St. Sebastian's Church, Kottarappilly, Vaikom (1967), Little Flower Monastery Manappuram (1968), Stella Mary's Church, Veravel (1984), Assumption Church, Mithapur (1978-79) and the Wankaner Semi Parish (2012-13). The other diversified ministries he did included taking care of the



Dharmaram College Dairy Farm, Bangalore (1970); serving as the Devadan Villa, Mysore, Thandavapura (1971); Procurator at SH Monastery, Thevara (1972-1975); Superior at Vimalalayam, Korandakadu (1975–1978) where he baptized a lot of followers for Jesus Christ.

He came to the Rajkot Mission on 21st June, 1978. He spent many years toiling in the arid land of Kutch and Saurashtra, finding joy in the given mission taking care of the Diocesan farms, village stations braving the toughest of situations. His services and edifying presence in the mission were offered at St. Mary's School, Rajkot (1979–1983); Nirmal Vadi, Nanikakkar (1984–1995); Rajkot Bhavan, Aluva, Kerala (1995-1996); Assumption Church, Mithapur (1996-1997); Nirmal Vadi, Nanikakkar (1997); Karunalaya, Parnala (1998); Navjivan, Lodhika (1999); Premjyoti Ashram, Wankar (2001-2003); Nishkalanka Mata, Ranpur (2003-2008); Ribda–Lodhika (2008-2010); Lodai (2011-12); Wankaner Semi Parish (2012-13) and St. Xavier's Provincial House (2013 – 2021).

In the passing away of Fr Joseph Kattikaran CMI we have lost a gentle soul, a simple human being, a vibrant community member and a hard-working, no nonsensical religious who lived a devout, diligent and well-ordered life. Simplicity of life was his hallmark. Self-discipline was his second skin, and strict-observance of religious rules was his daily strength. Availability and readiness to serve in all conditions and seasons were his closest virtues. He always enjoyed his priestly religious life and wanted others also do the same. He understood his religious priestly call very well and lived it to the brim paying fully the cost of discipleship. He was a contemplative in action. Being a deep rooted person of prayer he had the individual capacity to understand and console people and lead them in the right path of his Master. He was an ardent devotee of the Holy Eucharist and always happily accepted the call and opportunities to serve others by offering the Holy Eucharist and hearing confessions any time of

the day in all seasons. He was also an able and sensible Spiritual Director and Confessor. He was a person of punctuality and obedience. As hard-working, committed religious he knew the relationship between the soil and the body, the food and sweat, and chose to keep connected to the Lord and His people all the time.

In the death of Fr Kattikaran we have lost that religious, who, like the kedavilakku (ever burning lamp) at the sanctuary, kept inviting us to prayer, informing us of the monastery bell, reminded us of the religious rules and practices, and challenged us to serve the Lord and His people with a jovial and healthy mind, body and soul.

We look heavenward in gratitude for the many enduring blessings we have received through the inspiring, edifying and holy life of Fr Kattikaran. May he rest in peace and intercede for us from the heavenly abode.

BORN IN HEAVEN

He went about serving the flavor of joy, enthusiasm and commitment.
He was graceful and jovial in life and death.

Fr. John Zepherin Naduvathussery CMI

St. Xavier's Province, Rajkot

Birth: 21 October 1939

Profession: 19 May 1959

Ordination: 18 May 1970

Death: 26 November 2021



Fr John Zephrin Naduvathussery CMI (82), a member of CMI St Xavier's Province, Rajkot went home to be with the Lord in His heavenly abode. On Friday, 26 November 2021 he suffered a massive cardiac arrest and slipped into eternity at Christ Hospital, Rajkot. The mortal remains of Fr John were laid to rest at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Church (Prem Mandir), Rajkot on Monday, 29 November. The funeral services began at 10.00 a.m., at CMI St Xavier's Provincial House, Rajkot. Fr James Thayil CMI, the provincial of Rajkot officiated the first part of the funeral services. Mar Jose Chittooparambil CMI, the Bishop of Rajkot led the funeral mass and other services at Prem Mandir.

Fr John was jovial and graceful in life and death. He went about serving the flavor of joy, enthusiasm and commitment to people of all walks of life he met along his life journey. He always carried a gripping presence draped in an enthusing spirit.

Born on 21 October, 1939, as the fourth child of pious parents George and Mary Naduvathussery, in the parish of St Mary's Cathedral Basilica, Ernakulam, Fr John grew up in the company of his twelve siblings. Two of his sisters followed the line of Fr John and entered religious life.

Fr John had his primary school education at St Augustine School, Ernakulam, and Sri Rama Varma School. His intermediate studies were held at SH College, Thevara. At the age of 15 he joined the CMI Congregation as an aspirant at Thevara. As a young boy, he got the initial formation under Frs Oswald, Severinus, Rufinus and Cyprian. He did his novitiate and juniorate in Christ the King Monastery Novitiate, Karukutty (1958-60). On 19 May, 1959 he

made his first religious profession. His ecclesiastical studies of Philosophy and Theology were completed from Dharmaram College, Bangalore (1960-63; '67-72). He was among the first batch of brothers who got the opportunity to do college studies before priestly Ordination. He did his BSC and MSC (Chemistry) at S.H. College, Thevara (1963-67). He was Ordained Priest on 18 May 1970 by Mar Sebastian Mankuzhikary at the CMI Prior General's House, Ernakulam.

As a religious missionary priest, Fr John served the Church, the CMI Congregation and the society in multiple ministries and roles. He was a born leader, an excellent teacher, an exemplary pastor, an efficient administrator, an inspiring community animator, a distinguished linguist, a passionate missionary, and above all a kind hearted man with a jovial soul. Everything he did and attempted in life had a mark of perfection and grace.

He began his ministry as a teacher at Christ College, Bangalore (1970-71). In 1972 he joined S.H. College, Thevara as a teacher of Chemistry, and continued to serve there until he got a call to join the Rajkot mission in 1976 in view of taking over St. Mary's School from the Jesuits of Gujarat Province. He served there as teacher and principal for three years. He also served as Principal at Carmel Convent School, Junagadh (1979-81). The longest stretch of school ministry he had was at St. Xavier's Jamnagar, for nine years (1981-1990), as principal.

In the field of pastoral and spiritual animation Fr John served as parish priest in St. Ann's Parish, Junagadh (1979-81), and in Sacred Heart Cathedral (Prem Mandir) Parish, Rajkot (2003-2008). As parish priest, he took time to know the pulse of his flock. He had a listening ear for them always. He cared for them with spiritual and temporal nourishment. His pastoral commitment was further seen in his services as General Councillor for Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry (1996-2002) during the Prior Generalship of Very Rev. Fr. Alex Ookkan CMI.

The good God raised him to be an anointed leader, administrator and community animator. Thus, he spent himself fully for the Lord, the CMI Congregation and the Church in distinguished positions such as Regional Superior of CMI St. Xavier's Region (1984-87); the first Provincial Superior of CMI St. Xavier's, Rajkot (1994-96); Vicar Provincial of S.H. Province, Kochi (1990-94); General Councillor for Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry (1996-2002); Finance Officer of the Diocese of Rajkot (2002-2009), and Superior of St. Xavier's CMI House, Jamnagar (2009-11).

Fr John remained graceful and jovial in all ups and downs of his life. He was a community man. Wherever he was assigned, he made the community alive with his vibrant, celebrative and creative attitude and approach. He always wore a contagious smile which brightened up everyone who came across him. By his skills in culinary art, witty comments, magical hands, musical voice and learning skills Fr John spread the Gospel of joy. This won him many friends. He had a special talent for nurturing and keeping relationships. No wonder, his friendship circle was large, embracing all walks of people. The strong bond of family, community and friends kept growing until he breathed his last.

He was a man of progressive thought. With a deep spirituality and inclusive thinking, he used to make his presence felt with positive and creative contributions in every gathering and meeting. His presence was a matter of joy as he cherished and nurtured the triple tables of fellowship: the Eucharistic Table, the Dining Table and the Recreation Table.

The last stage of his life was spent at the Provincial House (2014-21), Rajkot. Although he nursed many discomforts and aches in his body, he remained active and positive, spending his time in taking classes for the aspirants, candidates and seminarians, entertaining the visitors, doing the community chores and so on. Even in his old age, he was an active member in the chapel and outside. A man of convictions, ideas and ideals, he lived as the Spirit of God led his breath. In the death of Fr John, we certainly cross an epoch in Rajkot mission. Yet, now that he has joined his Creator, there must be much laughter and joy in heaven, as he spreads the flavor of grace in his eternal abode.

BIBLE REFLECTION

SECOND SUNDAY OF ANNUNCIATION

December 5, 2021

READING : Lk 1: 26- 38

By Fr. Saji Koodakattu CMI



For the past few years, humanity's ears have been roughed by many bad and painful news like covid, flood, death of the beloved ones, sickness, joblessness, financial volatility and many more. It is amidst all these painful experiences of humanity that today we have the good news; the good news of life reviving hope, the good news of salvation: the annunciation about the birth of Jesus, our savior. Let's revive our hope, rejuvenate our faith and rejoice in the good news.

The central image of today's Gospel is Mary, the girl from Nazareth, chosen by the heavenly Father to be the mother of Jesus. Nazareth was not an important city. Even Nathaniel, the true Israelite asked Jesus can anything good come from Nazareth? In such an unimportant and neglected city, Mary was an ordinary girl. A place, from where, people thought nothing good can come, a girl who people thought to be of no importance, God finds both the place and the person to be the greatest among the nations and women. God reverses the thought processes and expectations of human beings. The Gospel today invites us to correct, reverse and remodify our thinking, our expectations about people, places and situations. The heavenly Father being favorable to Nazareth and Mary must inspire us to recede to our hearts to see whether we have condemned certain people to be unimportant, and useless. Have we labeled people with our thoughts that nothing good can come from them? If yes, then this period of annunciation summons us to reverse our thinking to accept the rejected, to love the neglected, to realize the greatness of fellow beings. So as to become the good news of love, forgiveness and charity to them.

When the angel Gabriel saluted Mary and proclaimed the good news to her, she was perplexed and disturbed. It's a dichotomy when the good news of joy for the entire world is announced to someone for the first time the person who listened became disturbed and perplexed. The disturbance Mary felt at the very beginning was actually only the seed of the entire sufferings that were to follow in her life. Every vocation to become the good news for others is also a call to disturbance and suffering. Only when the people who are called, cooperate with the plan of God, like Mary, the Divine plan of good news can be actualized. Every call is a call to disturbances. Whether it's a call to be a religious, a call to be a priest, a call to be a husband and father, a call to be a wife and mother, it involves disturbances and troubles, when we fulfill them as the call by God. Let's not lose our hope and faith when we face with troubles and sufferings in living our vocation. Let's not argue with God for not being faithful to us as he promised. Rather let us, as Mary showed us, realize with deep faith that through all my disturbances and suffering God is becoming the Good News to somebody. It could be to my community, it could be to my family, it could be to my life partner, it could be to my children.

The period of annunciation is also a period to infuse Gabriel characteristics to our life. Gabriel is the angel of good news, he finds only goodness in Mary, he generously acknowledges her goodness, he happily announces her the good news God has for her and the favor she has found with God. During this period of annunciation lets bring good news to people. Let's engage in more positive and life-giving talks. Let our presence and encounters radiate hopes to people. Let us generously accept and acknowledge the goodness in others. Let us speak them up open and aloud. Let us not be jealous about the goodness people receive, rather let us be agents of good news to people around us. May the Good news that we have received today be channeled to our being and beloved ones. Amen.

BIBLE REFLECTION

THE FEAST OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

December 8, 2021

READINGS: Jn. 2:1-12

Fr Dr Johnson KA CMI

'Do whatever He tells you' Mother Mary said. 'My time has not yet come' her son Jesus insisted. Discussing with Jesus, Mother Mary instructed the people to do as Jesus says. (St John Ch 2.)

Today the church celebrates the feast of the Immaculate conception of Blessed Virgin Mary. All the Gospels introduce Mother Mary and Jesus to us. But St John makes use of a marriage event in Cana to introduce Mother Mary. According to St John's Gospel even the public ministry of Jesus began from here. In the first chapter of St John's Gospel, John the Baptist saw Jesus coming, he said, 'This is the lamb of God'. Lamb always symbolises, in the Old Testament and to the people of that time, a sacrificial victim. When John the Baptist addresses Jesus as the lamb of God, he had the conviction that Jesus is the sacrificial face of God. By doing so he explains the sacrificial face of God. Every sacrificial lamb cleans the sins of the people. It enables the other to unite with God. This other orientedness or sacrificial face of God can be termed as the likeness of God. This likeness and image of God is embodied in Jesus. It is for the sins of other, during a ritual, that an innocent lamb sacrifices its life. Burnt offerings and sacrifices were the signs of reconciliation with God's image and likeness.



Mother Mary is introduced by the Gospel of St John as one among the family members at the Cana marriage. She went one step ahead by taking up the responsibility of the family. Her concern in itself explains the other orientedness or other centeredness, which is the face of God. It can be also called the likeness of God or selflessness of God. She always remained as the image and likeness of God. Being immaculate, the handmade of God, she shared Jesus to all. It is her free will, sacrificial life and faith that gave expression or enabled her to conceive an embodiment of God. It is visible and tangible in the person of Jesus Christ. During a marriage it became an experience for the family in Cana.

Every life is an embodiment of God's will and expression. God has a specific plan for each one of us. That is the reason today the mother Church celebrates this feast of Immaculate Conception of the woman, Blessed Virgin Mary. She is the mother of Jesus, step-mom of all his disciples. Jesus entrusted every believer to her by giving his mother to his own disciple John. It also reveals that Mother Mary is Mother of all creation. She is immaculate. Being and bringing the image and likeness of God on earth she had the power to take decisions on behalf of Jesus. In other words, Jesus accepts and executes the decisions of Mother Mary. (St John Ch 2) It is the privilege of Mother Mary, being the mother of Jesus. Understanding the signs of the time she decides the best for others. And that becomes the will of Jesus too. Jesus fulfilled the request, the will of Mother Mary. Therefore, it is advisable for her adopted sons and daughters to lean upon her. She is the perfect person who can read and understand the signs of the time and the will of God.

It is said, according to the Holy Bible, in the beginning, God willed to create human being in his own image and likeness. And this will of God is fulfilled in the life of Mother Mary. Therefore, the will of God, the other centredness or other orientedness is the life style of Mother Mary and Jesus. On the contrary by the very act of disobedience, unconcerned attitude and murder of Abel, the counter effects of God's will become visible, even tangible. Therefore,

the visibility of the will of God within oneself is a challenge before everyone. Mother Mary is a challenge. Understanding the signs of time is an opportunity before us, like it was for Mother Mary. It has its own way of life and living. It even gives the freedom to change God's ways. That is what and why mother Mary did it to Jesus at Cana. Not always though, there were also times in the life of Mother Mary that Jesus did not recognise, accept and adhere to her. When such things happened in his own life, even Jesus said, let thy will be done. 'My body is weak but the spirit willing' Jesus prayed. Mother Mary also might have said the same. Obedience and faith of Jesus and Mother Mary gives us a hope.

Therefore, as a follower of Jesus Christ, Mother Mary being our own heavenly mother, stepmom, let us lean upon her to live the face of God. We can even insist, request and pray to Jesus as Mother Mary did for the wellbeing of others. We may also surrender ourselves in faith as Jesus did to the plan of God. Thus, this feast celebration of Mother Mary becomes an expression in our life. Thus, we become an experience for the other. Let our other centeredness or other orientedness bring expression to the face of God on earth. Happy Feast!!!

PERIOD OF ANNUNCIATION READINGS: Lk 1:26-38

Fr. Joby Mylickal CMI

It is a gospel that at times is hard to believe. Sometimes it seems almost too good to be true – too simple, too easy. On the other hand, when the sufferings and tragedies of life and the tumultuous twists and turns of human history oppress us, it seems more like a fairy tale, a pipe dream. For Mary too the announcement was almost overwhelming. But her faith and purity sensitized her to God's truth. She accepted the angel's message and all its implications for her own life – a radical, unforeseen change in her plans. She was able to do so because she had long ago assimilated a doctrine we too often ignore, one that Gabriel reminded her of: “Nothing is impossible for God.”

Luke begins the life of Jesus with the account of the annunciation to Mary. By her unhesitant and complete “yes” Mary accepts the vocation of being the mother of the Messiah and makes possible the birth of God's son into this world. In her yes she represents humankind's acceptance of God's offer of salvation and thus becomes the first redeemed and the type and exemplars of the church (Lumen Gentium VIII, 53).

We can learn no greater lesson than how to say yes to God. Mary's “yes” reversed Eve's “no,” and paved the way for Christ's undoing of Adam's fall. Likewise, when God disrupts our lives – through the voice of conscience, the normal responsibilities and demands of our state in life, or the indications of Church teaching – our “yes” can echo Mary's and make more room for Christ in this fallen world. But our “no” – or even our “maybe” – can just as easily shut him out.

How strange, Lord, that you made the history of salvation depend not only on your own actions, but also on the free cooperation of your creatures! You waited for Mary to say yes before coming to be our Savior. You wait for each of us to say yes before coming to save us. I renew my “yes” right now. Teach me to help others say yes too; only what I do for your Kingdom will last forever.



BIBLE REFLECTION

THIRD SUNDAY OF ANNUNCIATION

December 12, 2021

READINGS: Gen 18:1-10, Eph 3: 1-13, Lk 1: 57-66

Fr. Dr. Thomas Paickattu CMI

Theme: Unwavering Hope in the Promise of God

“Both Abraham aged 100 and Sarah aged 90 in their old age were worthy to receive blessings to have a son Isaac” (Gen 18:1-10). The name Isaac would mean that one who rejoices or laughs.

“Both Gentiles and Jews are worthy to receive God's blessings if they believe” (Eph 3: 1-13). The Gentiles are given the name 'Co-heirs' members of the same body.

“Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were given blessings to give birth to a Son and name him John” (Lk 1: 57-66). The name John meant the grace of God. He was born to be the harbinger for the Lord.



A curve in the road is not the end of the road... unless you fail to make a turn.

A picture of 'name-giving' is seen in all the three readings today. The first reading speaks about naming Isaac, the second reading speaks about naming the Gentiles as 'co-heirs' and the third reading speaks about naming John. The families of Isaac, Gentiles and John all became part of God's promise of making covenant with the New Israel.

The Book of Genesis from chapters 12 to 50 introduces God's promises to Ancestors about becoming a Great People and inheriting the Promised Land. In Genesis chapter 18 we have the episode of how God visited Abraham with the message of the coming birth of his long hoped-for son by his beloved wife Sarah. Sarah laughed at the message (Gen 18: 12) just as Abraham had laughed at the promise of God (Gen 17:17). God speaks about the miracle needed to open Sarah's womb despite her old age and history of barrenness. This is not to be seen as a sudden whim of God but a deliberate step in the completion of a plan that God made from the beginning. God said to Abraham that, “you will be the father of a multitude of nations” (Gen 17: 4). This narrative has a theological outlook that all mysteries are gradually unfolding according to divine plan. Man's hopes meet God's plans and promises.

In the second reading (Eph 3: 1-13) we comprehend the revelation of God's plan for the entire universe. Paul the 'redeemed persecutor' refers to himself as the 'least of the apostles' (1 Cor 15:9) and 'the least of the saints' (Eph 3:8). Paul declares that, “This is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Jesus Christ” (Eph 3:6). Paul's imprisonment implied great suffering. Sufferings are signs of true discipleship (1 Cor 4:9-13). On the one hand Paul's sufferings are to be seen as the believer's glory (Eph 3:13) and on the other hand Paul's mission among the Gentiles in the world may discourage new believers. Paul categorically says that, “He was commissioned by God to announce to the Gentile nations the immeasurable riches of Christ (Eph 3:8). He brings to light the mystery hidden from the beginning of creation and being fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

As soon as Zechariah indicated that John is the right name to be given to the child, the sign of dumbness he went through ceased and his power of speech returned. John is marked by God's plan and purpose. He had a special role to perform within the Jewish society. Zechariah was under the spell of 'dumbness' for almost a year. Divine promises will come true despite man's apparent failures. The silence of Zechariah was paving way for John the Baptist to become the 'voice shouting in the wilderness' (Jn 1:23).

The sacrificial death of Christ on the cross opened the barren womb of the Covenant Community and asserted that “the Gentile nations are co-heirs and members of the same body” (cf. Eph 3:6). God's promise to Abraham brings hope to the entire world that salvation is universal just as creation is universal. When Paul asserted that the Gentiles are co-heirs with the covenant community, then the dumbness of the Gentile world began to cease. It was the plan of God to bring the whole cosmos together in Jesus Christ. This passage throws light on the dimensions of the mystery of Christ in a universal Church. God in his mercy has called and reconciled the Jews and the Gentiles to himself and to one another. We are called and redeemed by Christ but most of us live with a numbness of hope. The third Sunday of Annunciation teaches us to be men of hope, hope in the universal redemption.

It is rightly said that, 'One who offers everything into God's hands will eventually see God's hand in everything'. God's grace has no precincts. It is beyond age, caste, creed, religion and nationality. Anyone can run over the hurdles of life if one is able to see the hand of God in the race to the other shore.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Josh 1: 9). A curve in the road is not the end of the road... unless you fail to make a turn.

Job will fill your pockets but adventures will fill your soul.

Fr. Prasant Palakkappilly CMI the former Principal of Sacred Heart college, Thevara who loves to be adventurous always, took a venturesome ride on old bike as part of his India tour. He visited Gujarat mission and it was a great feeling for all.



BIBLE REFLECTION

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Luke: 2: 1-20

Fr. Jilson Pinakkattuparambil CMI

- In the book of Genesis we read, “God created man in his image and likeness” – he not only created man but also, he loved them as his own and Jn: 3:16 says “God so loved the world that he gave his only son”. This truth is being underlined on every Christmas day.
- As we are celebrating the most important feast of our life as Christians, the birthday of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the remembrance of God's unconditional love for us– wish all of you the blessings and joy of this day. May the child Jesus bless all of us.
- When we go through the infancy narrative of Jesus in the Bible, we see that the birth of Jesus takes place in the midst of a lot of struggles and difficulties. The birth of Jesus was an answer to the cry of generations for long centuries. It was an answer to the agonies and struggles his parents Mary and Joseph underwent. It was the result of their long waiting and persistence in the trust in God amidst all the troubles they faced to bring forth the Saviour to the World.
- When we look at the life of Joseph, we realize that he might have gone through a lot of mental struggle before the birth of Jesus – because he had to take a pregnant woman as his wife, though he was told by the Angel that the pregnancy of Mary was by the power of the Holy Spirit, as a normal human being he might have found it very difficult to accept it – and the struggles continued in his life. We can imagine the stress and pain he might have undergone during their journey to Bethlehem and the life ahead.
- The life of Mary also was not much different. As a young girl, she might have had many dreams in her life, but she renounced all her dreams with a single sentence – “behold the handmaid of the Lord”, and she began to dream with God. And the life further was filled with a lot of painful experiences.
- We too go through a lot of problems in our personal and social life. We get to learn different life lessons each day of our life. Since last two years we are going through a different kind of experience, that we never had in our life or we never thought of. Though Christmas is a Celebration of Joy, the situation around us today is not so joyful due to the tension of the pandemic all around the globe.
- When man thinks that he is the crown of the creation and he is the greatest being on earth, a tiny virus is teaching us about our nothingness, and today we are learning how weak we are.
- Thus, the birth of Jesus takes place in the midst of our struggles and difficulties just as he took birth in the life of Mary and Joseph and became an answer to the prayers and longing of many generations.
- Therefore, this Christmas stands as a possibility in front of us – ‘it is possible that Christ can take birth in my life, in the midst of all the difficulties of life, I can have Christ in my life even in the dark ages of my life in spite of all my sinfulness and unworthiness – if I long for him’.



- The cattle shed – a dirty place by its nature, became a Holy place with the birth of Jesus. So, let us aspire and believe that the answer to all the questions in my life is the birth of Christ. And he will turn my sorrow into joy, my sinfulness into saintliness, the birthday celebrations of Christ will make a difference in my life.
- But, If I don't have the trust of Joseph and Mary in my Lord, if I am not persistent in my faith, during our fight with the struggles of our life, it is possible that we might lose our faith, we may lose our hope, we may even lose Christ in our life. And Advent was a time for us to regain the lost Christ in our life.
- During the advent, the church reminded us to stay awake. It means to awaken our hearts, to awaken our souls in order to welcome Christ into our life.
- We were trying our best to awaken ourselves through different modes of preparations. We fasted, abstained from certain food materials to control the inclinations of the body. We had Christmas friends, for whom we prayed regularly – to rebuild and nurture our internal relationships. We prayed for different communities during this advent in preparation to give a worthy welcome to Jesus. So, we believe our preparations were in full swing. By doing all these, we were making a journey towards the Crib to meet Child Jesus or in fact we were trying to make a manger in our own hearts. But, have we really achieved our goal?
- Once the children of an 80-year-old father decided to celebrate his birthday. So, all of them gathered and planned about the celebration of the birthday. How shall we celebrate the birthday of our father in its solemnity? One of them suggested that they should invite some of the high-profile people from the society and the celebration must be grand. The discussions went for a long time. At the end of the discussion, they were in a confusion – because many dignitaries were going to come and their father was so old and ugly looking – not presentable in front of the VIP guests and they found him not fit for their status. So, again they discussed, where would they accommodate the father during the celebrations? And the youngest of them proposed an idea, “if our father is accommodated anywhere in the house, everyone will see him, and it will be shameful to us. Therefore, let us shift him to the cattle shed.” And all others accepted this suggestion and the father who was supposed to be the center of the birthday celebration was kept in the cattle shed, and his children celebrated the birthday of their father.
- Once again, after all the spiritual and physical preparations we are going to celebrate Christmas. As the celebrations are in progress, we should ask ourselves – Where is the place of Christ in my celebrations this year? Is it in my heart or in the crib that we have prepared so beautifully with all the decorations?
- On Christmas, the Crib stands as a symbol of our preparations to receive Jesus in our hearts – during Christmas, all of us always try to make the best cribs with beautiful decorations and artistic skills – but the cribs we make should be the reflection of the internal preparations we had. In other words, the tempo of the internal and external crib should be same or even more in the case of internal preparations.
- Sometimes what happens is that we find a separation of faith and celebrations happening in our life and celebrations take the upper hand and the most important thing will be missing in our life. So, let us make it sure that Christmas day will not be a 'Christ miss day', but it will be 'Christ must Day'. Let us not miss Christ in our celebrations.
- Our life after Christmas will tell us, whether I have Christ in my life, whether he has taken birth in my manger-whether all the sacrifices and abstinences I made has caused Christ to take birth in my life. If I have improved in my spiritual life, if I have improved in my relationship with my community members, if I can love the persons whom I used to avoid and disregard, if I can renounce my selfishness, if I am free of my stubbornness, if I am happy in other's success, if I can take the struggles and sufferings of my life positively, I have Christ in me – Christ has taken birth in my manger and all my acts of preparations were worth it. Because the purpose of all the preparations we had for the last 25 days was the incarnation of Christ in our life.
- And let us remember that the birth of Christ is not only limited for the advent or on the Christmas day. Christ can take birth in us at any time of our life. When we live a Christ-like life, Christ incarnates in us. So, let us aspire and prepare for the same throughout our life. Let us take the spirit of Christmas for our life ahead. Let Christ be the center of our life.

CMI RAJKOT MISSION IN GOLDEN GLOW

(1972-2022)



The CMIs are celebrating 50 years of their presence and mission in Gujarat in 2021-22. The mission has been blessed with committed, dedicated and talented missionaries who have turned the challenges into opportunities for Christ. They have made their presence felt in the nooks and corners of the Saurashtra and Kutch region facilitating the emergence of brooks in the desert. Sincere thanks to all those who have contributed their mite, in translating the dream of God into a reality in Rajkot Mission. There's still a long way to go. The harvest is plentiful. We pray that the Lord of the harvest send more committed workers into the field.

Prior General's Visitation to the Province



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