

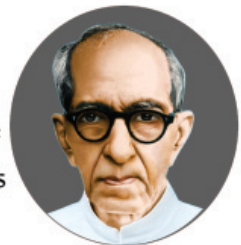


# OLIVE

ആദ്യം അമ്മയ്ക്കുള്ളിലും  
പിന്നെ മണ്ണിനുള്ളിലും  
അതിനിടയിൽ മനസ്സുകൾക്കുള്ളിലും  
അതത്രെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ സുവിശേഷം



a LIFE of light to be  
a LIGHT in many lives





I am infinitely more than  
that which I observe

മണ്ണിനും വിണ്ണിനും ഇടയിലുള്ള മനുഷ്യന്റെ കല്ലേറുദൂരം എത്രയാണ്? സുഖത്തിനും സുകൃതത്തിനുമിടയിലെ മനസ്സിന്റെ ഇടദൂരം തന്നെയാണത്. രണ്ട് ഉദരങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ (ഒന്ന് അമ്മയുടേതും, മറ്റൊന്ന് ഭൂമിയുടേതും ആണെന്ന് മാത്രം) ഒരു പുരുഷായുസ്സ് പൂർണ്ണമാകുമ്പോൾ ഇനിയെന്തുണ്ട്? ഓർമ്മകൾ !!!

ഓർമ്മയ്ക്കായി ഇത് ചെയ്യുക എന്ന ക്രിസ്തു മൊഴികൊണ്ട് അവനെ ഓർക്കാൻ മാത്രമല്ല, ഓർമ്മിക്കാനായി സുകൃതങ്ങൾ സമ്മാനിച്ച് കടന്നുപോവുക എന്ന് കൂടിയുണ്ട്, സൂചന. നൂറുമേനി ആയിരുന്നില്ല ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ **concern**. പകരം, പാഴായിപ്പോകുന്ന നിലം, വിഫലമായ വാക്ക്, കുഴിച്ചിട്ട താലത്ത് ഇതൊക്കെ തന്നെ അവന്റെ **concern**. കൈവശമുള്ളത് തരിക, വലത്തിന്റെ നിലപാടിലേയ്ക്ക് വീശുക... അതൊക്കെ തന്നെ ക്രിസ്തുവിന് വലുത്. നിലപാടുള്ളവർക്കും പരിശ്രമത്തിന്റെ വിയർപ്പ് നെറ്റിത്തടത്തിൽ ഉള്ളവർക്കുമാണ് അവന്റെ **priority**.

മാതാവിൽ ജനിച്ച്, മണ്ണിൽ ലയിച്ച്, മനസ്സുകളിൽ ജീവിച്ച് സുകൃതമായ ഒരാളാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ടാണ് 'പ്രകാശം, പ്രകാശം' എന്നൊക്കെ പറഞ്ഞ് മിഴിയടയ്ക്കാനായത്. 1976 ഒക്ടോബർ 04 ഒടുക്കമല്ല, തുടക്കമാണ്. മനസ്സുകളിൽനിന്നും മനസ്സുകളിലേയ്ക്ക് വളർന്നുകൊണ്ടേയിരിയ്ക്കുകയാണ് - ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ കടുകുമരം.

മംഗളാശംസകളോടെ,

**Fr. Shinto Edassery CST**

“I have called you Friends”



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## കാലഘട്ടത്തിന്റെ അനിവാര്യതകൾ

വേർ ഉത്തരമാണ്. ഒരു മരം നന്നായി ഫലം നൽകുമ്പോൾ എങ്ങിനെ എന്ന ചോദ്യത്തിന് പിന്നിൽ, വേർ ഉത്തരമായുണ്ടാകും. വേർ എവിടെയോ, വളം കണ്ടെത്തി ശിഖിരം അതേറ്റുവാങ്ങി, ചില്ല ഫലം നൽകി. എത്ര നല്ല വൃക്ഷമെങ്കിലും മുരടിച്ചാൽ അതിന്റെ വേർ ഉത്തരമായിരിക്കും - വേർ തറഞ്ഞ തരയിലാകും വേരോടുവാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്നത്; ആഴമില്ലാത്ത അവസ്ഥയിലുമാകാം.

ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭ അതിന്റെ അസ്തിത്വത്തിന്റെ നിലപ്പും നിലനില്പും അതിന്റെ വേരുകളിലേയ്ക്കും പ്രത്യേകം ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്ന മാസമാണ് ഒക്ടോബർ മാസം. സഭാമദ്ധ്യസ്ഥയായ ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തിന്റെ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മിക സരണിയിലും സഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ ബസിലിയൂസച്ചന്റെ ആപ്തവാക്യമായ 'നീയും പോയി അതുപോലെ ചെയ്യുക' എന്ന യേശു നാമന്റെ ആഹ്വാനവും നെഞ്ചിലേറ്റുന്ന ദിനങ്ങൾ. ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ ക്രിസ്തീയതയുടെ തായ്വേരുകളിൽ - ചെറിയവരാവുക, ചെറിയവർക്ക് ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്യുക എന്ന തനിമയിൽ - പ്രതിഷ്ഠിക്കേണ്ട ദിനങ്ങൾ. യേശുവിന്റെ ജീവിതം, ഫലം ചൂടിയത്, വേർ പിതാവിൽ ആയതിനാലാണ്. സുവിശേഷം പറയുന്നു. 'പിതാവ് ചെയ്തു കാണുന്നതല്ലാതെ പുത്രന് സ്വന്തം ഇഷ്ടമനുസരിച്ച് ഒന്നും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുകയില്ല' (യോഹ. 5:19).

ദൈവം എന്ന യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം ക്രിസ്തുവിലൂടെ മിഴി തുറക്കുമ്പോൾ, രണ്ട് അനിവാര്യതകൾ, ക്രിസ്തുവിൽ പ്രബലമായി നിൽക്കുന്നതായി മനസ്സിലാക്കാവുന്നതാണ്. ഒന്ന് ശിശുത്വ ദർശനമാണ്. രണ്ട് ഏറ്റവും ചെറിയവരോടുള്ള കടപ്പാടും. വി. ചെറുപുഷ്പവും, സഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ വല്ലിച്ചനും ഗുരുമുഖത്തു നിന്ന് സ്വന്തമാക്കിയ ആത്മീയ പരിവേഷം അതായിരുന്നു. ദൈവ സന്നിധിയിൽ മനുഷ്യരുടെ മുമ്പിൽ ക്രിസ്തുശിഷ്യന് സ്വീകരിക്കാവുന്ന ഏറ്റവും ഉദാത്തമായ മനോഭാവം ചെറുമയുടേതാണ്.

വിനയത്തിന്റെതാണ്. അതായത് പ്രായമായവരിൽ കാണുന്ന കണക്കുകൂട്ടലുകളില്ലാതിരിക്കുക, ശക്തിഹീനത, സ്വയം നീതീകരണമില്ലായ്മ, സ്വയം സംരക്ഷിക്കാൻ കഴിവില്ലായ്മ, സദാ സംലഭ്യത, അവകാശവാദമില്ലായ്മ, ജീവിതത്തോടുള്ള തുറന്ന മനോഭാവം. സ്നാപകയോഹനാൻ ഈ എളിമയുടെ ആശ്ചര്യപരമായിരുന്നു. 'ഉന്നതത്തിൽ നിന്നു നൽകപ്പെടാതെ ആരും ഒന്നും സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നില്ല' (യോഹ. 3:27) 'അവൻ വളരുകയും ഞാൻ കുറയുകയും വേണം' (യോഹ. 3:30) ഞാൻ മണവാളനല്ല, മണവറതോഴനാണ് എന്ന തിരിച്ചറിവ് ക്രിസ്തു ശിഷ്യത്വത്തിന്റെ ശിശുത്വദർശനമാണ്.

സംഭവിക്കുന്ന സകലത്തിന്റെയും പിന്നിൽ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ അറിവും അനുവാദവുമുണ്ട് എന്ന ബോധ്യം, ദൈവഹിതത്തിന് കീഴ് വഴങ്ങുന്നതിൽ സന്തോഷിക്കാനുള്ള കഴിവ്, പിന്നാലെ വരുന്നവർക്ക് സന്തോഷത്തോടെ വഴിമാറാനുള്ള സന്നദ്ധത, സഭയിലെ എല്ലാ ശുശ്രൂഷകളും മണവറത്തോഴന്റെതായി സ്വീകരിക്കുന്ന ജീവിതശൈലി എന്നിവ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നവരൊക്കെ ശിശുത്വദർശനം സ്വന്തമാക്കിയവരാണ്. അനുയായികളുടെ കലാപമടക്കാൻ നേതൃത്വത്തിന് കഴിയാത്തത് അഹന്തമൂലമാണ്. താൻ ആരെന്നും, തന്റെ ദൗത്യം എന്തെന്നും, ദൈവഹിതം എന്തെന്നും ഉള്ള ബോധ്യം ഉണ്ട്. ഈ ബലക്ഷയം നമ്മുടെ ആത്മീയതയുടെ ശോഷണമാണ്. അത് നമ്മുടെ സഭാഗാത്രത്തിന്റെ പുഷ്പിക്കലിനെ ബാധിക്കും.

ശിശുത്വ ദർശനത്തിന്റെ പുഷ്പിക്കലാണ്, പ്രകടന പരതയാണ്, അഗതികളിൽ എത്തിച്ചേരുന്ന ജീവിതവ്യവസ്ഥയുടെ നിദാനം. നിസ്സഹായനിൽ കരുതലും കാവലും കരുണയും സംജാതമാകുന്ന വ്യവസ്ഥിതി-- ക്രിസ്തു ശിഷ്യത്വത്തിന്റെ രണ്ടാമത്തെ അനിവാര്യതയാണിത്. ജീവിതം കൊണ്ട് നാം വിരുന്നൊരുക്കുമ്പോൾ, ദരിദ്രർ, വികലാംഗർ, മുടന്തർ, കുരുടർ എന്നിവരെ ക്ഷണിക്കുന്ന ജീവിതപ്രകൃതം. അഗതികൾക്കുള്ള വിരുന്നൂട്ട്. നമ്മുടെ രാഷ്ട്രപിതാവായ ഗാന്ധി ബൈബിളിൽ നിന്ന് വായിച്ചെടുത്ത നീതിബോധം ഈ അനിവാര്യതയാണ്. അതിന് അദ്ദേഹം ഇട്ട പേര് 'അന്ത്യോദയം' (Unto the last) എന്നാണ്. നേതാക്കന്മാരോടുള്ള അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ഓർമ്മപ്പെടുത്തൽ

അതായിരുന്നു - നിങ്ങൾ ഏതു പദ്ധതിയും വിഭാവനം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ “നിസ്സഹായരെ ഓർക്കുക” - അന്ത്യോദയം. “നീയും പോയി അതുപോലെ ചെയ്യുക” എന്ന യേശുനാമന്റെ വചനം ശിരസ്സാവഹിച്ച നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ, സാമ്പത്തികമായും സാമൂഹ്യപരമായും ആത്മീയമായും അഗതികളായിരുന്നവരിൽ തുണ തീർക്കുന്ന സംസ്കാരത്തിനായി യത്നിച്ചു. ‘ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കപ്പെടാനല്ല, ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കാനും അനേകർക്ക് മോചനദ്രവ്യമായി തീരാനും’ ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്തു. കേരളത്തിന്റെ അനുഗ്രഹീത കവി, ഒ.എൻ.വി. കുറുപ്പ് തന്റെ ‘എവിടെ ക്രിസ്തു’ എന്ന കവിതയിൽ ഇപ്രകാരം കുറിക്കുന്നു: “ക്രിസ്തു ആടുകൾക്കുവേണ്ടി ജീവൻ സമർപ്പിക്കുന്ന ഇടയനാണ്. ക്രിസ്തു ‘മഹതീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ട മനുഷ്യപുത്ര’നാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ട് തന്നെ മനുഷ്യനെ മഹതീകരിക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമം എവിടെയുണ്ടോ അവിടെ ക്രിസ്തുവുണ്ട്”. ക്രിസ്തു ശിഷ്യത്വത്തിന്റെ രണ്ട് മുഖങ്ങളെ പുനർവ്യാഖ്യാനിക്കാൻ, തിരിച്ചറിവുകളിലേക്ക് നയിക്കപ്പെടാൻ, വേരുകളുടെ ബലക്ഷയങ്ങളെ ബോധ്യപ്പെടാൻ ഈ കാലഘട്ടം നമുക്ക് ഉപയുക്തമാക്കാം. ഏവർക്കും തിരുനാളാശംസകൾ. ◆

***Flower Dale Quotations***

We often think we receive graces and are divinely illuminated by means of brilliant candles. But from whence comes their light? From prayers, perhaps, of some humble, hidden soul, whose inward shining is not apparent to human eyes.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

## SUPERIOR GENERAL'S MESSAGE

His Eminence Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, the Archbishop of Yangon, Myanmar and President of FABC, while commenting on the Gospel Mathew: 14:13-21- The Miracle of Five Loaves and the Pandemic of Hunger observed:

*“On this Eighteenth Sunday of the Year, the readings turn our attention to the problem of hunger and the miracle of the multiplication of five loaves and two fish to feed more than five thousand people. That story is so moving when we read in the background of the ravages of COVID.*

*Hunger is the more Lethal Virus. Starvation is the new virus during COVID. Hunger is a permanent pandemic. Already 821 million people around the world do not have enough of the food they need to live an active and healthy life. One in every nine people goes to bed hungry each night. Organizations like Oxfam say that the Hunger Virus will attack more than 122 million people. At least 12,000 people will die of hunger every day if the COVID continues. COVID kills around 6000-9000 every day. Hunger will kill more people every day at least 3000 more than COVID. Lockdown has closed livelihood opportunities for the poor, daily wage earners and farmers. But, there cannot be a lockdown for hunger. Human stomach never has a lockdown. The stomach is the most dangerous organ in the body. Starvation can make people slaves and lose all their dignity.*

*The Gospel depicts the response of Jesus when he saw people starving: “His heart was moved with pity for them.” His heart would be broken today when he sees millions, especially children, going hungry. Jesus felt the stomach-wrenching hunger of the people. Jesus saw the crowd and pleaded with his disciples to “Give some food to them.” The same words resonate as a challenge to each one of us: “Give some Food to them” - the millions whose food was deprived by a virus, to the*

*12,000 whose precarious conditions may bring them death. This is silent hunger genocide as dreadful as world war victims! What is in short supply? Not a food shortage. But a shortage of Justice.*

*As Pope Francis has agonizingly pointed out, humanity suffers because of an overdose of 'the culture of indifference and a culture of waste.' This paradox involves mechanisms of superficiality, negligence and selfishness that underlie the culture of waste. The amount of food lost or wasted costs 2.6 trillion USD annually and is more than enough to feed all the 815 million hungry people in the world - four times over. Even amidst all these wailing by hungry stomachs, multinational food companies have made a huge profit. During COVID carnage, Eight of the biggest food and beverage companies pay out \$18 billion to shareholders as new epicenters of hunger emerge across the globe. Hunger is a lucrative business.*

*Food is not only a biological function for the Christians. It has deep faith ramifications. The first blessings of God to the first parents came through food: "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food" (Gen. 1:29). This blessing was followed by the heart-wrenching betrayal of our first parents through another natural food: Fruit. When God liberated the Israeli slaves from Egypt, it would happen through a paschal meal. God fed them with the Manna in their wanderings until they reached the promised land. Food remains the liberative symbol in the Christian Faith.*

*Jesus Christ used the symbol of food in his mission. "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give*



for the life of the world.” (Jn 6:51). *He promised those who give a cup of water to the thirsty (Mk 9:41) and food to the hungry (Mt 25: 31) would merit eternal life. He multiplied loaves and fed thousands. In the institution of the Eucharist he would proclaim: Take and Eat; this is My body. Take and Drink; this is my Blood. (Mt 26:26) Ultimately he would break himself as the bread on the cross as our paschal lamb as St Paul affirms: Christ our Passover Lamb was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). In the Catholic Church food is the centre of our faith celebration. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic Faith. (CCC 1324). We come to celebrate the meal of liberation and salvation. Sadly, COVID has thrown a challenge to our communal breaking of the Bread and Word. But we are inspired by Our Lord Jesus example. The world has become the altar, our breaking of the bread is done in our reaching out to the suffering people through service and sharing. Eucharist continues in other forms.*

*On a deeper reflection, we realize that God has given each one of us: “five loaves and two fish.” The five loaves are our five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. Through these, we can multiply our good actions hundred and thousands time and reach out to millions. Remember St. Mother Teresa: her loaf of love was multiplied and given to millions. Let us multiply our five loaves during these hard times:*

- 1. Let my eyes see everyone as my brother and sister created in God’s image.*
- 2. Like Yahweh, let my ears hear the cry of the suffering people.*
- 3. Let me taste and see that the Lord is good and asks me to go out to his people.*
- 4. Let me go to the suffering people and come back with the smell of the sheep.*

5. *Let my hands reach out and touch those who starve and are ill.*

*The two fish are the two qualities we are asked to cultivate as true Christians. Compassion (Karuna) and Mercy (Metta) (Lk 3:36). Be compassionate and merciful as our Heavenly Father is compassionate and merciful.(Lk 6:36) We can multiply our good acts. We are already given five loaves (five senses) and two fish. (Two Christian Virtues of Compassion and Mercy). We can multiply our good acts to thousands of people. Like Jesus, we can share the bread of healing, the bread of sharing, the bread of comforting, the bread of love and justice. Let the streets become the altar. Let our good acts become the loaves of bread. Let thousands benefit from these loaves of bread of good acts. With Peter we can proclaim to our suffering brothers and sisters: "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."(Acts 3:6)*

*God has given to humanity Five Great Loaves that has been multiplying and sustaining the whole creation for millions of years. These five loaves are: Land, water, air, fire and ether. The human body is made of these elements; all the flora and fauna are made of these elements; nature is made of these elements. Graced by God and sanctified by God's blessings, these elements have been feeding and providing everything human beings need. Earth and Water multiply the food and sustains billions of our people and animals. The air keeps us alive. The fire keeps our civilization going.*

*As Mahatma Gandhiji said, God gave everything for man's need, not for his greed. God has provided everything. The whole world is a Garden of Eden. As the Psalm affirms: The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs. (Ps 145) Greed took over humanity. Millions are exploited, thousands die of*

*starvation every day. There is not only a Corona virus that is ravaging humanity today. The virus of avarice, the virus of exploitation, the virus of hunger and the virus of oppression are destroying humanity. Human suffering is a man-made disaster. As St Paul indicates in Rom -8:35, anguish, distress, persecutions, famine, peril and nakedness have mutilated the human family. COVID is just a symptom of that churning malice.*

*In his efforts to stop the suffering of humanity, Pope Francis suggests two Fish: Economic Justice and Environmental Justice. Yes for too long, Justice was in short supply and the biggest social sin is the exploitation of the economy and nature by a minuscule minority of mega-rich.*

*Christ's miracle of the multiplication of loaves has very contemporary relevance. This world needs SHARING. Corona came as a slap on the face of all 'superpowers'-those who invested more on arms than on the health of the people. The invisible virus has become the invincible virus, bringing the superpowers of the world to its knees. It is not the shortage of food that affects all: it is the shortage of justice. Let us pray for a more just world and pray with Prophet Amos: Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! Amos 5: 24."*

On October 02 and October 04 we commemorate two great personalities who have dedicated their lives to alleviate poverty, ensure justice, equity and all the universal values, achieve freedom, rights and dignity for the people as well as improve the quality of life. Mahatma Gandhiji and Very Rev. Fr. Basilius Panat had so many characteristics and personality traits in common. They sought for the soul of India and found it in the Villages, in the people excluded, oppressed, marginalized; the people attacked, stripped and beaten by the robbers. They were

filled with compassion; they put a pause to their life-journey, got involved with these people who were in acute need. They addressed the hunger of these people at all realms - physical, emotional, social and spiritual. They ventured to risk everything for the well-being of the people under their care and initiated very innovative ideas for their empowerment. Mookkannur and other CST Ashrams bear witness to this process.

As we pay homage to Mahatma Gandhiji and Very Rev. Fr. Basilius, we look for those creative and committed leaders who can regenerate the same mode of operations and address the issues of poverty, which is the lack of resources viz: access to and control over the resources, voice for the voiceless, mobility and decision-making power, the necessary information, the life skills needed for a decent living, access to the public institutions etc. We need people who can multiply the meagre resources for the satisfaction of all and recreate a just, inclusive and harmonious society. As consecrated persons we are duty-bound to get involved in this side of life and risk ourselves to give life to others. We are invited to be Facilitators and Mediators for building the Communities, as the Disciples of Jesus.

We wish you all the best in your ministry and your strenuous efforts to address the core issues of life and transform the society.

With warm regards,



Fr. Francis Kilivallickal CST  
Superior General.

Fr. Francis Kilivallickal participated in the Vestition Ceremony of the Brothers Shins Mundackal, Joseph Chavaranal, Bibin Kalarickal and Tinto Thannivelil at Little Flower Mission House, Vettikkattiri, Shoranur on 20 June at 09.30 am, who are going for their First Year Theology studies, and Fr. Francis blessed their Cassocks. After that, there was also the Inauguration of the new Academic Year of the Little Flower Minor Seminary at 11.00 am.

On 29 June we celebrated the Feast of Brother Robin Cheeradiputhenpurayil today, the Regent at Basilius Boys' Home, Thrikkakara.

On 12 July, the Generalate Community celebrated the Feast of St. Louis Martin and St. Zeligue Guerin. Fr. Aneesh Angadiath celebrated Holy Mass in the Generalate at 06.30 am and he gave a message on the importance on the day. We recited the Novena to St. Louis Martin and Zeligue Guerin in the evening after the Rosary and Evening Prayer.

Fr. George Mulloor, Priest from the Diocese of Idukki reached the Generalate on 14 July 2020 to stay at the Generalate and attend classes for German and Italian Language Course at Ernakulam.

On 31 July, We bid adieu to Fr. Jose Thamarakattu from Generalate at 09.30 am as he went to Lisieux Ashram, Velur, Thrissur in the morning for taking charge as the House Econome there.

On 15 August, there was the simple celebration of the Feast of Assumption of Mother Mary and Independence Day in the Generalate today morning. Fr. James Purathail celebrated the Holy Mass in the Generalate Chapel and he gave a message on the importance of the day. After the Holy Mass there was Flag Hoisting by Fr. James Purathail, followed by National Anthem.

Fr. Thomas Anjilivelil and Fr. Jose Manjiyil participated in the inauguration of the New Academic Year of the Seminary at Khristu Jyoti Mission Bhavan, Mudickal in the evening.

On 20 August, There was the Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Little Flower Generalate Educational and Charitable Trust conducted at the Generalate from 03.30 pm to 06.00 pm.

We started the Novena on 22 September 2020 in preparation for the Feast of St. Therese. Each day different Fathers celebrated Holy Mass, preached homily based on the spirituality of St. Therese.



### *Flower Dale Quotations*

How great is my gratitude. What is He reserving for us in heaven if here below His love dispenses surprises so delightful?

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I understand clearly that through love alone can we become pleasing to God, and my sole ambition is to acquire it.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

Jesus will reward you a hundredfold for the sweet joys you have given up for Him.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**



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## NEWS FROM MISSION IN AFRICA

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### **SAHIHI YA MUNGU (SIGNATURE OF GOD)**

Greetings to all from the Little Flower Mission in Africa!

It's our great joy to greet all the members of the CST family on the occasion of the feast of our heavenly Patroness, St. Therese of Child Jesus and to make an update with the life from the African Mission.

#### **St. Elizabeth Church, Subira**

##### **With the people**

Fr. Jojesh Paul, the Parish Priest of Subira Parish partially moved to the presbytery at Subira. So we started daily Holy Mass in the Parish apart from the Lihwena station church where our Mission House is situated.

##### **Lord, Come and live in my heart**

104 children of Subira Parish from all the four substations received Holy Communion in the month of August.

##### **To Confirm in Faith**

66 children of Subira Parish received Sacrament of Confirmation on 26 September. Very Rev. Fr. Erick Mapunda, the Vicar General of the Songea Archdiocese conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation to the children.

##### **Maria, Mama wa Mungu Utuombee (Mary, Mother of God Pray for us)**

Long waited dream of the faithful in Subira Parish to construct a grotto of Mother Mary was actualised on 26 September 2020 as the Grotto was blessed by Very Rev. Fr. Erick Mapunda, the Vicar General of the Songea Archdiocese on the occasion of Confirmation. We thank all the people helped to actualise the big dream of the faithful.

##### **Feast of St Therese of Child Jesus**

Lihwena substation is celebrating feast of its heavenly Patroness, St Therese of Child Jesus on Thursday, 01 October.



We began the Novena in preparation for the feast on 22 September.

**Little Flower Mission House, Lihwena**, will celebrate the feast of St Therese of Child Jesus on Saturday, 03 October.

**ST. GABRIEL ARCHANGEL CHURCH, MBAGALA KUU, DAR ES SALAAM**

Fr. Febin Puthumana took charge as the Parish Priest of St. Gabriel Church Mbagala Kuu, Dar Es Salaam on 19-7-2020.

On 26-7-2020 the Parishioners of St. Gabriel Parish gave send off to Fr. Philip Kallamplackal who was transferred to Mtandika Parish in the Diocese of Iringa.

Fr. Jose Panikulangara, Fr. Febin Puthumana and some of the Parishioners accompanied Fr. Philp Kallamplackal to reach Iringa, and take over the Parish at Mtandika.

On 25-09-2020 As part of the preparation for our Parish Feast we are starting novena of St. Gabriel, The Archangel.

As the part of our Catechetical program we have decided to celebrate the Feast of St. Therese on October, the Patron Saint of the Sunday School. So we are having different cultural programmes for our children on 04-10-2020 as part of our Parish Feast and the Feast of St Therese of Child Jesus.

On 03 -10-2020 - 46 children are getting Confirmation in our Parish

On 30-10- 2020 - 93 children are getting ready for their First Holy Communion

**ST. PETER AND PAUL, KAONGO (Diocese of Meru), KENYA**

**കെനിയയിൽ നിന്ന് എല്ലാവർക്കും നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധയുടെ തിരുനാൾ മംഗളങ്ങൾ!**

കൊറോണയുടെ വാർത്തകളൊക്കെ ഇവിടെ കുറഞ്ഞു കുറഞ്ഞു വന്നുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുകയാണ്. ഓരോ ദിവസവും 1000 ന് മുകളിൽ വരെ വന്ന രോഗികളുടെ എണ്ണം ഇപ്പോൾ ഗവൺമെന്റിന്റെ റെക്കോർഡ് പ്രകാരം എല്ലാ ദിവസവും ഏതാണ്ട് 200ന് താഴെ മാത്രമാണ്. സ്കൂളുകൾ ഒഴികെ എല്ലാ ദിവസവും ഏതാണ്ട് സാധാരണനിലയിലേക്ക് വന്നു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. സ്കൂളുകൾ



ഒന്നും തുറന്നിട്ടില്ല. എന്നാൽ നിബന്ധനകളോട് കൂടി പള്ളികൾ എല്ലാം തുറന്ന്, വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയും മറ്റ് കൂദാശകളും ആയി സാധാരണനിലയിലേയ്ക്ക് പതിയെ പതിയെ ഗ്രൂപ്പുകളിലായി വാർഡ് തലത്തിൽ കുർബാന ചൊല്ലി കൊടുക്കുന്നതിന് സാധിച്ചിരുന്നു. കൊറോണക്കാലത്ത് പള്ളികൾ അടച്ചിട്ടിരിക്കുകയായിരുന്നു എങ്കിലും അച്ചന്മാരുടെ ഭക്ഷണക്കാര്യത്തിലും മറ്റ് ആവശ്യങ്ങളിലും ഇവിടുത്തെ ഇടവക ജനങ്ങൾ അവരുടെ സഹായവുമായി എപ്പോഴും കൂടെ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. കൂടാതെ കൊറോണ കാലത്തെ അതിജീവിക്കുന്നതിന് രൂപതയിൽ നിന്നും ചെറിയ സഹായം ലഭിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി. കെനിയയിൽ നമ്മുടെ മിഷൻ ഉള്ള ജില്ലയിൽ കൊറോണ ഒന്നും കാര്യമായി റെക്കോർഡ് ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടിട്ടില്ല.

കൊറോണക്കാലം ആയിരുന്നുവെങ്കിലും ഇവിടെ ചെറുപുഷ്പ സഭയെ ഏൽപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന അഞ്ച് പള്ളികളിൽ ഒരേണ്ണംകൂടി മുഴുവൻ പണിയും കഴിഞ്ഞില്ലെങ്കിലും കല്ലുകൊണ്ട് ഭിത്തി കെട്ടി ഒരു permanent structure ആക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞതിന്റെ സന്തോഷം ജനങ്ങളുടെ മുഖത്ത് ഉണ്ട്. ഈ പള്ളി വിശുദ്ധ കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യയുടെ നാമത്തിലുള്ള പള്ളിയാണ്.

ഇടവകയിൽ നടത്തുന്ന സാമൂഹ്യ സേവന പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളുടെ ഭാഗമായി ഇടവകയിലെ കർഷകർക്ക് ഹോൾസെയിൽ റേറ്റിൽ ആവശ്യമായ വളം ഇറക്കി കൊടുത്തു. ഇടവകയിലെ യുവജനങ്ങൾക്കു വേണ്ടി ആരംഭിച്ച പൗൾട്രി ഫാമിനോട് ചേർന്ന് മരിയൻ ഡിവോഷണൽ ഗ്രൂപ്പിനുവേണ്ടിയും ഒരു പൗൾട്രി ഫാം ആരംഭിച്ചു. കൂടാതെ ഇടവകയിലെ വളരെ മോശം അവസ്ഥയിൽ താമസിച്ചിരുന്ന രണ്ടു കുടുംബങ്ങൾക്ക് വീട് വെച്ച് കൊടുക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഒന്ന് ഇവിടെ പോപ്പുലർ മിഷൻ ധ്യാനം നടത്തിയപ്പോൾ കിട്ടിയ തുക കൊണ്ടും മറ്റൊന്ന് കോൺഗ്രിഗേഷന്റെ പേരിലും ആണ്.

വളരെ ലളിതമായ രീതിയിൽ ആണെങ്കിലും ഇവിടെ ഞങ്ങൾ ഓണവും ആഘോഷിച്ചു. എല്ലാവരും ആരോഗ്യവാന്മാരായി ഇരിക്കട്ടെ എന്ന് പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു. കൊറോണയെ അതിജീവിക്കാൻ ശക്തിയുണ്ടാവട്ടെ.

ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി എല്ലാവർക്കും തിരുനാളിന്റെ പ്രാർത്ഥനകളും ആശംസകളും നേരുന്നു.



We the Fathers of Little Flower Mission in Africa wish you all the Fathers and Brothers a very happy Feast of our heavenly Patroness and may the missionary zeal of Little Flower and vision of our beloved Founder Very Rev. Fr. Basilius inspire many minds to join Mission to fulfil the dreams of the Congregation in the Mission in Africa. ◆

### *Flower Dale Quotations*

Be quite sure that God will bless you and that the depths of your sufferings will be matched by the consolation reserved for you.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

Oh, Jesus, my love...my vocation, I finally found my vocation, it is LOVE.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

May all those on whom faith does not shine at last see the light!

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

The good God says to me, "Give always without concerning yourself with results."

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

## ALUVA TIDINGS

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### **Arrival of the Seminarians**

Jumping over the hurdles, amidst the pandemic the Seminarians arrived at Little Flower Seminary, Aluva at different times. The Third Year Philosophers reached the Seminary on 01 of July. The First Year Philosophers arrived on 05 and the Second Year Philosophers arrived on 10 July. They were warmly welcomed to the Little Flower Major Seminary Community. Since the circumstances were not fitting to resume the classes, the time was given for each batch with some works and duties. The Third Year Philosophers were engaged in completing their Thesis works.

### **Orientation Programme for the First Years**

Becoming member of a group is to be animated and guided. First Year Philosophers had group dynamism from 28-30 June. They were guided by their respective animators. It was a good occasion for them to know each other and share their life experiences. Frs Francis Chittanappilly CST and Manjush Srakath CST actively led the group dynamism. Both living groups assembled together at the end of the day and had a good interaction session. The Orientation program reached its culmination by offering the Holy Eucharist celebrated by animators. Group dynamism was indeed helpful in getting to know oneself and members of the living group.

### **Festal Greetings to Fr. Jeevan**

We celebrated the Feast Day of St. James the Apostle on 25 July. It was a double joy for us that our dear and loving Fr. Jeevan Thundiylil, the Econome, celebrated his Feast on the same day. He offered Holy Mass for the community in the



morning. Fr. Rector, exhilarated the day with his heart-touching words during the Eucharist.

### **St. John Maria Vianney Day**

St. Vianney, the Patron of all Priests and Pastors, is one of the most inspiring Feast days in the Catholic Church. This Saint gives the power to all Priests to follow in the footsteps of Jesus to shepherd his flock. Little Flower Major Seminary family was so happy to celebrate this Feast in a moderate way during this season of pandemic Covid -19. We began our day drawing strength from the Eucharistic table where Rev. Frs Jeevan and John celebrated the Eucharist. Fr John delivered an enriching homily on the values and virtuous life of St Vianney. A friendly Basketball Match was organized between the First and Second Year Seminarians in which the Second Years proved that they are second to none. The prayer and sharing session conducted in living group-wise was also an inspiring one where Brothers shared their views and dreams on 'Priesthood' to attest their deep convictions and manifest their expectations. The Animators guided the groups. The day was a memorable one. First Year Philosophers staged a short cultural program.

### **Happy Birthday Dear Fr. John Vadakkal**

It was a moment of joy for the hearts of every Seminarian of our Seminary to jovially celebrate the birthday of our loving Fr. John Vadakkal, the Spiritual Director, on 20 August. He celebrated Solemn Holy Qurbana in the morning along with a heart touching spiritual message. In the evening we had community celebrations wishing him all the returns of the day wholeheartedly. Seminarians felicitated him through various programs.

### **COR-ONAM**

Onam is the only festival that the people of God's own land inherits. When the whole world is under the pandemic Covid-19, it is also necessary to keep safe. We, the LFS family,

was fortunate to celebrate this festival in a limited way keeping up the rules and regulations given by the Government as Covid protocol. In order to make this day with more fun and laughter, different competitions were held between the four groups showing their team spirit and vigour. The staff members were also much energetic during Onam celebrations. As the traditions and customs of Onam, the third year seminarians prepared 'Onasadya' under the leadership of Fr. Jeevan. The First Year Seminarians decorated the 'floral carpet'. The Second Year Seminarians led the prayer session. Taking into account the Covid -19 restrictions from the Government for grant celebrations, we celebrated the festival in a limited way.

### **Independence Day & Inauguration of the Cultural Academy**

The Feast of the Assumption of Mary and Independence Day of our Nation were celebrated in our Seminary on 15 August with full devotion and faith. Three days' preparatory prayer was conducted prior to the Feast of Assumption. Fr. Jeevan Thundiyl CST celebrated the Holy Mass and conveyed an inspirational homily. The national flag was hoisted by Fr. Saji Nellikunnel CST, the Rector, followed by a motivational speech by Bro. Jithin Kulangara CST, First Year Philosopher, on the importance of Independence Day. The day was an official beginning of the Literary Cultural Academy of the year 2020-2021. Rev Dr Manoj Palakkudy [HOD, Department of Malayalam, St. Dominic Collage, Kanjirappally] inaugurated the Cultural Academy. The three batches of seminarians staged colorful programs befitting to the occasion. Basketball match was conducted between Second and Third Year batch in which the Third Years won. The Third Year Seminarians with the collaboration of YSS took initiative in preparing and supplying various food items as part of social work fund raising. The First Year Seminarians led the prayer session in the evening.

## **Webinar**

There was a philosophical programme conducted in the Seminary on our Independence Day as 'WEBINAR'. Rev Dr Manoj Palakudy, HOD, Department of Malayalam, St. Dominic College, Kanjirappally gave the lecture on Cyber Literature. He pointed out the influence of cyber age and social media in this fast developing world. Now, everyone is busy engaged on cell phones, hand held gadgets and reachability has come down to the tip of one's finger. At the same time, this a revolutionary cyber world where even the new born babies are getting tuned with the new technologies. Cyber space gives massive advantage to everyone to open up their comments, thoughts, views and their responses. These technologies now become an unavoidable part in the human life and a moderation must be kept while using it. In his talk he also shared a comparative view on traditional and contemporary reading. Only few engage in reading written books; many others read from online publications. After his insightful presentation Seminarians had an open forum for discussing and commenting, raising questions and adding their own responses. The Webinar ended with Vote of Thanks by Bro. Arun Perepadan.

## **Teachers Day Celebration**

"A teacher is really the representative of supreme reality!"

On 05 September 2020, Little Flower Institute celebrated Teachers' Day. The student community gathered in the auditorium and had the celebrations. All the Resident Staff and Teachers were present for the function. The program began with a prayer song. Bro. Stenin CFIC welcomed all the Teachers to the dias. Bro. Albert Tharappel CSSR reminded about the significance of a Teacher in the life of a student in his message. The Second Year Philosophers staged a group song. We greeted our Teachers by cutting the cake. Fr. Manjush Srakath

CST, the Vice Rector of the Seminary, enriched the students with his views on meaning and importance of Teacher from the Indian context. The program ended with Congregational Anthem.

### **House Day Outing**

Owing to Pandemic Covid –19, instead of Semester One day Outing we had a “House Day Outing” on 17 September 2020. Everyone was at their leisure. We experienced the relief and gladness of putting aside our works and study matters and plunged ourselves into games and leisurely activities. The whole day was set free for the Seminarians and they utilized their time in doing their personal interests, like praying privately, watching movies, playing games, long hours of sleep etc. The YSS members were active in supplying various edibles on this day as part of fund raising. The entire day brought so much of enjoyment and leisure for the Brothers. This was indeed very much relaxing in hard times of Covid-19. ◆

### ***Flower Dale Quotations***

It is so consoling to think that Jesus, the strong God, experienced all our weaknesses, that He trembled at the sight of the bitter chalice - the cup that He had longed for so ardently.

***-St. Therese of Lisieux***

I have only to cast a glance in the Gospels and immediately I breathe in the perfumes of Jesus' life.

***-St. Therese of Lisieux***

ST. JOSEPH'S PROVINCE

1. കുവപ്പൊയ്ക ആശ്രമത്തോടനുബന്ധിച്ചുള്ള പാലിമെഡ് പാലിയേറ്റീവിന്റെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ 'ഡേ കെയർ ഫോർ സ്പെഷ്യൽ ചിൽഡ്രൻ' 2020 മാർച്ച് 8 ന് ബഹു. തോമസ് ചാഴിക്കാടൻ എം.പി. ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്തു.
2. ആർ.ആർ.സി. ധ്യാനകേന്ദ്രത്തിൽ മരിയൻ കൺവെൻഷൻ ഓഗസ്റ്റ് 7,8,9, തീയതികളിൽ ഓൺലൈൻ ആയി നടത്തി.
3. ഈ വർഷം വ്രതവാഗ്ദാനം നടത്തിയ ബ്രദേഴ്സിനായി ജൂൺ 15 മുതൽ 28 വരെ രണ്ടാഴ്ചക്കാലത്തേക്ക് പൂവൂത്തോട് സെമിനാരിയിലും നാടുകാണി കപ്പച്ചിൻ ആശ്രമത്തിലുമായി ഒരു ഓറിയന്റേഷൻ പ്രോഗ്രാം സംഘടിപ്പിച്ചു.
4. ജൂൺ 25 ന് ഈ വർഷത്തെ രണ്ടാമത്തെ വൈദിക സമ്മേളനം പെരിയ ബഹു. ജനറാളച്ചന്റെ സാന്നിധ്യത്തിൽ പ്രൊവിൻഷ്യൽ ഹൗസിൽ നടന്നു.
5. ഈ വർഷം വൈദികരുടെ ഒന്നാം ബാച്ചിന്റെ വാർഷികധ്യാനം സെപ്റ്റംബർ 13-18 വരെ ഓൺലൈൻ ആയി നടത്തി. ഫാ. ഡെർബിൻ ഈട്ടിക്കാട്ടിൽ വി.സി. ധ്യാനം നയിച്ചു.
6. കോതമംഗലം ലിറ്റിൽ ഫ്ളവർ സ്റ്റുഡിഹൗസിലെ പുതിയ കെട്ടിടത്തിന്റെ വെഞ്ചരിപ്പുകർമ്മം സെപ്റ്റംബർ 8-ാം തീയതി പ്രൊവിൻഷ്യാളച്ചൻ നിർവ്വഹിച്ചു. അന്നേ ദിവസം തന്നെ ബേസിൽ ഭവനിൽ പണി കഴിപ്പിച്ച പുതിയ ഗ്രോട്ടോയുടെ ആശീർവാദകർമ്മം മാർ സെബാസ്റ്റ്യൻ വാണിയപ്പുരക്കൽ പിതാവ് നിർവ്വഹിച്ചു.
7. കട്ടപ്പന ജെ.പി.എം. കോളേജിൽ പുതിയതായി എം.എസ്.ഡബ്ല്യു. കോഴ്സിന് എം.ജി. യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി അംഗീകാരം നൽകി. എം. ജി. യൂണിവേഴ്സിറ്റി ഡിഗ്രി പരീക്ഷകളിൽ അഞ്ചു റാങ്കുകൾ കോളേജിന് ലഭിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി.
8. മുല്ലക്കാനം സാൻജോ കോളേജിന് പുതിയതായി BSW കോഴ്സ് നടത്താനുള്ള അംഗീകാരം M.G. University യിൽ നിന്നും ലഭിച്ചു. ◆



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## ST. THOMAS PROVINCE

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1. Bros. Arun Thuravakkal and Jithin Vellappattu received the Order of Diaconate and Bro. Bibin Cherukunnel received the Order of Sub diaconate on 03 July, 2020 at St. Thomas Bhavan, Chelavoor from Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil, Bishop of Thamarassery.
2. Fr. Sibi Eyalel went for pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Faridabad and Fr. Jophin Kuruvammackal is appointed Assistant Parish Priest at St. Sebastian's Church, Koodaranji in the Diocese of Thamarassery.
3. During lockdown, Third Year Philosophers stayed at St. Thomas Ashram, Kottoor under the guidance of Fr. Tom Pazheparambil and First and Second Year Philosophers stayed at Sanjo Bhavan, Kaithapoyil under the guidance of Fr. Jaison Enchathanath.
4. Because of the hardwork of Rev. Fr. Anto Karakkattu, Vocation Promoter, 19 candidates were admitted at Tabore Little Flower Seminary, Kalpetta this year and 9 Brothers remain at present.
5. Bros. Abin Madassery and Shubin Mundackal who were supposed to go to Ruhalya Seminary, Ujjain, because of lockdown started their Theology studies at MST Generalate, Bharananganam.
6. Rev. Fr. Prabhath Nirappil was relieved of his duties from the Archdiocese of Thalassery and he is getting ready to go for Mission in Africa.
7. After lockdown, we have arranged 3 zonal meetings- Kottoor zone on 18 June, 2020, Thrissur zone on 21 June, 2020 and Kozhikode zone on 27 June, 2020.
8. 41<sup>st</sup> day of the demise of Rev. Fr. Augustine Alackal was commemorated at Provincial House on 26 June, 2020. CANVAS, a Souvenir was published on the day.

9. The appointed Committee members to write the History of Province gathered together and started the work.
10. The renovated Seminary building at Irikkur was blessed by the Provincial Superior on 03 July 2020.
11. Bro. Libin Kalapurackal who completed his regency at Malout Seminary received the Religious Habit at Provincial House on 08 July, 2020.
12. 5<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Fr. Damian Kondoor was commemorated at St. Thomas Ashram, Kottoor on 09 July, 2020.
13. Fr. Dr. Gimmy Akkattu published a book titled “Cyber Yugathile Kaumara Sangarshangal”. It was released by the Provincial Superior at Tabore Little Flower Seminary, Kalpetta on 06 July, 2020.
14. Book (Keshet) of Fr. Jaison Enchathanath was released by the Provincial Superior on 15 August, 2020 through online.
15. The renovated rooms at Navajyothi Ashram, Cherupuzha was blessed by the Provincial Superior on 20 August, 2020.
16. Onam kits to the poor with the help of CNEWA was distributed at Kannikalam and Nellikunnu in the presence of the Provincial Superior.
17. An inspection was held at Little Flower School, Sreekandapuram for CBSE Affiliation.
18. Blessing of the completed rooms of shopping complex at Goolikkadavu and the renovated Santhigram Ashram, Pettickal were officiated by the Provincial Superior on 27 August, 2020.
19. Our Fathers attended the burial of beloved Daddy of Fr. Vimal Dev Kandathil on 04 July, 2020, mother of Fr.

Wilson Panachikalkarott on 08 July, 2020, and younger brother of Fr. Thomas Mulangattil on 03 August, 2020.

20. His Grace, Mar George Njaralakkattu, Archbishop of Thalassery has appointed Rev. Fr. John Kochupurackal CST as a member of the preliminary investigation commission to enquire into the possibility of initiating the cause of Beatification and Canonization of Armond Madhavath OFM Cap.

21. The Major Seminaries where our Brothers are enrolled for Theology are opened (Good Shepherd Major Seminary on 13 September, St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Mangalapuzha on 14 September, St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor on the first week of October). Brothers left for Ruhalya Seminary, Ujjain on 15 September. ◆

### *Flower Dale Quotations*

The very desires and intuitions of my inmost heart assured me that another and more lovely land awaited me, an abiding city.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I am the smallest of creatures and I recognize my worthlessness, but I also know how hearts that are generous and noble love to do good.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**



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## KHRIST JYOTHI PROVINCE

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### **Death Anniversary of Fr. Pius Edasseriparabil CST**

Death Anniversary of Rev. Fr. Pius Edasseriparambil CST was commemorated at Ferozpur on 13 July, 2020. The Memorial Mass was presided over by Rev. Fr. Provincial Superior George Alukka and concelebrated by our Priests from Punjab and Rajasthan. *Office of the Dead* and Special prayers were also offered at the tomb after the Mass.

### **Blessing of the Renovated Church at Bikaner**

The renovated St. Xavier's Parish Church, Bikaner was Blessed by His Excellency Most Rev. Oswald Lewis, Bishop of Jaipur in the presence of Provincial Superior, other fathers and faith on 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. Special appreciation and thanks to Fr. Alwin Elavunkal, Parish Priest and Frs. Sebastian and Shibu. Fr. Dony Mulkariyil was installed as the new Parish Priest of St. Xavier's Parish Church, Bikaner on the same day.

### **Where Excellence is Tradition**

Results 2020 of Class X and Class XII brought much delight to many pandemic-stricken faces. All our schools under ICSE, CBSE and State Boards harvested an outstanding result this year. Special appreciation to all who were blessed to be an effective instrument to bring dreams of many to an accomplishment.

### **Stay Home, Celebrate At home**

Festival of Onam was celebrated with due significance in each individual Houses. It was really an occasion to grow stronger our bonds of love and fellowship. Though, we all are going through a very tough time owing to Covid-19, we never fail to share the joy of celebrating the birthdays and feast days of our fellow confreres, however, limited only to the respective communities.

## Welcome Back

Fr. Abraham Poonolil who underwent a heart surgery last year in the month of December in Kerala, came back to mission healthy and rejuvenated after his treatment and rest. Thanks to everyone who remembered and prayed for him in his time of need.

## New Appointments

- Fr. Sunny Charakunnath – Sabbatical Year, Member of Khrist Jyoti Mission Bhavan, Mudickal.
- Fr. Tom Padinjarayil CST - Priest In-Charge, Rama Mandi.
- Fr. Shan Alakkaparambil CST – Relieved for the Diocese of Faridabad; Hastiwala, Ferozpur.
- Fr. Dony Mullakkariyil CST- Parish Priest and Assistant Manager, Bikaner.
- Fr. Bibin Edappallymadathil CST – Priest In-Charge Kot-Ise-Khan for the Diocese of Faridabad
- Fr. Alwin Elavunkal CST- Vice Rector and Econome Khrist Jyoti Minor Seminary, Mudickal.



### *Flower Dale Quotations*

I realized that all souls have more or less the same battles to fight, but no two souls are exactly the same.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

Even when alone be cheerful, remembering always that you are in the sight of the angels.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**



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## LITTLE FLOWER PROVINCE

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### GORAKHPUR SAMACHAR

#### **To Felicitate our Glorious Nation**

We celebrated Independence Day and the Feast of the Assumption of Mary with due solemnity. Immediately after the Holy Mass the Provincial Superior hoisted the Flag in the School and gave the Independence Day message. The Holy Mass and Flag hoisting ceremony were conducted following the regulations of Government due to the Corona Pandemic.

#### **Online Mania.....**

In this pandemic situation, some of our Theologians are having Theology studies online. The Brothers who are doing Theology studies in Pune and Mangalapuzha are having their online classes from Vettikkattiri and the Brothers studying in Delhi are in the Provincial House.

#### **Time to Gear Up**

A meeting was arranged in the Provincial House on the 03 August 2020, for all the Principals of our educational institutions of the Province, to discuss the status of our educational system which got faint in the greatly affected pandemic.

#### **We are Engaged...**

Brothers in Jyothi Gurukul Walterganj are also busy with their hectic schedule as they began their Literary and Cultural Academy on 12 August 2020. The Provincial Superior inaugurated the function. There were several programmes staged by our Seminarians on that day. All the very best for the Seminarians for their Academic activities this year.

## Charity Begins at Home....

As we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our presence in North Indian Mission, we have planned to build a house near to all our Ashrams in the Jubilee year as part of the memorial of the Golden Jubilee. At many places we had begun the work but could not proceed further because of the Pandemic. We have completed two houses already and handed over the houses to the people. One in Nepal and one in Sravasti. Congratulations to Frs. Michael Chirayath and Jubish Azhiyath for their time and hard work in completing the work on time. ◆

### *Flower Dale Quotations*

We have only one task during the night of the present life - to love Jesus.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I made a resolution never to wander far away from the glance of Jesus in order to travel peacefully toward the eternal shore!

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

To remain a child before God means to recognize our nothingness, to expect everything from God. It is not to become discouraged over our failings, for children fall often, but they are too little to hurt themselves very much.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

# വി. കുർബ്ബാന ചൊല്ലിക്കൊണ്ടു മരിച്ച നമ്മുടെ സ്ഥാപക പിതാവ്

ഫാ. അലോഷ്യസ് കൊണ്ടുകാലയിൽ സി.എസ്.റ്റി

44 വർഷങ്ങൾക്കു മുമ്പ്

ഒക്ടോബർ മാസം

ഒന്നാം തീയതി

വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ തിരുന്നാൾ ദിവസം.

നമ്മുടെ സ്ഥാപകപിതാവായ വല്ലച്ചൻ

തന്റെ മുറിപുട്ടി താക്കോൽ

സ്ഥലം സുപ്പീരിയറെ ഏല്പിച്ചിട്ട്

പഴങ്ങാട്ട് ആസ്പത്രിയിലേയ്ക്ക്,

ഇനി ഞാൻ ഇങ്ങോട്ട് ഇല്ല എന്ന്

പ്രവചിച്ചുകൊണ്ട്.

പിന്നീടുവന്ന നാലു ദിവസങ്ങൾ

നീണ്ട ഒരു കുർബ്ബാന ചൊല്ലൽ ആയിരുന്നു.

അരനൂറ്റാണ്ടോളം താൻ സഹിച്ച കൂടലിലെ

കുരുക്കളുടെ വേദന അതിതീവ്രമായി:

എനിക്കു വേദനിയ്ക്കുന്നു

കഠിനമായി വേദനിയ്ക്കുന്നു

അതിതീവ്രമായി സഹിക്കുന്നു

എനിയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിയ്ക്കുക:

നാലു ദിവസങ്ങളിലായി പല പ്രാവശ്യം

കേട്ട വാക്കുകളാണ്, രോഗീ ശുശ്രൂഷകരായ ഞങ്ങൾ.

വിശുദ്ധ കുർബ്ബാനയിൽ നടക്കുന്നത് രണ്ടു വലിയ സംഭവങ്ങളാണ്. മനുഷ്യാവതാരം മുതലുള്ള സ്വയം ശൂന്യ വത്കരണവും മരണവും, മനുഷ്യർക്ക് വേണ്ടിയുള്ള ഈശോയുടെ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും. ഇവ രണ്ടും വളരെ വ്യക്തമായും



തീക്ഷ്ണമായും നമ്മുടെ വല്ലച്ചന്റെ അവസാന നാലു ദിവസങ്ങളിൽ നമുക്കു കാണാൻ സാധിക്കും.

തീവ്രമായും ശക്തമായും അച്ചനിൽ നിന്ന് അത് പുറത്ത് വരുന്നുണ്ട്. ഈശോയുടെ കുരിശിലെ വേദനയോട് സമാനമായ വേദന, അതിന്റെ മറ്റൊരു നിറഞ്ഞു കവിയൽ... “ഞാൻ കഠിനമായ അഗ്നിപരീക്ഷയിലാണ്. എനിക്ക് വേണ്ടി നിങ്ങൾ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുവിൻ”.

പീഡാനുഭവവും കുരിശുമരണവും പോലെ തന്നെ ഈശോ തന്റെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട ശിഷ്യർക്കുവേണ്ടി ദീർഘമായി, തീക്ഷ്ണമായി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയുണ്ടായല്ലോ. നമ്മുടെ വന്ദ്യപിതാവും താൻ സ്ഥാപിച്ച സമൂഹത്തിലെ അംഗങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി തീവ്രമായി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി, പ്രത്യേകിച്ച് അവസാന നാലു ദിവസങ്ങളിൽ - സമൂഹത്തിലെ അധികാരികൾ തുടങ്ങി മൈനർ സെമിനാരിക്കാർ വരെയുള്ള ഓരോ ഗ്രൂപ്പിനേയും പ്രത്യേകം എടുത്തു പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയുണ്ടായി.

1976 ഒക്ടോബർ 4 ന് രാവിലെ ആസ്പത്രി ചാപ്പലിൽ നടന്ന വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിൽ, കിടക്കയിൽ കിടന്ന് വല്ലച്ചൻ തീക്ഷ്ണമായി കുർബ്ബാന ചൊല്ലി, കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിച്ചു. ഉച്ചകഴിഞ്ഞ് രണ്ടു മണിക്ക് റംശാ നമസ്കാരം ശുശ്രൂഷികളോടുകൂടി ചൊല്ലി, സുബോധത്തോടും സുവ്യക്തമായും.

ഇതിനോടകം വല്ലച്ചൻ പ്രാണവായു വലിക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങിയിരുന്നു. ഏകദേശം 6.30 pm ആയപ്പോൾ സർവ്വശക്തിയും ഉപയോഗിച്ച്, മുറിയിലുള്ള എല്ലാവർക്കും കേൾക്കത്തക്കവിധം തക്സായിലെ “കർത്താവേ,..... എളിയവരും ബലഹീനരും ആകുലരുമായ ഈ ദാസർ നിന്റെ സന്നിധിയിൽ ...നന്ദി പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ കഴിയാത്തവിധം അത്ര വലിയ അനുഗ്രഹമാണ്.....” എന്ന പ്രാർത്ഥനയും പിന്നീട് കൂദാശ വചനങ്ങളും ഉച്ചരിച്ച് കുർബ്ബാന ഭക്തിയോടെ ഹൃദ്യമായി ചൊല്ലി, താൻ യഥാർത്ഥത്തിൽ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബ്ബാന ചൊല്ലുകയാണെന്ന് കരുതിക്കൊണ്ട്.

അഭിവന്ദ്യ ബിഷപ്പ് സെബാസ്റ്റ്യൻ മങ്കുഴിക്കരി 24 മണിക്കൂറിനുള്ളിൽ മൂന്നാം പ്രാവശ്യം വല്ലച്ചന്റെ അടുത്ത് എത്തിയിരുന്നു. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ നേതൃത്വത്തിൽ സി.എസ്.റ്റി. വൈദികരും ഇടവക വികാരിമാരും സി.എസ്.റ്റി. സെമിനാരി വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളും പാണാട്ട് കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളും കുറേ വിശ്വാസികളും ആസ്പത്രി സ്റ്റാഫും ഒന്നിച്ച് കൊന്ത ചൊല്ലി ജപിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കേ,

തന്റെ ആത്മീയ മക്കളുടെ വേദനയുടേയും കണ്ണീർക്കണങ്ങളുടേയും മദ്ധ്യേ,

സിസ്റ്റേഴ്സിന്റെ സുകൃതജപ പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടെ നടുവിൽ, മങ്കുഴിക്കരിപ്പിതാവ് ശൈഹികാശീർവാദം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ, വലിച്ചൻ “ഇതാ പ്രകാശം.... പ്രകാശം.... പ്രകാശം..... എന്ന് മൂന്നുനാല് പ്രാവശ്യം ചുറ്റും നിന്നവർക്ക് കേൾക്കത്തക്ക വിധത്തിൽ ഉച്ചത്തിൽ ഉദ്ഘോഷിച്ചുകൊണ്ട്

പ്രകാശത്തിന്റെ നാട്ടിലേക്ക്

പിതാവിന്റെ വീട്ടിലേക്ക്

പറന്നുപോയി,

നമ്മുടെ സ്ഥാപക പിതാവ്



*Flower Dale Quotations*

I give thanks to my Jesus for making me walk in darkness, and in this darkness I enjoy profound peace. I only desire that my darkness may obtain light for sinners.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I am a child of the Church. I do not ask for riches or glory, not even for the glory of heaven.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

How happy I am to see myself imperfect and to be in need of God's mercy.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

# വല്ലച്ചൻ നടന്നുനീങ്ങിയ വിശുദ്ധവഴികൾ

ഡോ. ഫാ. ജോസഫ് പുളിത്താനം സി.എസ്.റ്റി

ഉയരത്തിലും ഉൾക്കാഴ്ചയിലും, ചിന്തയിലും വീക്ഷണങ്ങളിലും, വിശുദ്ധിയിലും വിജ്ഞാനത്തിലും നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ ബസീലിയൂസച്ചൻ ഒരു വല്ലച്ചനായിരുന്നു.

ഭാരതത്തിന്റെ ആത്മാവ് കോടിക്കണക്കിന് ഗ്രാമീണരിലും കർഷകരിലും, സാധാരണക്കാരിലുമാണെന്ന രാഷ്ട്രപിതാവായ മഹാത്മാഗാന്ധിയുടെ വീക്ഷണം വല്ലച്ചൻ ഉൾക്കൊണ്ടു. തന്റെ കർമ്മഭൂമിയായി വല്ലച്ചൻ തെരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത മൂക്കന്നൂർ ഗ്രാമത്തെ അച്ചൻ ഒരു മാതൃകാഗ്രാമമായി വളർത്തി. കൃഷിയും ചെറുകിട വ്യവസായങ്ങളും, മൃഗസംരക്ഷണവും മറ്റും അനേകർക്ക് ഒരു മാതൃകയും പ്രേരകശക്തിയുമായിരുന്നു. ഗ്രാമങ്ങളേയും ഗ്രാമീണരേയും ഉദ്ധരിക്കാതെ നമ്മുടെ രാജ്യം ഉണരുകയോ വളരുകയോ ചെയ്തില്ലെന്ന് വല്ലച്ചൻ പറയുമായിരുന്നു.

അങ്ങനെയാണ് തന്റെ സഭയുടെ കർമ്മരംഗങ്ങൾ അച്ചൻ വടക്കേ ഇന്ത്യയിലേക്കും വ്യാപിപ്പിച്ചത്. പഞ്ചഭൂഖണ്ഡങ്ങളിലും സുവിശേഷം പ്രസംഗിക്കാൻ ആഗ്രഹിച്ച വി. ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തെ വല്ലച്ചൻ തന്റെ മാതൃകയും മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥയുമായി തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു. മിഷനറിമാർക്കുവേണ്ടി നിരന്തരം പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയും തന്റെ സഹനങ്ങൾ മിഷനറിമാർക്കുവേണ്ടി കാഴ്ചവയ്ക്കുകയും ചെയ്ത വി. ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തിന്റെ മാതൃക ഉൾക്കൊള്ളണമെന്ന് നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ സെമിനാരി വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളെ ഉദ്ബോധിപ്പിക്കുമായിരുന്നു.

ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭയിലെ ആദ്യത്തെ മിഷനറി, സ്ഥാപകനായ വല്ലച്ചൻ തന്നെയാണ്. പ്രായാധിക്യവും ആരോഗ്യപ്രശ്നങ്ങളും വക വെയ്ക്കാതെ വടക്കേന്ത്യയിലെ വിവിധ മിഷൻ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലേക്ക് വല്ലച്ചൻ അതിസാഹസികമായ യാത്ര ചെയ്ത് ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭയുടെ മിഷനറി പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്ക് തറക്കല്ലിട്ടു. വല്ലച്ചനാണ് നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ മിഷനറി “Par Excellence”.

ഭാരതത്തിലെ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ ചെറുപുഷ്പഭക്തൻ നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ വല്ലച്ചനാണ്. ഭരണജ്ഞാനത്തെ വി.

അൽഫോൻസാമ്മയും, കൽക്കത്തായിലെ വിശുദ്ധ മദർ തെരേസയും ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തിന്റെ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികതയിൽ ആകൃഷ്ടരായവരാണ്. മദർ തെരേസ ചെറുപുഷ്പ നാമ ധാരിയുമാണ്.

തന്റെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട പുണ്യവതി മരിച്ച മാസത്തിലോ അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അതിനോടടുത്ത ദിവസങ്ങളിലോ തനിക്കും മരിക്കണമെന്ന് വല്ലച്ചൻ ആഗ്രഹിച്ചിരുന്നിരിക്കാം. 1976 ഒക്ടോബർ ഒന്നിന് ചികിത്സയ്ക്കായി വല്ലച്ചൻ പഴങ്ങനാട്ടെത്തുന്നു. ഒക്ടോബർ 04 ന് വല്ലച്ചൻ ദിവംഗതനായി തന്റെ മാർഗ്ഗദർശിയും മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥയുമായ പുണ്യവതിയോടൊപ്പം സ്വർഗ്ഗത്തിൽ എത്തുന്നു.

നാമെല്ലാവരും എന്നും സായംസന്ധ്യയിൽ ചൊല്ലുന്ന വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായോടുള്ള പ്രാർത്ഥന വല്ലച്ചൻ തന്നെ എഴുതിയതാണ്. ഈ പ്രാർത്ഥന വല്ലച്ചൻ തന്റെ മരണക്കിടക്കയിൽ പല തവണ ഉരുവിട്ടു കാണും. നമുക്കറിയാം പ്രസ്തുത പ്രാർത്ഥന അവസാനിക്കുന്നത് “ഒരു നല്ല മരണം ലഭിക്കുന്നതിന് നിരന്തരം ഞങ്ങൾക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കണമേ” എന്ന അപേക്ഷയോടു കൂടിയാണ്. വി. ചെറുപുഷ്പം വല്ലച്ചന് തീർച്ചയായും ഒരു നല്ല മരണം കൊടുത്തു.

അർത്താരയിലെ വണക്കത്തിന് വല്ലച്ചനെ അർഹനാക്കണമെ എന്ന് നമുക്ക് നിരന്തരം പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കാം.



*Flower Dale Quotations*

I do not know the future; yet I can confidently say that my Spouse is at the door.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

## CONTEMPLATION, PROCLAMATION AND ACTION IN THE LITTLE FLOWER CONGREGATION

**Dr. Fr. Mathew Variyamattam**

Fr. Thomas Panat (1891-1976), known as Fr. Basilius, is the Founder of Little Flower Congregation (Congregatio Sanctae Theresia A Jesu Infante - C.S.T.). He started the Congregation out of his God –experience in Christ, enhanced by his very personal devotion to St. Therese of Child Jesus. Simplicity and child-like surrender to the will of God the Father had struck deep root in his heart when he translated the four chapters of her autobiography entitled “Navamalika” to Malayalam. Fr. Basilius in his memoirs says “with that (translation) I became enamoured of the life and spirit of Little Flower that erupted within me and overflowed from the interior of my heart”. He intensely desired to share this experience with a few young men, and eventually formed the Little Flower Brotherhood (Cherupuzhpa Sahodara Sangam) at Mookkannur, Kerala, India, on March 19, 1931, with the oral permission of Mar Augustine Kandathil, the then Archbishop of Ernakulam.

The presence of the destitute and orphans in the Sacred Heart Orphanage Mookkannur, of which Fr. Panat was the manager, the backwardness as well as the underdevelopment of the village of Mookkannur, his closeness to the poor villagers and the contact he had with Mahatma Gandhi who dominated the national scene at that time-all these factors were the inspiration behind to begin a new religious community.

The charism of Little Flower Congregation (C.S.T) is derived from the beatitude of littleness of the poor in spirit (Mt. 5:3) taught by the Lord who emptied himself taking the form of a slave (Phil.2:7). Our heavenly patroness, St. Therese of Child Jesus experienced God of the Bible as one who has preferential love for the lowly (Wis.6:6) and the little (Prov.9:4).

The words of Jesus inviting the little children as revealing the mystery of the kingdom of God(Mt:18,1-4) fascinated her. The little children represented the lowly, the helpless, the insignificant, the downtrodden and the marginalized(Lk. 14:21)

Little Flower practiced this littleness through her absolute surrender to the will of God. This enabled her to find God as a loving Father and to approach him with the simplicity of a child. The dynamism of this childlike approach was her love, trust and absolute surrender to God.

The total emptying of self permeated by love leads us to the foot of the Cross. Little Flower realized that her vocation is to be love in the heart of the Church, and it is this love that motivated her actions and carried her missionary ambitions even to the ends of the earth. Our Father Founder who experienced this love and littleness of the saint bequeathed to us a life of prayer, absolute surrender to God the loving father and selfless services to the poor.

Our charism is realized by the practice of the evangelical counsels through the profession of the public vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, which are the gifts granted to the Church by Christ. Our religious community is constituted in this perspective and finds its place in the heart of the Church to witness to a Trinitarian life of love and communion through the daily celebration of the Holy Qurbana and contemplative study of the word of God.

Our charism is actualized in the promotion of the values of the kingdom, such as truth, justice, peace, equity, especially of women, youth and children by pastoral and missionary activities, educational and development activities, and proclamation of Good News to the poor (Lk 4:18-19). Hence the call to our community is a call to prophetic mission in the world. Our charism in short can be expressed thus: Be little,

serve the little. This means imbibing the attitude of childlike simplicity, love, trust and absolute surrender to God in the context of gospel teaching and Theresian spirituality.

### **Theresian way of Spirituality**

Therese of Lisieux, commonly known as Little Flower, died in a French Carmelite Convent on 30 September 1897. Her popularity rapidly extended well beyond her Carmelite Convent community, her home town of Lisieux and her country. In 1925 Pope Pius XI responded to the enormous outpouring of popular veneration by declaring Therese a Saint, and calling her a word of God and a master of spiritual life. The Popes, who followed proclaimed her patroness of the missions, and with Joan of Arc patroness of France. This is really surprising because she had no notable achievements to her credit during the twenty four years of her life. She took up no missionary activities; she founded no religious community; she did not do any apostolic work. She lived practically an unknown life, she was practically unknown except for her immediate family members and her community of about twenty Carmelite nuns. For nine years in the Carmelite convent she has never gone out of the convent cloister.

She was declared Doctor of the Church by Pope St. John Paul II through his apostolic letter *Divini Amoris Scientia* on Oct 19, 1997. The Holy Father declared that St. Therese of the Child Jesus is a teacher of mysticism. Her parents St. Louis Martin and St. Zélie Guérin also were canonized on October 18, 2015.

St. Therese was leading a prayer centred life from early childhood. The prayer she made at her first Holy Communion proves this<sup>1</sup>. They are not the words of an ordinary girl. They

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1. *Autobiography of a Saint, Therese of Lisieux*, translated by Ronald Knox, (1961), p.22.

are the words of a person well acquainted with prayer and spiritual life. Therese and her Sister Celine used to make long conversations near the window of the third floor of the house at Les Buissonnets. Therese's prayer was from the heart. She conversed with God as a child speaks to her father and mother. Therese used to go deep in prayer when she was alone as a child. The Saint writes in her autobiography, the experience of going fishing with her father. "He went out fishing sometimes, this Charming Prince of mine and it was a great day when he took me with him. I did so love the countryside with all the birds and flowers. I even tried fishing with a rod of mine. I preferred sitting on the grass, with the flowers for my company. My thoughts went deep at such times and although knew nothing about meditating, my soul did sink into a state of genuine prayer. Noises came to me from a distance, the sighing of the wind and faint echoes, even of music from soldiers on the march, inducing a mood of melancholy. Earth seemed a place of exile and I could dream of heaven".<sup>2</sup>

St. Therese of Child Jesus opened up a new path in Christian spirituality. It is not altogether new; it was already there in Bible and Christian Spiritual tradition. It is the spirituality of "littleness". The Saint writes in her autobiography: "And you know my dear Mother, I have always wished that I could be a Saint. But when I have compared myself with the Saints there was always that unfortunate difference – they were like great mountains, hiding their heads in the clouds and I was only as insignificant grain of sand trodden down by all who passed by. However, I was not going to be discouraged. I said to myself: God wouldn't inspire us with such ambitions that cannot be realized. Obviously there is nothing great made of me; so it must be possible for me to aspire to same thing in spite of my insignificance. I have got to make myself just as I am, with all

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2. *Autobiography* p. 46



my imperfections, but somehow I shall have to find “a little way” all of my own which will be a direct shortcut to heaven. In Proverbs 9:4, Isaiah 66:12,13 and Psalm 70:17,18 Therese found out what she was searching: “the little way”. Prov.9:4 says: “Is anyone simple as a child, then let him come to me”. Is 66:12,13 expresses this same idea more powerfully; I will console you like a mother caring her son; you shall be like children carried at the breast, fondled on a mother’s lap. The saint acknowledges that she has never come across words so touching. The Psalm says. “It is Thou, God that has inspired me ever since the days of my youth, and still I am found telling the tale of Thy wonders now when I am old and grey headed (Ps 70:17,18). Therese comes to the conclusion that spirituality and sanctity do not consist in austere and self-inflicting penance and practices; but in the ability to be “little” and in the ability to love. Searching the Holy Bible, especially reading St. Paul’s first letter to Corinthians she discovered that only love stands for ever (1 Cor. 13: 13).

Therese entered Convent on April 9,1888. Her vestition was on Jan 10,1889. The prayer she kept close to her heart at the time of her profession reveals what she is<sup>3</sup>. At the same time Therese went through great aridity in prayer life. From the time she entered Carmel she had to suffer a lot spiritually and physically.

### **Contemplation**

Bible and our religious tradition give primacy to contemplation as the source and inspiration of all our apostolic activities. Contemplation is the strength and dynamism of consecrated life. It is a sad fact that many do not reach this state of contemplation. Contemplation is the awakening and the movement of the spirit within us. We have a good example

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3 Theresa of Avila, *Interior Castle* 14:17-18

for contemplation in the Gospel according to Luke, 10:38-42. Here we have the story of Martha and Mary. They are sisters. When Jesus was at their home Mary was sitting at the feet of the Lord and was contemplating upon His Words. But Martha was running about and distracted while serving the Lord. Martha's style of behavior was not pleasing to the Lord. It is true that Martha complains to Jesus about that, "Lord do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the works by myself?" "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted about many things. There is need of only one thing, Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her". (Lk 10:41,42). This was the response of Jesus.

Contemplation enables us to have intimacy and union with God. It is a glance of the invisible, and a cry of gratitude and love, in the silence of our being, entering in the chamber and closing the door (Mt. 6:6). Through contemplation we try to find out the relation between Bible and life. Everyone should earnestly cultivate both the spirit and practice of contemplation, especially through the meditative, reading of the word of God. Christian Contemplation is unique. St. Therese of Child Jesus has a natural instinct for prayer right from her childhood. St Teresa of Avila teaches that in consecrated life Martha and Mary are necessary and their integration would be the ideal. <sup>3</sup>Martha is very busy and much distracted in her own way of serving the Lord. We see the reaction of Martha to put aside her heavy schedule, and to sit at the feet of Jesus contemplating on his word, but it is much more preferable to Martha who is running about and is distracted. A consecrated person should be a happy combination of a contemplating and dynamic person. A one-sided attachment to any one side will be harmful and would cause imbalance. Total withdrawal from the world, or fully immersed in the world: both should be avoided. "At the same time an exclusive swing to either of these poles with the

detrimental to the Carmelite ideal as Carmel –being thoroughly Christian- is neither a total withdrawal from everyone and everything else nor an abysmal indulgence in mindless action: both contemplation and action can be both Christian and Carmelite at the same time if they are fully focused on the person of Jesus Christ and every creation with a special sensitivity towards and preference for the marginalized and outcast, the suffering and downtrodden, the last, the lost and the least”<sup>4</sup>.

There should be a healthy blending of contemplation and proclamations in the consecrated life. There should be an internal insistence that the Carmelite should preach through his / her life and example about Jesus whom they encounter personally in silence and solitude, and in the word of God and in the words of human beings experienced dynamically in the innermost heart. We do not consider contemplation just for its own sake only. The theological basis is: *contemplare, contemplata aliis tradere*, ie. Contemplate, and give to others the fruits of Contemplation. We are not contemplating and proclaiming just for our sake only. Our contemplation should reach its good results to others, especially to the poor and the marginalized. Contemplation should necessarily lead to action; otherwise it would be self-deception. Every Christian is called to have a personal encounter with God. We see in the gospel that Peter, John and Jacob are called to personal encounter with the Divine, on mount Tabor (Lk 9:1-9).

### **Proclamation**

Carmelite vocation is a vocation to proclaim the Good News. St. Therese of the Child Jesus proclaimed God’s message with vigour and enthusiasm. She has never gone out of the Carmelite cloister during her nine years of Carmelite

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4. Chackalackal Saju (editor) “*Contemplation and Proclamation, Carmelite Charism for a Renewed Indian Mission*”, Dharmaram Publications, (2019). p.6.

life. In spite of that St. Therese is one of the greatest missionaries in the world together with St. Francis Xavier. She is the patroness of the universal mission of the Church. Suffering and prayer are powerful weapons to conquer the world. She was a great ascetic and she encountered Jesus in silence and solitude. Therese experienced Jesus in the word of God and in the word of human beings. Contemplation and action can be both Christian and Carmelite at the same time<sup>5</sup>. They should be focused on the person of Christ and every creation. It should have special orientation towards the marginalized and the outcasts, the suffering and the downtrodden. The disciples to Emmaus have a similar experience. They experienced a “burning heart” in his presence.

As we are called to a religious community under the patronage of St. Therese of Child Jesus, Patroness of the missionaries, who had an ardent desire to preach the Gospel all over the world, we have the privilege and obligation for the missionary commitment like our patroness. We should be at the heart of the mystical body of Christ burning with love that will carry us in an intimate link between consecrated life and mission. Since consecrated life itself is a mission, we consecrate ourselves to the fulfillment of the mission of Christ\*

### **Action**

In our Carmelite vocation we must be sufficiently radical and daring in our social concerns like our Father Elijah in order to keep our priorities well in order. The revolutionary image of Jesus who dined with the sinners, the tax collectors and the marginalized of his time should be our challenges and inspiration in our radical commitment. Our life-long religious commitment should really strengthen the hands of the lowest strata in the society, and not the mighty and the powerful. The need to make concrete and tangible options for the most burning and aching

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5. Cf. Chackalackal p.6

issues of the society in which we are. In our social ministry in the midst of the neediest, we must be moved and stirred by the compassion of Jesus who wept at the tomb of Lazarus. In seeking to promote human dignity, we ought to show a preferential love for the poor and the voiceless. This option for the poor cannot but embrace the multitude of the hungry, the needy, the homeless and those without hope for a better future

As consecrated men and women, we are sent forth to proclaim through the witness of our lives, the value of Christian fraternity and the transforming power of the Good News. It enables us to see all people as children of God, especially the least of brothers and sisters. The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those affected in any way, are the joy and hope, grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. In this way we share the solidarity of the Church with the whole human family

The religious inaugurate and perpetuate in the world a social set up envisioning “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. 21:1). The consecrated life shows forth God’s love in the world by its specific witness to the saving mission which Jesus accomplished by his total consecration to the Father.

Man is endowed with God-given dignity and inalienable human rights. Many people are subjected to the most degrading form of exploitation and manipulation which make them veritable slaves to those who are most powerful, to an ideology, economic power, oppressive political system, scientific technology or the intrusiveness of mass media. Our preferential love for the poor must move towards establishment of human rights for the weaker section of the society. Our God takes the poor man’s side.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia*, PostSynodal Apostolic Exhortation, (1999)

Through our religious commitment, we religious become missionaries in a special sense. Hence our entire religious life should be permeated by an apostolic spirit as our entire apostolic activity should be animated by a religious spirit.

In our apostolic life we share the joys and sorrows of those who are with us and those with whom we live. We should be fully alive to the longings of their life and be aware of their problems through dialogue in a brotherly spirit bringing to them peace and light of the Gospel. We must show the way to those who are in quest of peace. While intense prayer life remains our inner force in the call of the broken humanity and the broken rhythm of the cosmos serve as the inner compulsion of our social commitment. Each gesture of our social concern is an offering like that of the widow's mite to the enhancement of the unfathomable goodness, beauty, solidarity, harmony and communion of the humanity and the world at large (Lk.21:3).

### **Conclusion**

All the Carmelite Communities should preach Jesus alone. It is our Prophetic call. Jesus himself is in the Carmelite tradition. Very often he spent time in the wilderness alone with God. The early morning hours he spent in silence and solitude and prayer. Jesus was in the prophetic tradition which begins with Prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel. Elijah challenges the people: "How long will you follow two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him. The people did not answer a word". (1 Kings: 18:21). The prophet is compelling the people to make options. Jesus too challenges his people. Everywhere in the gospel, Jesus is presented as a prophet and not as a priest. Today it is a challenge before all Carmelite Communities to be a blend of contemplation and proclamation. It is a challenge for Carmelite communities to hold on to contemplative line of life. Many of them are moving to more active way of life and institutional strength. We are supposed to preach Jesus when we have met him in silence and solitude, in the word of God and in the words of Human beings. Our actions are actions of contemplation. ◆



### ഒരനുസ്മരണം

ഫാ. ജോർജ്ജ് ആറായേരി സി.എസ്.റ്റി.

2020 കൊറോണ കൊണ്ട് എല്ലാവരും അസ്വസ്ഥരാണെങ്കിലും ജൂബിലികളുടെ ഒരു വർഷവുമാണല്ലോ. ഓർക്കുവാനും, നന്ദി പറയുവാനും, നവീകരിക്കുവാനും, ആസ്വദിക്കുവാനും, ആഘോഷിക്കുവാനുമുള്ള അവസരം. തിരുപ്പട്ടത്തിന്റെയും വ്രതത്തിന്റെയും ഗോരഖ്പൂർ മിഷന്റെയും ജൂബിലി മംഗളങ്ങൾ എല്ലാവർക്കും നേരുന്നു.

ഈ കുറിപ്പിലൂടെ ഞാൻ ഓർക്കുന്നത് എന്റെ ദൈവവിലിയിൽ കൈപിടിച്ച് ചെറുപുഷ്പ സഭയിലേക്കു കൊണ്ടുവന്ന ഡൊമിനിക് കോക്കാട്ട് പിതാവിനേയും പിന്നെ എന്റെ ആദ്യവ്രതം സ്വീകരിച്ച സഭയുടെ സുപ്പീരിയർ ജനറലായിരുന്ന സെറാഫിൻ പറമ്പിലച്ചനേയും ആണ്. സെറാഫിൻ അച്ചൻ ഇഹലോകവാസം വെടിഞ്ഞിട്ട് ഏതാണ്ട് 15 വർഷമായി. 1960ൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭയിൽ പൗരോഹിത്യം സ്വീകരിച്ചവരാണവർ. സെറാഫിൻ അച്ചൻ മാർച്ചിലും, ഡൊമിനിക് പിതാവ് ഒക്ടോബറിലും.

ഡയമണ്ട് ജൂബിലി ആഘോഷിക്കുന്ന ഡൊമിനിക് പിതാവിന് ജൂബിലിയുടെ നൂറുനൂറു മംഗളങ്ങൾ നേരുന്നു. പിതാവ് വഴി ലഭിച്ച എല്ലാ അനുഗ്രഹങ്ങൾക്കും ദൈവത്തിന് നന്ദി പറയുന്നു.

നമ്മിൽ നിന്നും വേർപെട്ട് പോയെങ്കിലും നമുക്ക് വിസ്മരിക്കാവുന്നതല്ല നമ്മുടെ പരേതനായ സെറാഫിനച്ചനെ. ഈ ജൂബിലി അവസരത്തിൽ ഞാൻ അച്ചനെ പ്രത്യേകം സ്മരിക്കുന്നു. അധികമൊന്നും അറിയപ്പെടാതെ സഭാസമൂഹത്തിന്റെ പരിഗണന അർഹിക്കാതെ കടന്നുപോയ ഒരാളാണ്. പക്ഷെ സഭയുടെ ആരംഭകാലത്ത് വലുച്ചനോടൊത്ത്, വലുച്ചന് പ്രിയപ്പെട്ടവനായിരുന്നു സെറാഫിനച്ചൻ. അതിനാലായിരിക്കണം ആലുവാ സെമിനാരിയുടെ ആദ്യ റെക്ടറായി അദ്ദേഹത്തെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ നിയമിച്ചത്. പിന്നീട് അദ്ദേഹം രണ്ടുവർഷം നൊവിസ് മാസ്റ്റർ ആയി മൂക്കന്നൂരിൽ.

1966ൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകനുശേഷം നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ സുപ്പീരിയർ ജനറലായ വ്യക്തിയാണ് സെറാഫിനച്ചൻ. പല സീനിയേഴ്സിനേയും പിന്നിലാക്കി റോമിൽ നിന്ന് പ്രത്യേക അനുവാദം വാങ്ങിയാണ് ഈ പദവി അലങ്കരിച്ചത്. ആറു വർഷം അദ്ദേഹം നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ വളർച്ചയുടെ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ സഭയെ നയിച്ചു. 1969 ൽ സ്റ്റഡി ഹൗസിൽ വരുമ്പോൾ ഏതാണ്ട് 80-90 പേരുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. സഭയുടെ തിളക്കമാർന്ന കാലഘട്ടമായിരുന്നു.

സെറാഫിനച്ചന്റെ കാലത്താണ് സഭാസ്ഥാപകനെയും കൂട്ടി പ്രേഷിത പ്രവർത്തനരംഗം അന്വേഷിച്ചു വടക്കേ ഇൻഡ്യൻ പര്യടനം നടത്തിയതും ഇന്നത്തെ ഗോരഖ്പൂർ മിഷൻ കണ്ടുപിടിച്ചതും അങ്ങോട്ട് നമ്മുടെ അച്ചന്മാരെ അയച്ചതും. ഗോരഖ്പൂർ മിഷൻ സുവർണ്ണ ജൂബിലി ആഘോഷിക്കുന്ന ഈ അവസരം ബ. സെറാഫിനച്ചനെ നമുക്ക് പ്രത്യേകം സ്മരിക്കാം, പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കാം, അദ്ദേഹം സഭയ്ക്കു വേണ്ടി ചെയ്ത സേവനങ്ങൾക്ക് ദൈവത്തോട് നന്ദി പറയാം.

ഞാൻ വൈദികനായതിനുശേഷം 1980ൽ എനിക്കു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൂടെ കോട്ടൂർ ആശ്രമത്തിൽ ഏതാനും മാസങ്ങൾ ജോലി ചെയ്യാൻ അവസരം കിട്ടി. വളരെ കാര്യങ്ങൾ പഠിക്കുവാനും മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാനും എനിക്ക് അവസരം നൽകി. ശ്രീകണ്ഠാപുരം എഡ്യൂക്കേഷൻ സൊസൈറ്റി രൂപീകരിച്ച് ആ നാടിന്റെ അഭിവൃദ്ധിക്കുവേണ്ടി പരിശ്രമിച്ചത് സെറാഫിനച്ചനാണ്. Santhom College ആ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ആ നാട്ടിലെ യുവതി യുവാക്കന്മാർക്ക് ഒരു മാർഗ്ഗദീപമായിരുന്നു. അനേകർക്ക് വിദ്യാഭ്യാസവും അതുവഴി ജോലിക്കും ഉന്നത വിദ്യാഭ്യാസത്തിനും ഉപകരിച്ചു. കോട്ടൂർ ഐ.ടി.സി. സ്ഥാപിച്ച് ആ നാട്ടിലെ യുവാക്കൾക്ക് തൊഴിൽ സാധ്യതകൾ ഒരുക്കി. വളരെ കഷ്ടപ്പാടുകളും വിമർശനവും അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു നേരിടേണ്ടി വന്നു. എങ്കിലും എല്ലാം ഇന്ന് വളർന്നു വലുതായി, ITC, workshop, coaching centres. ഇന്നത്തെ SES college വരെ സെറാഫിനച്ചന്റെ Education Society യുടെ വളർച്ചയാണ്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ എല്ലാം തന്നെ എളിയതും അധികം ഒച്ചപ്പാടില്ലാത്തതുമായിരുന്നു. ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തെപ്പോലെ ചെറുതായിരിക്കുക, വിധേയത്വം ഉള്ളവനായിരിക്കുക എന്ന ആദർശത്തിൽ ജീവിച്ചിരുന്ന വ്യക്തിയാണ് സെറാഫിനച്ചൻ.



കോട്ടാരച്ചൻ

കരിസ് മാറ്റിക് പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾ ഒന്നും ഇല്ലാതിരുന്ന അറുപതുകളിൽ തന്നെ രോഗശാന്തി ശുശ്രൂഷ നടത്തിയിരുന്ന അച്ചനാണ് സെറാഫിൻ. 1967ൽ ഞാൻ സഭയിൽ വന്നപ്പോൾ മുക്കന്നൂർ മൈനർ സെമിനാരിക്കാർക്ക് അച്ചനെ പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തി തന്നത് “നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ സുപ്പീരിയർ ജനറാളാണ്, അച്ചൻ പിശാച് പിടുത്തക്കാരനാണ്. അച്ചന്റെ മുറിയിലും കാണും.” രാത്രിയിൽ അച്ചന്റെ മുറിയുടെ പിൻഭാഗത്തുകൂടി വേണം ടോയ്ലറ്റിൽ പോവുക, പേടിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്!!! അച്ചന്റെ ആശീർവാദത്തിനും, അനുഗ്രഹത്തിനുമായി ധാരാളം രോഗികൾ വരാറുണ്ടായിരുന്നു ആ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ. അച്ചന്റെ പ്രശസ്തി കേരളം മുഴുവൻ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. കോട്ടാരായിരുന്നപ്പോൾ വളരെ അടുത്തറിയുവാൻ സാധിച്ചു സെറാഫിനച്ചന്റെ സിദ്ധി.

സന്യാസ സമൂഹത്തിലെ പരിശുദ്ധമായ അസൂയ, അച്ചന്റെ ഈ Healing Power നെ അന്ധവിശ്വാസവും, കിരാതവുമായി വർണ്ണിക്കുകയും കുറ്റപ്പെടുത്തുകയും, വിമർശിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തിരുന്ന സഭാംഗങ്ങൾ നഷ്ടപ്പെടുത്തിക്കളഞ്ഞ ഒരവസരമായി ഞാൻ ഇന്നു കരുതുന്നു. കോട്ടാരിൽ എല്ലാ ശനിയാഴ്ചയും 50 മുതൽ 150 പേർ വരെ അച്ചനെ കാണുവാനും, അച്ചന്റെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയ്ക്കും, വെള്ളം, കയർ, മെഡലുകൾ മുതലായവ വെഞ്ചിരിപ്പിക്കാനുമായി വിദ്വരത്ത് നിന്ന് വന്നിരുന്നു. അവരെ കൂട്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുവാനും, പാടാനും ദൈവവചനം പറഞ്ഞുകൊടുക്കുവാനുമുള്ള ഒരവസരമായിരുന്നു. കൂടാതെ അച്ചന് മനോരോഗികളെയും സുഖപ്പെടുത്തുവാനുള്ള വരം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. നാലുപേർ പിടിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുവന്ന രോഗികൾ അച്ചന്റെ മുൻപിൽ ശാന്തരായി കുഞ്ഞാടുകളെപ്പോലെ നിലക്കുന്നത് ഞാൻ നേരിൽ കണ്ടതാണ്. അദ്ദേഹം ഏകദേശം അരമണിക്കൂർ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയും ഹന്നാൻ വെള്ളം തളിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തുകഴിയുമ്പോൾ വളരെ ശാന്തരായി തിരിച്ചു പോകുന്നത് ഓർക്കുന്നു.

അദ്ദേഹത്തെ പാസ്റ്ററൽ കൗൺസിലിങ്ങിൽ ഉന്നത പഠനത്തിനായി അമേരിക്കയിലേക്കയച്ചു. അവിടെയും അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ അടുത്തു ധാരാളം ആൾക്കാർ ആശീർവാദത്തിനും പ്രാർത്ഥനക്കുമായി വരുന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. അദ്ദേഹം അമേരിക്കയിൽ

നിന്ന് പാസ്റ്റർ കൗൺസലിംഗിൽ ഡോക്ടറേറ്റ് എടുത്തു. അവിടെ തന്നെ തന്റെ ശുശ്രൂഷ തുടർന്നു.

എന്റെ ചോദ്യം 400ൽ അധികം അച്ചന്മാരുള്ള നമ്മുടെ സഭയിൽ എത്ര പേരുടെ അടുത്ത് വിശ്വാസത്തോടെ ആശീർവാദവും, അനുഗ്രഹവും, പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ചോദിച്ചു ആൾക്കാർ വരുന്നു. ദൈവീകവരങ്ങൾ ഉള്ളവരായി നമ്മെ കാണുന്നുണ്ടോ? തിരുപ്പട്ട സീകരണ സമയത്ത് നമ്മെ അഭിഷേകം ചെയ്യുമ്പോൾ ലഭിക്കുന്ന വരങ്ങളിൽ ഒന്നാണല്ലോ രോഗികളെ സുഖപ്പെടുത്തുക എന്നത്. മനുഷ്യൻ ഏറ്റവും കൂടുതൽ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നത് ആന്തരികവും ശാരീരികവുമായ രോഗശാന്തിക്കാണ്. ആദ്യമായി ദൈവം നമുക്കു നൽകിയിരിക്കുന്ന വരങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് അവബോധമുള്ളവരായിരിക്കാം. നല്ലവനായ ദൈവത്തിൽ വിശ്വസിക്കാം. നമ്മിൽ തന്നെയുള്ള പിശാചുക്കളെ പുറത്താക്കി വിശുദ്ധിയിലും ദൈവികജ്ഞാനത്തിലും വളരാം. ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവെക്കുന്നവരാകാം. സ്വാർത്ഥതയും അഹന്തയും വെടിഞ്ഞു ദൈവീക ദാനങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവെക്കുന്നവരാകാം. രോഗികൾക്കും പാപികൾക്കും വേണ്ടി നമുക്ക് സമയം കണ്ടെത്താം. ഈ കൊറോണാവൈറസിന്റെ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ നമ്മുടെ ‘രോഗശാന്തി ശക്തിയെ’ വളർത്തിയെടുക്കാൻ ശ്രമിക്കാം. കോട്ടൂരച്ചാത്തങ്ങൾക്കായി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കണം!



**Flower Dale Quotations**

My little way is the way of spiritual childhood, the way of trust and absolute self-surrender.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

St. Paul assures us that without the Spirit of Love, we cannot call God our Father (cf. Rom 8:15)

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

# ഫാ. ബസീലിയൂസ് സി.എസ്.റ്റി : വിശ്വാസ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ ചരിച്ച പഥികൻ

ഡോ. സജി മാത്യു കണയങ്കൽ സി.എസ്.റ്റി.

അടിസ്ഥാനപരമായി വിശ്വാസം വെളിച്ചമാണ്. വിശ്വാസനാളം അണഞ്ഞുപോകുമ്പോഴാണ് മറ്റെല്ലാ പ്രകാശങ്ങളും മങ്ങി തുടങ്ങുന്നത്<sup>1</sup>. ഒരു വ്യക്തിയുടെ ജീവിതയാത്രയെ മുഴുവനും പ്രകാശമാനമാക്കുന്ന ദീപമാണ് യഥാർത്ഥ വിശ്വാസം<sup>2</sup>. താൻ ജീവിക്കുന്ന കാലഘട്ടത്തിലെ ചുഴിയും തിരയും തിരിച്ചറിയുവാനും അതിനെ അതിജീവിക്കാനും അതാതു കാലഘട്ടത്തിലൂടെയുള്ള പ്രയാണത്തെ ദീപ്തമാനമാക്കുവാനും വിശ്വാസത്തിനു കഴിയും<sup>3</sup>. ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ ഒരു വ്യക്തിയുടെ ജീവിതത്തെ മുഴുവനും നയിക്കാനും പ്രകാശമാനമാക്കുവാനും നിയന്ത്രിക്കുവാനും ശക്തിയുള്ള ദൈവിക ചൈതന്യമാണ് വിശ്വാസം. വിശ്വാസ ദൃഷ്ടിയിൽ ജീവിതത്തെ മുമ്പോട്ടു നയിക്കുന്ന ഒരു വ്യക്തി, തന്റെ ഉള്ളിൽ നിരന്തരം ഉയരുന്ന ദൈവികാഹ്വാനത്തിന് എപ്പോഴും 'ആമ്മേൻ' പറഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ട് ദൈവകരങ്ങളിലേയ്ക്ക് തന്നെതന്നെ ഭരമേല്പിക്കുവാൻ സന്നദ്ധനാകും<sup>4</sup>. അങ്ങനെ നിരന്തരമായ ആത്മസംതൃപ്തിയുടേയും ആത്മദാനത്തിന്റെയും ജീവിതം നയിക്കാൻ ഒരാളെ പ്രാപ്തനാക്കുന്ന ദൈവിക പുണ്യമാണ് (Theological Virtue) വിശ്വാസം.

ദൈവത്തിലുള്ള വിശ്വാസം ഒരുവനിൽ രൂപം കൊള്ളുന്നതിന് അവന്റെ ബാല്യകാലവും കുടുംബപശ്ചാത്തലവും പ്രധാന പങ്കുവഹിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ചെറുപുഷ്പ സഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ ബസീലിയൂസച്ചന്റെ (ഫാ. തോമസ് പാണാട്ട്) ബാല്യ - യൗവന കാലഘട്ടത്തിലെ അനുഭവങ്ങൾ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ വിശ്വാസ ജീവിതത്തെ എങ്ങനെ സ്വാധീനിച്ചു എന്നു പരിശോധിക്കുകയാണ് ഈ ലേഖനത്തിൽ.

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1. ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപ്പാപ്പ, വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, ചാക്രികലേഖനം, നമ്പർ 4.  
2. വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, 1.  
3. വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, 12.  
4. വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, 10-11

കൈസർവ ദർശനമനുസരിച്ച് “വിശ്വാസം വ്യക്തിപരമായ ഒരു പ്രവൃത്തിയാണ്. സ്വയം വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്ന ദൈവത്തിന്റെ മുൻകൈ എടുക്കലിന് മനുഷ്യൻ നൽകുന്ന സ്വതസിദ്ധമായ പ്രത്യുത്തരം.”<sup>5</sup> എന്നിരുന്നാലും ഇത് ഒറ്റപ്പെട്ട പ്രവൃത്തിയോ ഒരു വ്യക്തി തനിയെ ചെയ്യുന്ന പ്രക്രിയയോ അല്ല. ഒരാൾ തന്റെ സ്വത്വം മാതാപിതാക്കളിൽ നിന്നും സ്വീകരിച്ച് ജന്മം കൊള്ളുന്നതുപോലെ വിശ്വാസമെന്ന പുണ്യവും മറ്റുള്ളവരിൽ നിന്നുമാണ് നാം സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നത്<sup>6</sup>. അങ്ങനെയാണ് ഒരു വിശ്വാസി വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിന്റെ വലിയ കണ്ണിയായി മാറുക. കുട്ടികൾക്ക് ജന്മമേകുവാൻ മാത്രമല്ല, വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിൽ അവരെ വളർത്തുവാനും മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാർക്ക് ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമുള്ളത് വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ ഈ കൈമാറ്റ പ്രക്രിയ മൂലമാണ്<sup>7</sup>. ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ ബസീലിയൂസച്ചനും തന്റെ ക്രിസ്തീയ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ നാളങ്ങൾ സ്വീകരിച്ചത് തന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കളായ പാണാട്ട് മത്തായിച്ചനിലും ഏലീശായിൽ നിന്നുമാണ്.

ബസീലിയൂസച്ചന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ അടിയുറച്ച ക്രിസ്തീയ ജീവിതം നയിച്ചവരായിരുന്നു. ഏതു പ്രതികൂല സാഹചര്യങ്ങളേയും നേരിടുവാൻ അവർക്ക് ലഭിച്ച കരുത്ത് ദൈവത്തിലുള്ള അചഞ്ചലമായ വിശ്വാസമായിരുന്നു. ക്രിസ്തീയ വിശ്വാസം സംരക്ഷിക്കുവാനും അതിൽ ആഴപ്പെടുവാനുമായി ഏതു പ്രതിസന്ധിയും നേരിടുവാനുള്ള ധൈര്യം തോമസ്സിൽ നിറഞ്ഞത് തന്റെ പ്രിയ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ പകർന്നു നൽകിയ ചൈതന്യത്തിൽ നിന്നുമാണ്. അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ബാല്യകാലത്ത് എല്ലാ ശനിയാഴ്ചയും അമ്മയും സഹോദരനുമൊത്ത് ചാലിൽ പള്ളിയിൽ വിശുദ്ധ ബലിയർപ്പണത്തിനായി പോയിരുന്നു. ചാലുകളും തോടുകളും കടന്ന്, ദുർഘടമായ പാതകൾ പിന്നിട്ടായിരുന്നു ദേവാലയത്തിലേയ്ക്കുള്ള ഈ യാത്ര. മഴക്കാലത്ത് വെള്ളംകൊണ്ട് ചാലിൽ പള്ളി അപ്രാപ്യമാകുമ്പോൾ, അഞ്ചു കിലോമീറ്റർ അകലെയുള്ള പരിശുദ്ധ മാതാവിന്റെ നാമത്തിലുള്ള മുട്ടം ഫൊറോനാ പള്ളിയിൽ അവർ പോയിരുന്നു<sup>8</sup>. കൊച്ചുതോമസിന് ആത്മീയ കരുത്തു

5. കത്തോലിക്കാസഭയുടെ മതബോധന ഗ്രന്ഥം, 166  
 6. കത്തോലിക്കാസഭയുടെ മതബോധന ഗ്രന്ഥം, 166  
 7. വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചം, 43  
 8. മാത്യു എം. പാണാട്ട്, ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭാസ്ഥാപകനായ ഫാ. ബസീലിയൂസ് CST, (തൃക്കാക്കര : ലിറ്റിൽ ഫ്ളവർ പ്രസ്, 1982), 27

നൽകിയ ഈ യാത്രയുടെ മാർഗ്ഗദർശിയും വഴികാട്ടിയും സ്വമാതാവുതന്നെയായിരുന്നു.

പിൻക്കാലത്ത് പൗരോഹിത്യവിളിയോടുള്ള അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ആഭിമുഖ്യവും അതിനായി സ്വീകരിച്ച ഉറച്ച നിലപാടുകളും തന്റെ വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിന്റെ തികച്ചും പ്രകടമായ ആവിഷ്കാരമാണ്. ചേർത്തല വെർണാക്കുലർ മിഡിൽ സ്കൂളിൽ നിന്നും ക്രൈസ്തവ വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായി ഇദംപ്രഥമമായി വിജയിച്ച തോമസിനെ<sup>9</sup> സവർണ്ണർക്കായി മാത്രം മാറ്റിവെച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു സർക്കാർ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥനായി കാണുവാനായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പിതാവായ മത്തായിയച്ചന്റെ ആഗ്രഹം. തന്റെ പിതാവിന്റെ ആഗ്രഹത്തിൽ നിന്നും തികച്ചും ഭിന്നമായി “ദൈവപിതാവിന്റെ കാര്യങ്ങളിൽ” പൂർണ്ണമായും സമർപ്പിക്കുവാനായിരുന്നു ബാലനായ തോമസിന്റെ ആഗ്രഹം. “ഒരിക്കലും കൂട്ടിമുട്ടുവാൻ ഇടയില്ലാത്ത രണ്ടു രേഖകൾ പോലെ”<sup>10</sup> സമാന്തരമായി നീങ്ങിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്ന ഈ ആഗ്രഹങ്ങൾ തോമസിന്റെ ഉള്ളിൽ നിരന്തരമായ ആത്മ സംഘർഷങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. തേഡ്ഫോറം വിദ്യാർത്ഥിയായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ തന്റെ വീട്ടിലേക്കു കടന്നു വന്ന വിവാഹ ആലോചനാ സംഘത്തെ, മുറിയിൽ നിന്നും പുറത്തിറങ്ങാതെ കതകടച്ചിരുന്നാണ് അദ്ദേഹം ചെറുത്തുതോല്പിച്ചത്.”<sup>11</sup> അദ്ദേഹത്തെ ഉപരിപഠനത്തിനയയ്ക്കാൻ വൈമനസ്യം കാണിച്ച പിതാവിനെ ഗുരുഭൃതന്മാരുടെ സഹായത്താലാണ് തോമസ് ജയിച്ചത്<sup>12</sup>. തന്റെ ബാല്യകൗമാര കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ തന്നെ തോമസ്സിൽ വേരുന്നിയിരുന്ന ദൈവവിശ്വാസത്തിലുള്ള അചഞ്ചലതയും പ്രതിസന്ധികളെ ധീരമായി മറികടക്കാനുള്ള ആത്മധൈര്യവും എല്ലാറ്റിലുമുപരിയായി സ്വന്തം നിലപാടുകളിൽ ഉറച്ച് നിൽക്കുവാനുള്ള ആർജ്ജവവുമാണ് വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത്. വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഈ കരുത്തുറ്റ ആവിഷ്കാരങ്ങൾ കുറേക്കൂടി വ്യക്തമായി അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പിൻക്കാലജീവിതത്തിൽ കാണാവുന്നതാണ്.

9. പാണാട്ട്, 22  
10. പാണാട്ട്, 39  
11. പാണാട്ട്, 36-37  
12. പാണാട്ട്, 39

തോമസിന്റെ പൗരോഹിത്യ പരിശീലന കാലഘട്ടങ്ങളും ഏറെ പ്രതിസന്ധികൾ നിറഞ്ഞതായിരുന്നു. ഒന്നാം ലോക മഹായുദ്ധത്തിന്റെ കെടുതികളിലൂടെ ലോകം മുഴുവനും കടന്നുപോയിരുന്ന ഒരു കാലഘട്ടമായിരുന്നു അത്. വരാപ്പുഴ പുത്തൻപള്ളി സെമിനാരിയും ഇതിന്റെ പ്രത്യഘാതങ്ങൾ നേരിടേണ്ടിവന്ന സ്ഥലമാണ്. വൈദികവിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ പരിശീലന പ്രക്രിയയേയും ഇതു സ്വാധീനിച്ചെങ്കിലും താൻ വളർന്നുവന്നിരുന്ന രാഷ്ട്രീയ - സാമൂഹിക പശ്ചാത്തലം തോമസിൽ നവമൂല്യങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കുവാൻ പര്യാപ്തമായി.<sup>13</sup>

തോമസിന്റെ വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിന്റെയും ആത്മബോധങ്ങളുടേയും മറ്റൊരു മുഹൂർത്തം അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ പൗരോഹിത്യ സ്വീകരണത്തിന്റെ അവസരമാണ്. പൗരോഹിത്യം നിശബ്ദ സേവനത്തിനായി അർപ്പണം ചെയ്ത ഒന്നായിരിക്കണം എന്ന ഉൾക്കാഴ്ചയിൽ നിന്നും ഇത് പ്രശസ്തിയ്ക്കും പദവിയ്ക്കും വേണ്ടിയുള്ളതല്ല എന്ന ബോധ്യം അദ്ദേഹത്തിനുണ്ടായിരുന്നു.<sup>14</sup> അതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ തികച്ചും അനാർഭാടമായി വേണം തന്റെ നവപൂജാർപ്പണം നടത്തുവാൻ എന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം ശരിച്ചു. എന്നാൽ അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ മാതാപിതാക്കന്മാരും കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങളും ഒരു മഹോത്സവമായി അത്യന്തം ആർഭാടത്തോടെ ഈ ദിനം ആഘോഷമാക്കാനാണ് ആഗ്രഹിച്ചത്. ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ തന്റെ പിതാവിന്റെ അഭ്യർത്ഥന പോലും തുണവൽഗണിച്ച തോമസ് ശെമ്മാശൻ വിട്ടുവീഴ്ചയില്ലാത്ത തികച്ചും കർക്കശമായ നിലപാടാണെടുത്തത്. “അർപ്പണജീവിതവും പ്രശസ്തിയ്ക്കായുള്ള യത്നവും പൊരുത്തപ്പെടുകയില്ലെന്നുള്ള ദൃഢമായ ബോധ്യം”<sup>15</sup> അദ്ദേഹത്തിൽ അപ്പോഴേയ്ക്കും രൂഢമൂലമായിരുന്നു.

ബസീലിയൂസച്ചന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിലെ പൗരോഹിത്യസ്വീകരണം വരെയുള്ള ചിലസംഭവങ്ങൾ പരിശോധിച്ച് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തെ പരിശോധിക്കുകയായിരുന്നു ഈ ലേഖനത്തിലൂടെ. ഇവിടെ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിച്ച സംഭവങ്ങൾ ആ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ വിശ്വാസദൃഢതയും നിശ്ചയദാർഢ്യവും

13 പാണാട്ട്, 49-56  
14 പാണാട്ട്, 56  
15 പാണാട്ട്, 57

നിലപാടുകളിലുള്ള ഉറച്ച ബോധ്യവും വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നവയാണ്. തന്റെ കൗമാര-യൗവ്വന കാലഘട്ടത്തിലെ ചില നിർണ്ണായക സംഭവങ്ങളിലും സംഘർഷനിർഭരമായ അവസരങ്ങളിലും ധീരവും ശക്തവുമായ തീരുമാനങ്ങളെടുക്കുവാൻ തോമസിന് പ്രേരണ നൽകിയത് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ഉള്ളിൽ ജ്വലിച്ചു നിന്ന വിശ്വാസ വെളിച്ചമായിരുന്നു. ഈ വിശ്വാസവെളിച്ചം തന്നെയായിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ മുന്നോട്ടുള്ള പ്രയാണത്തിലെ വഴികാട്ടിയും. ◆

**Flower Dale Quotations**

I would like to do heroic deeds. I would gladly die in defense of the Church.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I do not concern myself about what God might be asking of others. Whatever God asks of me always makes me happy.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

If I cannot walk in paradise for the glory of Jesus, I prefer to remain in [this] exile.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

The Lord has given me the grace never to fear the conflict, to do my duty no matter what the cost.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

## വലിച്ചന്റെ ദർശനം ഇന്നിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ

ഫാ. ബെന്നി കുര്യൻ വല്ലൂർ സി.എസ്.റ്റി.

ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ചിന്തകരുടെ ചർച്ചകളിൽ സ്ഥാനം പിടിച്ച ഒരു വാക്കാണ് Post-truth.

2016 ൽ ഓക്സ്ഫോർഡ് ഡിക്ഷണറി ഈ വാക്കാണ് word of the year ആയിട്ട് എടുത്തത്.

ഇതിന്റെ അർത്ഥം ഇങ്ങനെ:

‘relating to denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’.

ഉദാഹരണത്തിന് Post-truth politics സത്യാനന്തര രാഷ്ട്രീയം. മനുഷ്യന്റെ വികാരത്തെ ത്രസിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് അയാഥാർത്ഥ്യമായ ഒരു കാര്യം സത്യമായിട്ട് സ്ഥാപിക്കുവാനുള്ള ശ്രമമാണിവിടെ സംഭവിക്കുന്നത്. രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിൽ ഇത് പ്രകടമായി കാണുവാൻ സാധിക്കും. അതുപോലെ തന്നെ, ചിലപ്പോൾ അതിലുമധികമായും, മാധ്യമങ്ങളും ഈ രീതിയിലേക്ക് അഥവാ അവസ്ഥയിലേക്ക് മാറുന്നത് കാണാം സത്യാനന്തര രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിനു സത്യാനന്തര മാധ്യമ പ്രവർത്തനം കൂട്ടായി വരുമ്പോൾ ആ ദേശത്ത് സത്യം കുഴിച്ചുമുടപ്പെടും.

എന്നാൽ രാഷ്ട്രീയവും മാധ്യമവും മാത്രമല്ല സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ മിക്ക തലങ്ങളിലേക്കും ഒരു വൈറസ്ബാധ പോലെ ഇതും പടർന്നുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുകയാണ്. കച്ചവടവും ലാഭേച്ഛയും ലക്ഷ്യമാകുമ്പോഴാണ് മനുഷ്യൻ ഇങ്ങനെ സത്യത്തിനെതിരായി നീങ്ങുന്നത്. ആരോഗ്യ-വിദ്യാഭ്യാസ മേഖലകൾ, എന്തിന് നീതി-നിയമ സംരക്ഷണമേഖലകൾ വരെ മനുഷ്യന്റെ തോന്നലുകളെ ശക്തമാക്കി സത്യത്തെ വളച്ചൊടിക്കാറുണ്ട്. സത്യത്തിനും നീതിക്കും സമാധാനത്തിനും ശാന്തിക്കും മനുഷ്യന്റെ നന്മയ്ക്കും ഉന്നമനത്തിനും ഒക്കെവേണ്ടി നില കൊള്ളേണ്ട മതങ്ങളിലും ആത്മീയസരണികളിലും ചിലപ്പോൾ ആളുകൾ അവരുടെ തോന്നലുകളെ സത്യമായി അവതരിപ്പിക്കാറും തെറ്റിദ്ധരിപ്പിക്കാറുമുണ്ട്.



കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യയെയും വലുച്ചനെയും പ്രത്യേകമായി ഓർക്കുന്ന ഈ ഒക്ടോബർ മാസത്തിൽ നമ്മൾക്ക് നമ്മളുടെ കാഴ്ചപ്പാടുകളെക്കുറിച്ച് ഒരു പുനർവിചിന്തനം നല്ലതായിരിക്കും എന്നു തോന്നുന്നു.

കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികതയിൽ ആകൃഷ്ടനായി, അത് തന്റെയും താൻ സ്ഥാപിക്കുന്ന സഭയുടെയും ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികത ആകണം എന്ന ആഗ്രഹത്തോടെയാണ് വലുച്ചൻ ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭ സ്ഥാപിച്ചത്. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യയുടെ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മിക ശിശുത്വവും, “നീയും പോയി അതുപോലെ ചെയ്യുക” എന്ന ക്രിസ്തു സന്ദേശവും സമന്വയിപ്പിച്ച ഒരു ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികതയായിരുന്നു വലുച്ചന്റേത്.

യേശുവിൽ നിന്ന് ഉത്ഭവിച്ച് ലിസ്യൂവിലെ ചെറുപുഷ്പത്തിന്റെ പരിമളവും പേരി, പതിതരുടെയും പാവപ്പെട്ടവരുടെയും അശരണരുടെയും ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് ഒഴുകിയെത്തിയ ഒരു പുഴയാണ് വലുച്ചൻ.

വലുച്ചൻ ഒരു കാലഘട്ടത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യം ആയിരുന്നു. മനുഷ്യന് ജീവിക്കുവാനും വളരുവാനും മാർഗ്ഗം തെളിച്ച് അച്ചൻ അന്ന് അവരുടെ ആവേശമായി മാറി. നമ്മളും നമ്മളുടെ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങളും ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിന് ആവശ്യമാണോ? വലുച്ചൻ ഒരു ജനതയുടെ രക്ഷകൻ ആയിരുന്നു. നമുക്ക് മനുഷ്യരെ രക്ഷിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ? വലുച്ചൻ ഒരു പ്രദേശത്തിന്റെ ഉദ്ധാരകൻ ആയിരുന്നു. ഒരുപക്ഷേ ഇന്നത്തെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ സാമൂഹിക അവസ്ഥയിൽ ഒരു ദേശത്തെ ഉദ്ധരിക്കുകയെന്നത് സാധ്യമാകില്ലായിരിക്കാം. അതുകൊണ്ട് ‘ദേശം’ എന്നുള്ളത് മേഖല എന്ന് നമുക്ക് മാറ്റി ചിന്തിക്കാം. അങ്ങനെയെങ്കിൽ, നമുക്ക് ഏതെങ്കിലും മേഖലയെ ഉദ്ധരിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ? അതോ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മിക-സന്യാസ മൂല്യങ്ങൾക്കുപരി സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളും സംരംഭങ്ങളും കെട്ടിലും മട്ടിലും മികച്ചതാക്കി കാണിക്കുവാൻ തത്രപ്പെടുകയാണോ നമ്മൾ? എങ്കിൽ ഒരു post-truth religious ആയി നമ്മൾ മാറിയേക്കാം.

“നീയും പോയി അതുപോലെ ചെയ്യുക” എന്ന എന്നും കാലികമായ ക്രിസ്തു സന്ദേശത്തിൽ അധിഷ്ഠിതമാണ് വലുച്ചന്റെ ദർശനം. എന്നും എവിടെയും എപ്പോഴും നമ്മൾ അനുവർത്തി

കേണ്ട ഒരു നിർദ്ദേശം കൂടിയാണ് അത്. Bloom where you are planted. നാം ആയിരിക്കുന്നിടത്ത് നമുക്ക് ചുറ്റിലും നല്ല സമരായൻ ആകുക എന്നുള്ളതാണ് പരമപ്രധാനം. ബസീലിയൂസച്ചൻ വികാരിയായിരുന്ന മൂക്കന്നൂർ ആണ് അച്ചൻ, “വലച്ചൻ” എന്ന വിത്തായി മുളച്ചതും തരുവായ് വളർന്നതും. അവിടെത്തന്നെയാണ് അച്ചൻ പൂവിട്ട് മനുഷ്യന്റെ മനം കവർന്നതും ഫലമണിഞ്ഞ് അവൻ ബലമായതും ഇല ചൂടി അവൻ തണലേകിയതും. വലച്ചൻ എന്നത് ആ നല്ല സമരായൻ ആ ദേശക്കാർ നൽകിയ ഇഷ്ടനാമമാണ്. ഇന്നത്തെ ഭാഷയിൽ അവരുടെ “ചക്”.

വിജയവും വളർച്ചയും പേരും പെരുമയും ലക്ഷ്യം വെക്കുന്നവർക്ക് ഈ ക്രിസ്തു സന്ദേശത്തിലെ സമരായനാകുക എന്നത് ഒരു വെല്ലുവിളിയാണ്.

വീണു കിടക്കുന്ന മനുഷ്യനെ കണ്ടപ്പോൾ പുരോഹിതനും ലേവായനും യഹൂദനും ഒക്കെ അവരുടെ ഉള്ളിൽ ചില ചിത്രങ്ങൾ വരച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടാകും. ഒഴിവുകഴിവുകളുടെ ചിത്രങ്ങൾ. ഒന്നുകിൽ മുറിവേറ്റതായി നടിച്ചു കിടക്കുന്ന അക്രമിയുടെ, കള്ളന്റെ ചിത്രം. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ കൃത്യസമയത്ത് എത്തേണ്ട സ്ഥലത്ത് എത്താതെ പോയാൽ വരുന്ന നഷ്ടങ്ങളുടെ ചിത്രം. എന്നാൽ സമരായൻ പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടത് മുതപ്രായനായി കിടക്കുന്നവനെ ജീവനിലേക്ക് തിരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടുവരുന്നതായിരുന്നു.

അകത്തളങ്ങളിൽ മുളയ്ക്കാത്ത, വളരാത്ത, ജീവിക്കാത്ത ആധ്യാത്മികത പുറത്തു ജീവിക്കാനാവുകയില്ല. പല മേഖലയിലേക്കും എന്നപോലെ സത്യാനന്തര കാലഘട്ടത്തിന്റെ അസത്യങ്ങളും അർദ്ധസത്യങ്ങളും സത്യങ്ങൾ ആയി നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിലും രചിക്കപ്പെടുകയും പരത്തപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. വലച്ചൻ ആരെക്കുറിച്ചും ഒരിക്കലും കുറ്റം പറയില്ലായിരുന്നു എന്നാണ് വല്ലച്ചനെ പരിചയമുള്ള ചിലരിൽ നിന്നും അറിയാൻ സാധിച്ചത്. സഹോദരനെതിരെ ദുഷണങ്ങളുടെ ശരങ്ങൾ എയ്യുന്നവർക്ക് അവനെ സഹായിക്കുന്നില്ലെന്ന് മാത്രമല്ല വിഷമാവസ്ഥയിൽ കഴിയുന്നവനെ സഹായിക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള ചിന്ത അപരനിൽ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതിന് തടസ്സമാവുകകൂടി ചെയ്യുന്നു. എന്നാൽ പ്രസ്താവനകളിലോ ഇവർ അവന്റെ സംരക്ഷകരും!

“തങ്ങളിൽ തങ്ങളിൽ മുഖത്തും തൂപ്പും നമ്മളൊന്നെന്ന് ചൊല്ലും ചിരിക്കും”

എന്ന് മധുസൂദനൻ നായർ, ‘നാരായണത്തു ഭ്രാന്തൻ’ എന്ന കവിതയിൽ ആധുനിക മനുഷ്യനിൽ വളർന്നുവന്നു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന സ്വഭാവ വികലതയെക്കുറിച്ച് പണ്ടേ എഴുതിയതാണ്.

ഉറഹാപോഹത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉടലെടുക്കുന്ന കഥകൾ നിറം പിടിപ്പിച്ച് ഉറതി പറത്തി വിടുന്ന ആളുകളുടെ എണ്ണം കൂടി വരികയാണ് - പുറത്തും അകത്തും. ഏതെങ്കിലും ഒരു സ്ഥലത്തിരുന്ന് നായകരായും ചിന്തകരായും ആത്മീയരായും കരുതിയും കരുതിപ്പിച്ചും ഇങ്ങനെയുള്ളവർ നശിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് സഭാസമൂഹത്തിന്റെയും ക്രൈസ്തവീകതയുടേയും Integrity ആണ്. ഇവർ പോകുന്നത് വല്ലച്ചന്റെ ദർശനത്തിന് എതിരായിട്ടുമാണ് സത്യം നിങ്ങളെ സ്വതന്ത്രരാക്കും എന്ന യേശുനാഥന്റെ തിരുവചനത്തിന് പകരം സത്യാനന്തര രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിലേ വിജയമുള്ളൂ എന്ന ചിന്ത നാമറിയാതെ നമ്മിൽ മുളപൊട്ടുന്നുണ്ടോ എന്ന് ഇടക്കിടയ്ക്ക് നമ്മൾ പരിശോധിയ്ക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

എന്താണെങ്കിലും ഉറതിപ്പെരുപ്പിച്ച പെരുന്നൂണകളുടെയും അവാസ്തവകാര്യങ്ങളുടെയും ബലുണുകൾ ഉയർന്നുപൊങ്ങി മറ്റുള്ളവരുടെ ദൃഷ്ടി ആകർഷിക്കുമ്പോൾ കരുതണ്ട അതിനു അധികം ആയുസ്സ് ഉണ്ടാകുമെന്ന്.

അതുകൊണ്ട് ഇന്നിന് ഏറ്റവും ആവശ്യം യേശുവിന്റെ കാലത്തെപോലെ തന്നെ വലുച്ചന്റെ കാലത്തെ പോലെ തന്നെ, നല്ല സമറായന്മാരെയാണ്.

- വീണവരെ എഴുന്നേൽപ്പിക്കുന്നവർ,
- വീഴുന്നവരെ താങ്ങുന്നവൻ,
- നിൽക്കുന്നവരെ വീഴാതിരിക്കാൻ സഹായിക്കുന്നവർ,
- വീഴ്ത്തുന്നവർക്കെതിരെ ശബ്ദമുയർത്തുന്നവർ
- അത് ആത്മീയമാകാം, ബൗദ്ധികമാകാം, സാമ്പത്തികമാകാം, സാമൂഹികമാകാം.



## The Family Apostolate of Rev. Fr. Basilius and its Relevance

**Dr. Fr. Jaimon Vengacheriyil**

The life and works of Rev. Fr. Basilius was an ideal blend of an intellectually matured visionary and a grass root practical doer. Born and brought up in a deeply devout catholic family, trained and formed in the disciplined academic setting of the seminary, and confronted with stark realities of the everyday life of an undeveloped and backward population. Rev. Fr. Basilius was well equipped to respond to the signs of his times. He was deeply aware of the significant role of the family in the development of a larger society. The outstanding contributions towards the inclusive up-liftment of the people were only a natural corollary of his vision and apostolate for the family, the nucleus of the society. It is fundamentally his vision for the family that impelled him to actively engage himself in the social apostolate. Given the profound influence of Gandhiji upon him, it was only natural for him to conclude that ‘to a man with an empty stomach food is God’. However such an emphasis on the social apostolate did not do away with what was more fundamental i.e., the up-liftment of the families. Moreover such a vision is very much integral to the concept of the Family apostolate as envisioned by the Vatican Council II : “Among the various activities of the family apostolate may be enumerated the following: the adoption of abandoned infants, hospitality to strangers, assistance in the operation of schools, ( ...), help for the aged not only by providing them with the necessities of life but also by obtaining for them a fair share of the benefits of an expanding economy” (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* 11). Seen from this perspective the ministries undertaken by Rev. Fr. Basilius were nothing less than a model of family apostolate par

excellence. The first part of the article will focus on the concrete ministries of family apostolate accomplished by Rev. Fr. Basilius and the second part will attempt to reinterpret his vision in the context of the present challenges of the society.

### **1. Rev. Fr. Basilius's Model of Family Apostolate**

Despite being a “REV. FR. BASILIUS” both in stature and hierarchy there was in him a vibrant “KUNJACHAN” whose vision was always primarily focused towards the ‘least and the small’ of the society after the example of his own parents and of the ‘little way’ of his beloved Saint, Therese of Lisieux. Empowered and “engrossed” by his innate ‘smallness’ he identified the latent and potential greatness of the remote and undeveloped villages and of the people. This discovery of the hidden potential of small things drove him to make villages the focus of his ministry and mission. As a young priest his willingness to take up the additional responsibility of the Sacred Heart Orphanage at Mookkannur was a decisive point in his life. This provided him with the opportunity to form the poor children as men of character coupled with good education and thereby enabling them to lay the foundations for a value-based family life. Further, he was the mastermind of several innovative projects for the self sufficiency of the economically backward families. These include beginning of small scale industries, promotion of scientific farming, foundation of primary school for the village, vocational training centres etc. The beneficiaries were certainly the ‘small and the poor’ for whom he committed himself. Therefore in the first place his style of family apostolate was directed by the principle of preferential option for the poor.

As a pastor in the parish his paradigm was of holistic development of the family addressing their material and spiritual needs as the two sides of the same coin. The strategies to

materialize these objectives were multi-directional. In order to get the real feel of the people he realized that the best means was to do family visits. He made it mandatory, after the foundation of the religious congregation, for the seminarians to visit the families. In visiting the families, he specifically directed the seminarians not to spare the people of other faiths. Similarly, in imparting education to the poor he made no distinctions in terms of the religious affiliations of the beneficiaries. The same approach of pastoral and social inclusiveness is testified through his active involvement in the rehabilitation works in the aftermaths of a massive flood in 1924. When the flood brought about enormous loss of lives and public infrastructure in Kerala Rev. Fr. Basilus took great interest in supporting the people to face the calamity. He facilitated the distribution of available resources from the Government to the victims. Heaven opened the doors of the house to the refugees to lay their heads which was something revolutionary at that time. The road he cut through Mookkannur to connect with the neighbouring villages certainly served its purpose to the fullest extent; however, it was more symbolic of his God-given calibre to create a network of connections between the hearts of the people whom he served. Thus, in the second place the model of the family apostolate undertaken by Rev. Fr. Basilus was essentially characterized by the ideal of inclusivism guided by the principle of universal sisterhood and brotherhood.

Thirdly, his family apostolate was fundamentally human but transcendental in its orientation. It was human in so far as his approach was a timely response to the concrete needs of the people and transcendental because he did all this for the glory of God. The pioneer members of the congregation testify that whenever a retreat was organised in the parish they had to go to the streets announcing and inviting people to attend it and in

the end of the announcement they were supposed shout out: *Christurajan neenal vazhatte* (Long Live Christ the King!). He also had clear perspectives as to how the liturgy must be made meaningful in the everyday lives of the people. This was the reason why he recited certain prayers of the *Syrian* Liturgy in Malayalam at a time when it was obligatory to celebrate liturgy in Syriac. He was a great promoter of Marian devotion and this mission of spreading Marian devotion was extended to the neighbouring parishes too. As far as his pastoral apostolate is concerned, he was a visionary who not only foresaw things much ahead of his times but also someone who could foresee the actual needs of the people around him.

## **2. The Family Apostolate of Rev. Fr. Basilius in the current context**

The family apostolate accomplished by Rev. Fr. Basilius and the principles that guided his works are in fact a roadmap that is ever relevant. The question is how we are going to carry forward the rich legacy left behind by our Founder in today's context. What could be the mission of the CST Fathers for the families today? This is a meaningful challenge which we need to reflect and deliberate.

Reading the signs and challenges of our times and interpreting them through the principles that guided Rev. Fr. Basilius' works would open a horizon of opportunities before us. Perhaps, the sense that prevails in the minds of a majority in our Indian society today is one of INSECURITY. This sense of insecurity is caused by factors such as the: deliberate escalation of fundamentalism; growing number of job-loss and high rate of unemployment and the consequent economic struggles of the middle class families, problems of emigration, immigration and return migration, the never-ending hunger of millions of our sisters and brothers, the

emergence of fatal calamities, climate change, family break ups, etc. A feasible response could be a one word answer: DEVELOPMENT. For “development is the new name for peace.” This is exactly what Rev. Fr. Basilius did. Development needs to be the catchword for today’s family apostolate.

Being stakeholders in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>1</sup> through the institution of families seems a very effective way of family apostolate. The ideal of inclusiveness, preferential option for the poor, and the universal brotherhood lived Rev. Fr. Basilius in his apostolate for the families needs to be applied in each element of the SDGs. Designing and formulating concrete programmes for the implementation of SDGs will be a major step towards the discharge of a relevant family apostolate in today’s context. This includes concrete programmes for the climate action, protection and promotion of a clean environment, eradication of hunger, etc., in our apostolate in the rural areas. After the principle of human dignity let us envisage programmes for the immigrants in a spirit of welcome and hospitality. In the context of the fundamental tendencies let us promote programmes for the economic self sufficiency of at least a few if not of many, purely on humanitarian grounds irrespective of what faith they may or may not profess. The principle of universal brotherhood and the ideal of inclusiveness would also tell us there is no true development devoid of the earth in which we live. No element of the universe is excluded from the togetherness of the one whole. In this way our family apostolate needs to include concrete plans for the preservation of our planet. Therefore, promoting programmes for the implementation of SDGs is the most effective engagement of a pastoral ministry for the families that will eventually facilitate overall development and generate higher aspirations among the youth. Our endeavours in this line will be a great tribute to our Rev. Fr. Basilius.



(Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup>Sustainable development Goals are a set of seventeen goals envisaged by the UN to be achieved by 2030. The SDGs are eradication of poverty, hunger, good health and well being, education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry-innovation-infrastructure, end of inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, careful management of water, safeguarding the land we live, peace justice and strong institutions, erection of global partnerships. ◆

*Flower Dale Quotations*

I ask Jesus to draw me into the fire of his love, and to unite me so closely to himself that he may live and act in me.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

I no longer have any great desires, beyond that of loving til I die of love.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be loved, who alone is found good and faithful above all friends.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**



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# **A MODEL POST-COVID-19 SPIRITUALITY: THE LITTLE WAY OF DIVINE FILIATION**

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## **Journey through Theresian Spiritual Way and the Spiritual Battle during Covid-19 Lockdown**

**Fr. Dr. Joseph Puthoor CST**

With no axe to grind, the rich and the poor, developed and the developing countries are struggling today to cope with the newly arose corona virus. A believer or a non-believer is no exception. Government offices, religious and pilgrim centres, Churches, shops and public and private sector offices and works remained closed for almost six months. People were lock downed in their limited space of their homes. Here we will delve only the religious space leaving behind all other aspects and difficulties caused by the Covid-19 virus. In the religious field the traditional way of spiritual nourishment and fulfilment of going to church and receiving the Sacraments and blessings became impossible and it necessitated a new way of spirituality. Homes became domestic churches and the members have to find out a home-centred spirituality for their spiritual sustenance and development. It is here in this context the Theresian Way of Divine Filiation becomes all the more expedient and relevant.

### **1. The Little Way of the Divine Filiation**

The founder of the Little Way, St Thérèse of Lisieux was convinced profoundly that her call is precisely for surrendering herself completely to the will of God the Father. It is a childlike surrender and a vocation to love. Mostly we experience the sonship and daughtership at its best in our own homes. Primarily, we all are sons and daughters of God the Father; He created us, through our human parents, in his own image and likeness.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, through the Sacrament of Baptism we are incorporated into Christ, who is the Son of God.<sup>2</sup> We are not

sons of God by nature because we have human natures whereas God has a divine nature. We are, however, sons of God by adoption, because by virtue of our Baptism we form part of God's Son.<sup>3</sup> St Paul writes: "For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are Sons of God. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage so as to be again in fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons, by virtue of which we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"<sup>4</sup>

### **A. Family: A Kindergarten of Divine Filiation**

Divine Filiation is the Catholic doctrine which teaches that we are all sons and daughters of God, the Father in Christ, as brothers and sisters of Christ and as members of the same family of God, the Church. Hence our call is to be like him and with him and with one another, sons and daughters of God His father and our Father, and brothers and sisters, children of the same one Catholic Family of God. Divine Filiation means that all Christians are made the adoptive sons of God through the Sacrament of Baptism in Jesus. In his Apostolic Letter, *Divini Amoris Scientia*, Pope John Paul II stated clearly the authentic meaning of spiritual childhood. In his own words:

At the root, on the subject's part, is the experience of being the Father's adoptive children in Jesus; this is the most authentic meaning of spiritual childhood, that is, the experience of divine filiation, under the movement of the Holy Spirit. At the root again, and standing before us, is our neighbour, others, for whose salvation we must collaborate with and in Jesus, with the same merciful love as his.<sup>5</sup>

First of all, the filiation is lived and experienced in the natural family. Thérèse grew up in a Christian family which strived always to emphasize the faith in God and the love of her parents and siblings. It is from the very home Thérèse firstly heard and received the Gospel. Further she lived the Gospel in the very affectionate homely atmosphere of the Martin family.

The life of little Thérèse overtly proclaims the depth of the relationship she had with her father. She was the most beloved daughter of the father, and was convinced that a good father helps out his little children. Later on, in her mature spiritual life, St Thérèse was convinced with great certainty that God has a father's heart. She realized that God is an infinitely good Father, and her littleness would draw down the Father's help. She found herself as a child before God the Father, trusting Him as a small child trusts its father, abandoning herself as a small child abandons itself with its father. Thus, as the child of Louis Martin, she grew to the fullness of Divine Filiation, to live out the life of a child of God the Father. Thus, she lived the fullness of Divine Filiation in her "spiritual childhood."

At the age of six or seven, Little Thérèse had a prophetic vision in which she saw her father Louis stooped with age and his head covered with a sort of apron.<sup>6</sup> This revelation helped her to make the distinction between her father and God the Father. Indeed, her own father helped her to realize the goodness of her Father in Heaven. An analysis of the relationship between Thérèse and her father will give us a vivid picture of how she transcended herself from the natural fatherhood of Louis Martin to the eternal fatherhood of God. It is transcendence to Divine Filiation through spiritual childhood.

### **B. Head of the Family: A Symbol and Model of the Paternity of God**

In the life of Thérèse, her father Louis Martin was a model and a symbol of the paternal love of God. From her daily experience of her loving and caring father she surpassed it to the Divine Father. Louis Martin was very special in burgeoning the touch of Divine Filiation and the paternity of God to his children. Moreover, one of the main reasons little Thérèse could overcome the pain of the loss of her mother was her confidence in God and her father's tender and affectionate care. Louis was the one who took her out of the house and introduced her to the

wider world of culture, language, and social reality. From the very first moment of her life Louis had a significant spiritual or symbolic role to play. Little Thérèse learned to symbolize things and situations. After the death of her mother, Zélie, Louis simply replaced her and symbolized the tender care and providence of the heavenly Father. Accordingly, Thérèse as the daughter of Louis Martin had initial trust in her earthly father, and later on in her mature spiritual life she interpreted her filiation as the little Child of the Heavenly Father.

Louis Martin took special attention in the spiritual growth of his children and encouraged his family members to follow sincerely the spiritual practises in the family along with the daily struggle. Thus, he was building his home a domestic church and a place of sanctification. As a natural father of his children and as the head of his family, he had the vocation and the gift of incarnating the infinite Fatherhood of God in his daily life and in fascinating human fatherhood. He ensured to look at his heavenly Father whenever the children looked at him as their earthly father. To go beyond, or to transcend the daily experiences is the key of the family centred spirituality. This was categorically present in the life of little Thérèse and her father Louis. Therefore, today Thérèse is venerated by the Church as “the most beloved child in the whole world” and her “little way” as a way of “spiritual childhood,” or Divine Filiation.

### **C. Thérèse, a Beloved Child of her Father**

Thérèse’s childhood memories reveal how her conscience became indelibly marked by the spirit of filiation. Thérèse wrote: “I cannot say how much I loved Papa; everything in him caused me to admire him.”<sup>7</sup> She always felt herself as the beloved child of the father and she remembered the tender care she had received from her father after her mother’s death. Hence she wrote: “still I continued to be surrounded with the most delicate *tenderness*. Our Father’s *very affectionate heart*

seemed to be enriched now with a truly maternal love!”<sup>8</sup> Louis Martin treated his children in such a way as to give them an ardent and attractive faith in the Fatherhood of God.

Each child is ultimately a child of God and Divine Filiation demands from his or her parents, family members and from the society to recognise that the child is not supposed to grow up by means of *our* way of dealing with life; rather they grow up by means of *our* way of dealing with their humanity. At some point in the stages of growth children go through a period of adoring, admiring and almost divinizing their own parents. That is not to end there but to transcend to the Heavenly Father and to live and experience the Divine Filiation. We could say that God has planned this to make everyone grow and experience Divine Filiation in a natural way. As in the case of Thérèse, the grace was so great that she transcended the natural fatherhood of Louis into a supernatural experience: for her, God always remained The Father, “the Almighty God”, and whom she wanted to love alone.<sup>9</sup>

#### **D. The Sacred Scripture: The Source and Stimulus of Spiritual Life**

The Bible was the source of the Little Way of Thérèse. By meditating the New Testament, Thérèse became well aware of the incarnation of Jesus and those insights helped her to formulate the Little Way of Divine Filiation. From the incarnation and the redemptive work of Jesus every father receives an obligation to lead his child to his/her Creator and hand him/her over to the certain, trustworthy, and truthful hands of the Father who is in Heaven. Jesus Christ, through his incarnation revealed the face of the Heavenly Father to humanity. His way of being a Son, all His words and actions, and His very person, were oriented toward that Infinite Love which has created us and that Mercy without limits which has redeemed us. He made it clear so that we might be able to come to know our Heavenly Father

and entrust ourselves to him. In the Gospel of St John chapter 14 verses 7 to 9 Jesus reveals to Philip; “He who has seen me has seen My Father, because I am in My Father and My Father is in me!” That is the reason why Jesus referred to His Father with that most familiar expression of Hebrew children “Abba!” And that is how Jesus taught us to address His Father when we pray the “our Father.” From then on, every Christian family lives out or is supposed to live something of that mystery. “For, you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Rom 8:15).

## **2. Living the fullest of the Fatherhood of God and Divine Filiation in the ‘Little Way’**

The starting point and the real spirit of Thérèse’s “little way” is Divine Filiation. Thérèse sees at once that if she is to become her heavenly Father’s little child, then, for her, God must be before all else a Father. This is the starting point of the “little way:” the Fatherhood of God. She will treat God in the supernatural order exactly as a little child treats its father in the natural order, and so, provided she surrenders herself to him, she is safe and nothing can hurt her. In her autobiography she describes the tender foresight of a father, knowing that there is a stone in his child’s way, and so hastens ahead of his child to remove it.<sup>10</sup> She became aware of the divine fatherly providence in her life and recognized that she is that child of the infinitely loving father, who is being protected from all possible harms. The “little way” is founded upon the truth that God is our Father and we all are the sons and daughters of the Father, and it is in this light that St Thérèse sees all the ups and downs of life, every human experience, including the final one which awaits us all, death.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, we summarise with the words from the Apostolic Letter *Divini Amoris Scientia* of Pope St John Paul II. On the

occasion of proclaiming St Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face a Doctor of the Universal Church, he wrote:

The core of her message is actually the mystery itself of God-Love, of the Triune God, infinitely perfect in himself. If genuine Christian spiritual experience should conform to the revealed truths in which God communicates himself and the mystery of his will, it must be said that Thérèse experienced divine revelation, going so far as to contemplate the fundamental truths of our faith united in the mystery of Trinitarian life. At the summit, as the source and goal, is the merciful love of the three Divine Persons, as she expresses it, especially in her Act of Oblation to Merciful Love. ...

Through spiritual childhood one experiences that everything comes from God, returns to him and abides in him, for the salvation of all, in a mystery of merciful love. Such is the doctrinal message taught and lived by this Saint.<sup>12</sup>

### **3. The Little Theresian Way: A Spirituality for the Present Period**

In the religious realm, the current pandemic period is gloomy and uncertain. The believers are very much in search of a viable personalistic spirituality that does not require physical presence in the churches, but can be practised personally and at home. At the same time they should experience grace in their daily moments. In such a period one should emphasize and practice the spirituality of the domestic church as taught by the II Vatican Council. Though the idea of the family as a domestic church goes back to the Church Fathers, there was some 1500 years of radio silence and later it re-emerged at the II Vatican Council. Family is a domestic church; means that it is the smallest instance of the Church, the smallest iteration — that the Christian family, through Baptism and the Sacrament of Marriage, is connected with the great Church and exhibits all



the characteristics of that Church. The Little Theresian Way of Divine Filiation is well-suited in the spirituality of domestic church.

The Theresian Way of Divine Filiation is well known in India especially through the apostolate of the Congregation of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus founded by Rev. Fr Basilius Panatt on 19 March 1931 at Mookkannur, Angamaly. As he taught and encouraged the core of the spirituality of Little Flower Congregation is Divine Filiation. Rev. Fr Basilius translated the four chapters of her autobiography in to Malayalam language entitled “Navamalika” and the childlike surrender of St Thérèse to the will of God the Father struck deep roots in the heart of him and that caused the foundation of the religious congregation of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus. In his memoirs Fr Basilius wrote that “With that [translation of the autobiography of St Thérèse] I became enamoured of the life and the spirit of the Little Flower that erupted within me and overflowed from the interior of my heart.” He intensely desired to share this experience with a few dedicated young men whom he eventually formed as the Little Flower Brotherhood (*Cherupushpa Sahodara Sangham*). And later, “Be little and Serve the little” is taken as the charism of the members of the Little Flower Congregation and they are committed to uphold the inherent and inviolable dignity of each person especially of the poor and the vulnerable.

Now let us see how the Theresian way of Divine Filiation is practical even during the lockdown period. According to the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church “The family is so to speak, the domestic church.”<sup>13</sup> This means that it is in the context of the family that we first learn who God is and to prayerfully seek His will for us. Family stands as a domestic church and through the sacramental grace the family life itself turns to be a means of sanctification. Prayer in the family is unavoidable and it strengthens them to understand and to walk in the ways of our Lord. This sanctification is actualised through their self-sacrificing love, commitment and

mutual care. Praying as a family, certainly before meals, but also first thing in the morning or before bed and the liturgy of the Church as a model for prayer and heartfelt unstructured prayer as well will make it a domestic church of prayer. We see the Martin family as a best example of a praying family, where all the members clung to God in everything, in their joys and sorrows. An experience of filiation is explicit in a praying family.

Further, Bible is the foundation and reading and meditating the word of God helps one understand deeply the meaning of being a divine son/daughter. Through the Sacred Scriptures, God speaks and it helps to live in the presence of God. In the life of St Thérèse we see her ardent love and desire for the word of God which helped her to experience God as the father and to go deeper to the experience of being a divine child. In the family the Bible stands as a tangible loving presence of God, just as the people of Israel experienced the presence of YHWH amidst them during their journey to their promised land.

In the domestic church the parents have the responsibility to foster the spiritual growth of their children. “The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith,” says the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Parents being the first teachers and really leading the family to God make the domestic church, really what it is. The parents have to take this responsibility seriously. During Covid-19 lockdown the parents get more time to stay in home and being with their children, they themselves can grow in faith and they can guide the spiritual growth of their children. Thus they can lead them to a life of a divine son/daughter of God the Father. The Martin family and the life of St Thérèse is a best example for the parents of today.

## **Conclusion**

Thérèse, as a child in the Martin family, discovered the common vocation of all the baptized. It is not riches or glory that a child asks for, but it asks for Love. Thérèse said she is a child. Hence what she asks for is love and she knows but one

desire, to love Jesus. As a Child in the Martins' family Thérèse experienced tender care and love. She was their beloved child.

Thérèse carried out this vocation to love through her life in a relationship with God, expressed in the outpourings of prayer and in the actions of her daily life. The "little way" of Thérèse is an attitude, a disposition of heart and a life style of living the fullest of Divine Filiation. It is a way of accepting and reciprocating God's love, available in all life's experiences as a child accepts all its littleness and limitations, reciprocates its parents' love and enjoys the goodness and love of its parents. In becoming little like a child, and recognizing her dependence on God, Thérèse became aware of her experience as graciously gifted. The "little way" is a way of responding to the divine love with abandonment, confidence, and trust, and sharing that love with others. It is the presence and disposition of a child delighting in and sharing a gift with the giver and those around it. Thérèse's "little way," just as the Gospel way, requires only a spirit of abandonment and complete confidence in God's free and merciful love. It is a call to transcend one's experience and love of the earthly father to the Divine Father and to live the life of Divine Filiation.

#### (Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> See Genesis 1:26.
- <sup>2</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, no: 1267.
- <sup>3</sup> "Through Baptism men are inserted in the Paschal Mystery of Christ . . . they receive the spirit of adoption as children." Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Romans 8: 14-17.
- <sup>5</sup> POPE JOHN PAUL II, *Divini Amoris Scientia*, no. 8.
- <sup>6</sup> Cfr. *Story of a Soul*, (Manuscript A, II), 45-46.
- <sup>7</sup> *Story of a Soul*, (Manuscript A, II), 48.
- <sup>8</sup> *Story of a Soul*, (Manuscript A, II), 35.
- <sup>9</sup> Cfr. *Story of a Soul*, (Manuscript A, VI), 126.
- <sup>10</sup> Cfr. *Story of a Soul*, (Manuscript A, IV), 84.
- <sup>11</sup> Cfr. J. VERNON, *Spiritual Childhood: The Spirituality of St. Thérèse*, Ignatius Press, 2001, 9-10.
- <sup>12</sup> POPE JOHN PAUL II, *Divini Amoris Scientia*, no. 8.
- <sup>13</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11.

## “GO AND DO LIKEWISE” (*Lk 10,37*)

### Scriptural Basis of the CST Consecrated Identity and Spirituality

Fr. Jino Job Perimcherry CST

#### Introduction

In the pursuit of the “universal call to holiness” of all the mankind, consecrated life has always gifted the Church with authentic and radical ways and models for the growth of the faithful in holiness. Beginning with the consecration of the virgins in the early centuries to the canonically recognized forms of consecrated life, this state of life has accompanied the Church in her strive to become the “sacrament of Christ” in the world. This accompaniment has been exercised in particular forms, at particular times and places in the Church through the exemplary lives of consecrated men and women in the orders, congregations, and other institutes of consecrated life.

Very Rev. Fr. Thomas (Basilus) Panat CST (hereafter Vallyachan), founder of the Congregation of St. Therese of Child Jesus (hereafter CST) is such a personality of spiritual vigour and fecundity in the history of the Church. He principally based his understanding of religious consecration and spirituality on the Lucan parable of the Good Samaritan (*10,30-37*).

The present article is an attempt to approach this biblical basis of the vision and spirituality of our Vallyachan from the theological vantage point of both the old and new Testaments. We will not enter into the current social, religious, and political significance of the “Go and do likewise” mandate of Jesus and its inspirational bearing on Vallyachan. We rather limit ourselves to a basic exposition of its possible scriptural nuances for the fundamental CST religious identity and spirituality. It is our hope that this preliminary scriptural reading into the motto of our

Vallyachan, “Go and do likewise”, would render us with a biblical platform from which to approach his specific contributions to the spiritual dynamism and missionary zeal of the Catholic Church.

## 1. Meaning of Consecration and Our CST Identity

The concept of consecration is defined by the catholic encyclopaedia as the stable and legally valid transit of a person or a thing from a profane order (*ius humanum*) to a sacred order (*ius divinum*) by means of a religious ritual.<sup>1</sup>

The word “consecration” comes from the Latin word *consecrare*. From a theological point of view, it refers to the action of dedicating oneself to the service of God.<sup>2</sup> From an etymological point of view, it means “with sacredness” or “co-sacredness” and hence it means to make someone/something sacred or holy.<sup>3</sup> Consecration, in general, is an act by which a person, thing, or a place is separated from a common and profane use, and is dedicated to the service and worship of God by certain rites.

Our religious consecration, thus, involves a transition from the human level to the divine level represented by a religious act. It has human and divine dimensions.<sup>4</sup> The first refers to the segregation from the profane, and dedication to the service of God. The second refers to the essential act of sanctification by God, which is exercised through the ministry of the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Filippo Oppenheim, “Consacrazione,” in *Enciclopedia Cattolica* (Città del Vaticano: Ente per l'Enciclopedia Cattolica e per il Libro Cattolico, 1950), 391.

<sup>2</sup> See D. P. Simpson, *Cassell's New Latin Dictionary* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1959), 138.

<sup>3</sup> See P. G. W. Glare (ed.), “Sacro,” in *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. 7 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 1675.

<sup>4</sup> See J. P. Sullivan, “Consecration,” in *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 186. See also LG 44.

The words of Jesus “Go and do likewise” categorically expresses the essence of our CST consecrated identity. It demands of us both an authentic knowledge of what the life of Jesus teaches us, and an unconditional openness *to go and to do* what he preached and lived in this world. In this sense, our Constitution clearly states that the CST religious consecrated identity “derives from the beatitude of the littleness of the poor in spirit (*Mt 5,3*) taught by our Lord who emptied Himself taking the form of a slave (*Phil 2,7*).”<sup>5</sup>

The primary aspect of our consecration finds its fulfillment in one’s degree of commitment to the purpose of consecration, which is to “go and do likewise” in the service of “the little” in the world through the Church.<sup>6</sup> The parable of the Good Samaritan inspired Vallyachan to make everyone partners in the covenantal love of God. In this sense, our CST religious consecration makes each one of us partakers of the passionate love of our Lord in announcing the Kingdom of God to the little flock (see *Lk 12,32*).

## **2. Biblical Meaning of CST Consecration “to Go and to Do Likewise”**

Every spirituality and spiritual vision owes its origin to the Sacred Scripture. It is the enduring treasure of divine-human relationship and commitment. Sacred Scripture is full of divine initiatives to bring mankind to its perfection in its relationship to God.

Both the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT) narrate how God chose and consecrated communities and persons to partake in the salvific mission of restoring humanity to the fullness of divine life in the world. In the OT, God takes initiative of calling and setting apart a person, a family or a nation for a specific purpose. In the NT, the significance and nature of

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<sup>5</sup> Little Flower Congregation, *Constitution & Directory* (Thrikkakara: Little Flower Offset Press, 2010), 3 §01.

<sup>6</sup> On this, see *Constitution*, 3 §04.

consecration culminates and incarnates in Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup> Jesus is the supreme model of being consecrated and sent (see *Lk 4,18; Jn 10,36*)

## 2.1 Perspectives from the Old Testament

Consecration or setting apart for God's design in the world has its theological foundation in the OT teaching. Although the OT does not speak in a specific sense of religious consecration and life, it is replete with instances of divinely commissioned persons and communities whose task was to proclaim the message of God and to represent among the people the reign of God. Consecration, thus, involves making sacred by means of a separation and a dedication.

In the OT, the act of consecration is expressed by the terms *qadas* (holy; *Exod 3,16-20*), *masiah* (anointed; *Exod 28,3*), and *nazir* (set apart, consecrated; *Exod 39,30*).<sup>8</sup> They refer to the action of separating a person from the profane to the sacred and holy sphere of life. This act of separation and initiation into the sphere of the sacred gives the person the responsibility to be holy (see *Lev 11,44-45; 19,2; 20,7-8*). This demands of the person a total dedication to the divine mission of becoming the channel of God's love and grace (*Jer 1,5*).

The OT expressions like 'being called,' 'elected,' 'chosen,' and 'set apart,' have their significance in understanding the true nature of consecrated life.<sup>9</sup> In this sense, the theology of Christian consecration can be traced back to the call of Abraham in *Gen 12* and to the call of the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt

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<sup>7</sup> On this, see G. Perego, *Nuovo Testamento e Vita Consacrata* (Milano: San Paolo, 2008), 40.

<sup>8</sup> See S. M. Alonso, "Consecrazione," *Reflessione teologica in Dizionario Teologico della Vita Consacrata*, ed. T. Goffi and A. Palazzini (Milano: Editrice Ancora, 1994), 437. See also I. De La Potterie, "Consecration-Anointing," in *DBT* (Pasay City: St. Paul, 1996), 21-22.

<sup>9</sup> See Paolo Martinelli, "The Consecrated Person of Apostolic Life: A Theological Reflection," *UISG Bulletin* 145 (2011), 5.

and to the establishment of the covenant: “If you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples... you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.” Its ratification may be found in *Exod 24, 1-11*.

The consecration of individuals can be seen in the OT. The Prophet Jeremiah was the first biblical figure to accept celibacy at the command of the Lord as a state of life (*Jer 16, 1-4*). The consecration of the Nazirites (*Num 6, 2.6-8. 12*) was a kind of personal consecration among the Hebrews. Consecrating oneself to God is seen as a state of perpetual ritual readiness for participation in the divine service.<sup>10</sup>

Hence the Nazirites were set aside as holy to God.<sup>11</sup> The significance of the nazirite vow lies in *continence*, in *restraining from superfluous thoughts*, and in *maintaining pure love of God*.<sup>12</sup> The commitment to the holy God of Israel is to be taken with utmost seriousness and discipline, for it impinged on the holiness of the whole community.<sup>13</sup>

In this sense, we can find the following important aspects of divine consecration in the OT;

- a. Consecration involves a divine commission to set apart
- b. Consecration is meant to be a sign of fidelity to God
- c. Consecration is oriented to act prophetically in the world

### **2.1.1 Divine Commission to Set Apart**

The OT depiction of the salvific intervention of God in the life of His chosen people, Israel, reveals ‘setting apart’ as a basic

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<sup>10</sup> Jacob Paxy Alunkal, “Biblical Perspectives of Consecrated Life,” *Jyotirdhara* 9 (2007), 9.

<sup>11</sup> James L. Mays (ed.), *Harper’s Bible Commentary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988), 187.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph T. Lienhard (ed.), *Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, vol. III (Illinois: Inter Varsity Press, 2001), 210.

<sup>13</sup> James L. Mays (ed.), *Harper’s Bible Commentary*, 187.



element of consecration. It is the divine mandate to set oneself apart for God and His service. Consecrated life demands from us our readiness to give up all that we are and all that we have to be set apart for the love of God. Whether it is the Patriarchs, Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, Joseph or the prophets like Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, all of them were set apart by YHWH to be His spokesperson before the chosen people of YHWH.

The complete dedication to God through the instrumentality of an oath and purity of life is characteristic of the concept of consecration in the OT (*Num 6,2.6-8.12; Jer 16,1-4*). The observance of separation from the world and ritual purity are central to the nazirite vowed way of life.<sup>14</sup> This understanding of dedication to God and purity of life is central to the religious life in the present day as well.<sup>15</sup> In this sense, the goal of consecrated life is “to become a pleasing and holy sacrifice to the Heavenly Father and to be set apart for the service of the world.”

Divine consecration and the setting apart of individuals are evident in the life of the prophets of the OT. Moses is presented as the one who is set apart by YHWH to be his prophet (*Exod 3,7-12; Deut 34,10*). The purpose of this consecration of Moses as the Prophet of YHWH is to be at His service in bringing out the people of YHWH from the slavery of Egypt (*Exod 3,10*).

The parable of the Good Samaritan depicts vividly what it means to be set apart for God and His service. It calls for a total dedication, abandoning everything to be at the service of YHWH and His people. It demands of the person an absolute commitment to a prophetic mission in answer to the choice of YHWH.

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<sup>14</sup> James L. Mays (ed.), *Harper's Bible Commentary*, 187.

<sup>15</sup> Jacob Paxy Alunkal, “Biblical Perspectives of Consecrated Life,” 9.

### 2.1.2 Divine Consecration to be a Sign of Fidelity to God

With the parable of the Good Samaritan, our CST religious consecrated identity attains another aspect in the mandate to be a sign before the world. This sign-aspect of divine consecration demands of the person consecrated a total faithfulness to the ordinances and statutes of YHWH. The OT raises the oft-repeated exhortation to be a sign of total fidelity to YHWH, the only God and to His ways. It is vividly expressed in the prophetic books and in the book of *Deuteronomy* (*Deut 11; 28*). The first commandment in the Decalogue (*Exod 20*) underlines this aspect of faith in YHWH unequivocally.

A thorough reading of the OT narration of YHWH's intervention in the life of Israel brings to light the divine insistence on being a sign of hope in the final restoration of the world to its origin, which is God. The OT illustrates this sign-aspect of divine consecration repeatedly and consistently in each of its books. The OT underlines the eschatological dimension of divine consecration through its focus on future restoration which will be established by YHWH.

The OT shows that it is the ineffable love of God for mankind that is expressed in the salvific design of God for the world. It is out of compassion for the misery of His chosen people that God sent His chosen ones to save His people (see *Gen 6,6; 8,21; Exod 3,7-10*). In this sense, the parable of the Good Samaritan succinctly summarizes the mission of a CST consecrated person as leading others to a life of faith, hope and charity. Through our untiring work of charity, we should continue and perfect the glorious mission began by God, the Father, making use of His own effective means of love and compassion to instil faith, hope and charity in the world.

### 2.1.3 Divine Consecration for Prophetic Existence in the World

The prophetic call to be a sign of divine love and compassion in the world amidst the continuous rebelliousness of Israel against YHWH forms the most integral aspect of the OT implication for consecrated life. The loving kindness of YHWH that forgives the abominations of the people of Israel is proclaimed and represented by the prophets, who are set apart to be signs of divine love before their community.

At the time of their prophetic call, God gives the chosen person the grace necessary to respond to divine election through a profound and free self-surrender to God (see *Isa 6; Jer 1,4-5*). The prophetic call was given to make God's will known to His people and to interpret God's word in their concrete life situations. The prophet Ezekiel repeats this nature of prophetic call very often (see especially *Ezek 20,4-5*).

In this sense, the nature of prophetic call in the OT defines the identity of consecrated life. Prophets in the OT proclaimed the ways of God and corrected the wrongs ways of the world. They revealed to the world its true destiny through the oracles of God. They held out the eschatological hope of receiving the fullness of life with God. In the same way, consecrated life in the Church is oriented to be a prophetic sign of the Kingdom of God.

We understand that divine consecration always demands a setting apart for a particular mission in the world. This mission is to represent God and His message in the world by becoming a sign of hope, faith and charity through a prophetic response to concrete historical situations. In this sense, our Constitution envisions the goal of the CST consecrated life and writes, "Religious life is a special call to a radical and intense life of the evangelical counsels to become a visible sign (LG 44) of the fullness of life already started here on earth. For this, God has

called us to the Little Flower Congregation, an evangelical community of religious priests.”<sup>16</sup>

We will now try to understand the possible basic NT meanings of the inspirational motto of our Vallyachan and their import on our CST consecrated life and spirituality.

## **2.2 Perspectives from the New Testament**

In Jesus, the central protagonist of the NT, the fullness of divine consecration is made visible to human eyes. In the whole of the NT, the parable of the Good Samaritan splendidly reflects the sum total of our CST religious consecration and life as envisaged by our Founder. In this sense, we can find the following relevant aspects of religious consecration that the parable of the Good Samaritan unravels;

- a. Consecration entails an element of ‘sending’
- b. Consecration is to partake in the mission of Jesus
- c. Fullness of consecration demands progressive assimilation of the divine life

We will approach these observations in the light of the NT presentation of Jesus and His disciples. The disciples of Jesus are the prime models for us in following Christ in His footsteps. The gospels are the perfect sources of knowing how disciples grew in their assimilation to the person of Jesus.

### **2.2.1 Our Consecration Entails an Element of ‘Sending’**

The mystery of Christ as presented in the NT reveals that divine consecration entails necessarily the aspect of ‘being sent.’ The Jesus of Nazareth, who, as man, (but without sin), was like any other human being living in a particular space and time, is presented in the NT as the one who is sent by the Father. In *Jn*

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<sup>16</sup> *Constitution*, 4.

17,18, Jesus reveals Himself as the one sent by the Father: “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” The biblical imperative, “Go and do likewise,” echoes this essential aspect of our CST consecration and mission. The fourth chapter of Our Constitution meticulously explains this basic missionary vigour of our religious existence: “Through religious commitment, which is a special expression of the baptismal consecration, we religious become missionaries in a special sense. Hence our entire religious life should be permeated by an apostolic spirit.”<sup>17</sup>

In this sense, Richard P. McBrien’s observation on Jesus and His earthly life is very important so as to show how the mystery of Christ represents the aspect of ‘being sent’ in a concrete life situation. He writes, “He [Jesus] was born at a particular time, in a particular place, of a particular family, and he passed through various stages of human development just like anyone else. His words and actions had a particular impact, on a particular people, under particular circumstances. And he died at a particular time, in a particular manner, at a particular place, in the presence of a particular people.”<sup>18</sup>

This significance of the mystery of Christ is upheld by St. Paul as he presents Jesus Christ, who was crucified, died and was raised from the dead as the power of God and the wisdom of God who came down from heaven (1 Cor 1,21-25).<sup>19</sup> It is again affirmed in the first creedal formula (*kerygma*) handed down by Paul to the early Christian community (1 Cor 15,3-8).

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<sup>17</sup> Constitution, § 70.

<sup>18</sup> See Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism*, 415.

<sup>19</sup> See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Pauline Theology,” in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown and others (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1987), 806.

For Paul, Jesus is sent by the Father for righteousness, sanctification and redemption of all (1 Cor 1,30).<sup>20</sup> Jesus purified and renewed the whole world from the stain of sin. He released the world from sin, sanctified it and restored it.

As the heirs of the charism of our Vallyachan and the bearers of his inspiration, we should strive to become partakers of the mission of redemption and sanctification of the world granted to us by Jesus in and through living his loving exhortation, “Go and do likewise.” In this sense, the CST consecrated life formed out of the inspiration of the Founder, from a theological view point, should be the life of the envoy, the one who is sent to be of a healing and edifying presence in a world torn apart by divisive jargons and destructive elements of hatred and racism.<sup>21</sup>

### **2.2.2 Our Consecration is to Partake in the Mission of Jesus**

The OT presentation of divine consecration for a particular mission is exemplified in Jesus Christ in the NT. Jesus Christ

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<sup>20</sup> St. Paul preached Christ crucified – Christ as significant for the human person: “You are God’s children through your union with Christ Jesus who became for us Wisdom from God – our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption (1Cor 1,30). For a detailed consideration on this, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Pauline Theology,” in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, et al (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1987), 806. The letters of Paul, which were written between 51 and 64 and hence before the Gospels provide some details regarding the life of Jesus: Jesus was born a Jew (*Gal 3,16; Rom 9,5*), a descendant of King David (*Rom 1,3*), he exercised a ministry to the people of Israel (*Rom 15,8*), he forbade divorce (*1Cor 7,10-11*); he celebrated a last supper on the night he was betrayed (1Cor 11,23-25); he died by crucifixion (*Gal 2,20; 3,1; 1Cor 1,23; Phil 2,8*); risen from the dead and appeared to his disciples (*1Cor 15,3-8; Gal 1,12-16*). For an extended discussion on this, see Gerald O’ Collins S.J, *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3-7.

<sup>21</sup> See Paolo Martinelli, “The Consecrated Person of Apostolic Life: A Theological Reflection,” 5.

is presented first of all as the One sent by the Father.<sup>22</sup> St. Paul presents Jesus as the One sent in *Heb 1,3*. It indicates that all vocations and missions in the Church are to be seen as emerging from the mission of Christ.<sup>23</sup> St. Paul affirms this also in *Eph 1,4-5* and *Rom 8,29-30*.

The NT shows us that one of Jesus' fundamental concerns was to bring together a group of people for his proclamation of the Kingdom of God, regardless of their gender, status, or background, to establish His Father's Kingdom on earth. Jesus is the supreme model of consecration for a mission. *Jn 17,19*, "for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth," testifies to it.

Jesus' complete oblation of His life for the mission of the Father gives consecrated life an orientation and sense of mission. Every consecrated person is to do the will of the Father, who is the author of every consecration (*Jn 4,34; 5,36; 8,29*). This disposition of Jesus to the mission of the Father ought to be personalized by each and every one of us who owe our religious identity to the ever-echoing mandate of Jesus, "Go and do likewise."

In this sense, our consecrated mission as CSTs is to be understood as a continuous participation in the mandate of Jesus, which He entrusted to His disciples before ascending to heaven (*Mt 28,19*). It was the radical and authentic model of Jesus that gave impetus to the life and mission of His disciples.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> For this in the synoptic gospels, see *Mt 10,40; Mk 9,36; Lk 9,48; 10,16*. The evangelist John is more frequent in presenting Jesus as the one sent by the Father, see *Jn 5,36-38; 6,38-40; 7,16-18; 8,26*.

<sup>23</sup> See Paolo Martinelli, "The Consecrated Person of Apostolic Life: A Theological Reflection," 5.

<sup>24</sup> George Soares Prabhu, "The Jesus of Faith: A Christological Contribution to an Ecumenical Third World Spirituality," in *Theology of Liberation: An Indian Biblical Perspective, Collected Writings of George M. Soares Prabhu*, Vol. 4, ed. Francis X. D'sa (Pune: Jnana-deepa Vidyapeeth, 2001), 271.

It calls each of us to draw the impetus for our mission in today's world in this divine intervention through Jesus, which continued through His disciples in NT times. We are called even today, filled with the Holy Spirit, after the example of our Chief Priest, to leave everything behind – own country, own people and all the worldly comforts and wealth declaring, “behold we have followed you leaving everything behind,” and to work towards the salvation of souls, partaking in the mission of Jesus.

### **2.2.3 Fullness of Consecration requires Progressive Assimilation of the Divine Life**

The New Testament presentation of Jesus refers to how Jesus accomplished the fullness of divine life in order that all may become the beloved children of God.<sup>25</sup> Jesus loved mankind to such an extent that He allowed His heart to be pierced and shed even the last drop of His blood. Thus man, who had become a victim to God's wrath, was made the beloved of God.

The disciples of Jesus testify to the progressive assimilation of the divine life more than any other. For example, the gospel of Mark, on the one hand, continuously accuses the disciples of not understanding fully who Jesus is and what His words and deeds really signify.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, Matthew shows us that the disciples of Jesus grew in the knowledge of Christ as he presents us with his account of the series of miracles in his gospel.<sup>27</sup> Luke shows

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<sup>25</sup> See *Lk 2,52; Jn 20,31*.

<sup>26</sup> For the Marcan presentation of the misunderstanding of the disciples of Jesus about the identity of Jesus, see *Mk 4,35-41; 6,45-52; 8,14-21.31-33; 9,32-34; 10,35-41*. This style of the evangelist Mark is directed to the reader so that they may understand who Jesus really is and follow Him. For a detailed presentation of this based on the Gospel of Mark, see Mark Allan Powell, *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 202-204.

<sup>27</sup> For the Matthean presentation of the growth of disciples in the knowledge of Christ, see the miracle narratives in *Mt 4,1-11; 8,1-4.5-13.14-17.23-27.28-34; 9,1-8.18-26.27-34; 10,1-8; 11,1-6; 12,1-14; 14,13-21.22-33*. All these miracles reveal the divinity of Jesus and His divine authority over the natural and supernatural powers of the world.



us that there is a progressive recognition of the identity and mission of Jesus by the disciples. His account attests to a progressive assimilation of the mystery of Christ and His life by His disciples.<sup>28</sup> Luke in the *Acts of the Apostles* similarly explains further how the disciples attained the complete knowledge of who Jesus is and what His mission is especially with the Pentecost in *Acts 2*.

The Evangelist John states vividly at the conclusion of his gospel what his very purpose of writing it was by saying, “these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (*Jn 20,31a*). John presents this progressive assimilation of the identity of Jesus by His disciples through his narration of the encounter of different personalities with Jesus. He shows how all of them have recognized and publically proclaimed the true identity of Jesus and how they have grown in the mystery of Christ.<sup>29</sup>

The biblical inspiration of our Vallyachan in the words “Go and do likewise” primarily demands of us a progressive assimilation of divine mystery of life revealed in Jesus. It is and should be the founding stone of our mission in following Christ as he taught us to do. In short, we are called to configure ourselves with Jesus, *assimilating His personal qualities* through a life centered on the charism of our Congregation to serve the little on the footsteps of Christ, who fully emptied Himself to give life to the world.

This assimilation of divine life necessitates following Christ in His footsteps (*Mt 4, 18-22; Mk 1, 16-20*). The twelve disciples

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<sup>28</sup> For the Lukan presentation of the progressive assimilation of Christ’s mystery and life by His disciples, especially see the Lukan travel narrative in *Lk 9,51-19,27*.

<sup>29</sup> For details on the Johannine presentation of the progressive assimilation of divine life by the disciples of Jesus, see Cornelis Bennema, *Encountering Jesus: Character Studies in the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2014).

“left everything and followed him” (*Mt 19,27; Mk 10,28; Lk 5, 11; 18,28*). Their following was an absolute renunciation of everything in order solely to enter into the consecrated life of Jesus.<sup>30</sup> Our following of the inspiration of our Vallyachan in the words “Go and do likewise”, therefore, should urge us to submit ourselves totally to all crosses of our life, during our whole life time in this world. We should become constant witnesses of our Lord’s total renunciation along with His passion, and should learn to live our consecration lovingly and with earnest desire to “go and do” what the Lord desires of us. As a CST religious priest in today’s world, bearing this mandate of following Christ successfully is the best method of growing in divine life.

At the Pentecost, the disciples of Jesus, together with Mary, became ardent followers of Christ (*Acts 2*). The disciples became the people of the Way (*Isa 35,8-9; Acts 9,2; 19,23; 24,22*). The *Acts of the Apostles* teaches that the Church essentially consists of those who belong to the Way of Jesus (*Acts 9,2*). The life of Christ has been manifested and assimilated in and through the Church.

The evangelist Luke presents a sequence of the journey of Jesus’ disciples with their Master. A first stage of this journey is found in *Lk 9,51-19,27*. This travel narrative encompasses the formative stages of assimilation of divine life in the footsteps of Jesus. A second stage of the journey of Jesus’ disciples begins at *Acts 1,8*, which says, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” At this second stage, as the disciples follow the steps of their Master, they become His sign; representing and witnessing to Him to the extent of becoming another Christ (*alter Christus*). Today, this accompanying journey should happen in the

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<sup>30</sup> Angel Pardilla, “Gesù “formato” dal Padre nella famiglia di Nazaret e “formatore” in una famiglia di tipo religioso,” 14.

formation of our members in order not to forget the basic truth of our call to “go and do” as the Lord has lived before us.

Today, every CST should find in this journey of the disciples with the Master and on His Way the important role of the Church in our spiritual growth. The more we cling on to this rock, the more we grow in the life of Christ and we imbibe various virtues. The constancy and perseverance in true faith, obedience, honour and love towards the Vicar of Christ, zeal for the spread and glory of Christ’s Church will be born and flourished in each one of us.

### **3. Insights into the Religious Vision of Vallyachan**

Vallyachan founded his vision on consecrated life and spirituality on the Sacred Scripture. He has drawn inspiration from the biblical narration of the Good Samaritan in *Lk 10,30-37*. Both the basic nature and function of our CST consecrated life, identity and mission in the Church today should be explained in the light of this basic inspiration of our founding Father. We shall enumerate certain important observations on the biblical foundation of our CST identity, spirituality, and mission.

First, our religious identity and spirituality should be founded on the divine act of setting certain chosen persons and communities apart to Himself by God in the OT presentation of salvific history.

Second, our consecrated life has the implicit divine mandate to make the will of God known to the world. It entails a representing dimension by becoming a sign of fidelity to God’s revealed message in Sacred Scripture.

Third, in Jesus we have the perfection of the OT understanding of religious consecration as a divine act of setting someone apart to make divine message known to the people in concrete situations. In Jesus, God Himself chose to incarnate as a poor, obedient and chaste to set a path of authentic consecrated life before us. Therefore, the core of our spirituality

should be a constant effort to assimilate the dispositions of Jesus.

Fourth, life of Jesus reflects the aspects of 'being sent' for 'a mission of preaching the Kingdom of God' and the disposition of obedience to the will of the Father. Thus, life of Jesus should be the way for our consecrated life in the world.

Fifth, we need to take the example of the disciples of Jesus to learn how consecrated persons should attain spiritual growth. It demands a progressive growth in the knowledge of Christ, His attitudes, life, and mission.

Sixth, our progressive growth in Christ's life should happen in the communion of the Church that proclaims the life of Christ through its sacraments and mission.

### **3. Conclusion**

Our aim in this article was to do a preliminary reading into the biblical foundations of the religious inspiration and vision of our Vallyachan quoted in the biblical verse "Go and do likewise." This introductory exposition of the scriptural dimensions of our CST identity and spirituality will help us to delve deep into the traditional, ecclesial, and missionary aspects of our CST religious identity and worth in today's world.

We live in a time of radical change in all aspects of human life. Everything becomes re-defined after the changing value system of the world. In this context, the life and inspiration of our Vallyachan give us a prophetic mandate to stay faithful to the exhortation of Jesus to the lawyer, "go and do likewise" by moulding a religious personality adored with altruistic openness to the people of God and in exercising our charism by embracing "the little" of our society. In all these, the only absolute norm is Christ, who faithfully followed the will of His Father (see *Heb 10,9*) as revealed in and through the Word of God and the signs of the time (see *Mk 13,7-8*). ◆



## FR BASILIUS: THE ONE WHO LOVED HIS PRIESTHOOD

Deacon Aneesh Theyathettu

“Karmany-evâdhikâras te mâ phaleshu kadâchana  
mâ karma - phala - hetur bhûr mâ te sango ‘stvakarmani”  
(Bhagavad Gita)

*You have the right to work, but never to its fruits. Let the fruits of action be not your motive, nor let your attachment be your cause of inaction.*

Isn't it true that Rev. Fr. Basilius CST had a deeper insight and a clear conviction about his priestly life which he enjoyed more than five decades of his life? Was he not living like an *Alter Christus* among the people of God? I would say it is, and rightly so; because the life of Fr. Basilius bear witness to it. The above-mentioned *shloka* from the Bhagavad Gita sheds plenty of light on how a priest 'Should Be' and how Fr. Basilius 'Could Be.' The whole life of Fr. Basilius, I would say, can be revolved around the central tenet of Trinitarian Love which is Mutual Selfless-Giving. The whole world is one family and it does not matter, being a priest, whether you serve a particular community or a section of the world or the whole world as long as you have the 'good' of the world in mind. As an introduction to what I write about the priestly life of Fr. Basilius CST, I would describe him, even though I have not seen him and lived with him, as the one who grasped the core meaning of the Word of God which we see in Matthew 7: 12 that "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you." For Fr. Basilius, the whole world was a means to radiate the serving character of Jesus. And I believe that it is what Fr. Basilius put forth through his priestly life and now challenges us to continue his path of "Go and do likewise."

## Fr. Basilius: A Prophetic Voice

“And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.” (Mat 10:42)

This verse from the Gospel of Mathew reminds that whatever we offer to the little ones here on earth is offered to the Almighty and our devotion is not to be hidden in the four walls of the temple; it is to be part of our day today lives. Now, in the life of Fr. Basilius, the term devotion is to be connected with his devotion towards the priestly life. If so, where did Fr. Basilius get this initial seed from? What did inspire him to choose the life of a priest? Did his family play a great role in his journey to priesthood? All these questions shall be understood, to an extent, once we go through his life history. He is not fully understood among us for he was exceptional as Msgr. Mathew Mankuzhikkari remembers about him, “Father Basilius ranks high among his contemporaries not only on account of his physical stature, but also his ideals, wisdom and religious observances. He was a multi-faceted genius and a spiritual giant.”

We may say that the divine intervention in the life of Fr. Basilius happened when a Hindu astrologer acclaimed at his birth that the boy would become a *Mahacharya*. His mother Eliswa was a pious lady who always tried to bring her children in deep faith. So, the pious activities from the part of his mother always filled him with the power of God which he kept as an unquenchable flame throughout his life. Thus, I would say that the formation of father Basilius from his family was only a prelude to the real exercise of his priestly life.

The spirituality of the priesthood is that “You also should do as I have done to you” (Jn 13:15). This is what we see in the life of Fr. Basilius, a total identification with the Lord. Are we not

called to do the same being a member of the Little Flower Congregation? Yes, we are. We are specially called that we may understand the new notion to the priesthood given by the Master of all. It is better always to see how Father Basilus incorporated the characteristics of the priesthood of Jesus to his own priesthood.

### **Christ: The Eternal Priest**

The priesthood of Christ is eternal that he is the alpha and the omega. Jesus had always proclaimed his relationship with the Father throughout his earthly ministries. Christ was so generous to share his priesthood with the human beings and we now enjoy the same through the Catholic Church. He shared his priesthood that we may gain an attitude of servitude. Fr. Basilus, I would say, emulated this characteristic through his participation in the eternal priesthood of Jesus.

### **Kenosis: The Nature Of Jesus' Priesthood**

Kenosis is the self-emptying of Jesus. This is the perfect example of humility and love towards the humanity. St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians chapter 2 verses 6 to 8 clearly mentions what kenosis exactly, in the life of Christ, is. We see the same attitude of humility and love in the life of Fr. Basilus for we read in the book "Go and do likewise" that "By imitating Jesus, the Good Shepherd, he dedicated his whole life for the integral development of the people, their spiritual as well as material well-being."

### **A Priesthood Of Action**

The whole life of Christ spread the fragrance of the effect of his activity. He was active in his mission. It is so important to say that he exercised his priestly ministry in his public ministry. It is then so evident that a priest is the promoter of the action. Bro. Sebastian Kallarackal CST remembers about Fr. Basilus that "he not only looked after the orphans but always tried to make them educated and skillful. It is on account of these that

he took upper hand in establishing the schools and the vocational training centers.”

### **Jesus’ Priesthood: A Communion With God**

“But I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father” (Jn 14: 30). The Gospels give testimony to the life of Jesus that he prayed to his Father and was in solitude at late nights so that he could be in and with God. So, it is no wonder to say that Fr. Basilius was always in communion with his Master, the Lord of all. A diocesan priest who was attracted to the spirituality of St. Therese could not but do this, because Theresian Spirituality was a total dependence upon the providence of God and that of the superiors.

### **Priesthood: A Service For The Community**

A priest is raised from the people that he should serve those whom he is entrusted with. “so, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet, for I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you” (Jn 13:14). So a priest is to cultivate an attitude of servitude. The condolence letter on the demise of Fr. Basilius written by the Executive officer of Mookkannur Panchayat, starts with these words. “We convey our heartfelt condolence in the demise of Fr. Basilius and pray for his eternal bliss, *who worked day and night for the integral development of Mookkannur for the last fifty years and who founded the Little Flower Congregation.*”

### **Priesthood Of Fr. Basilius Is A Self-Denial**

The cross of Christ is the manifestation of his self-denial and if so, the service oriented life of Fr. Basilius is the expression of his self-denial. The greatest quality of the priesthood of Christ is that he gave his life for the salvation of the people. He emptied himself and died on the cross even for the people whom he did



not know. The life of Fr. Basilius also shows a similar kind of self-denial which is for the people who were in need, poor and were totally unknown to him in the initial period of his priestly ministry.

So, it is a noteworthy facet of the life and action of Fr. Basilius that he was an evangelizer, community builder, a man of prayer and a defender of justice throughout his life.

### **Conclusion**

Priesthood is a participation in Tria Munera of Christ. Priesthood is medium to serve the community by denying oneself. Fr. Basilius shows us how a priest 'Could Be' and how a priest 'Should Be.' He enjoyed his priestly life and was committed to the call he received. People of that time as well as that of the present wanted/want to have a priest who knew/know the pulse and need of the people. I would say that Fr. Basilius could be one among them and thus we are called to be one like him. ◆

### ***Flower Dale Quotations***

My frail barque has great difficulty in reaching port. I sighted it long since, and still I find myself afar off. Yet Jesus steers this little barque, and I am sure that on His appointed day it will come safely to the blessed haven of the Carmel.

***-St. Therese of Lisieux***

# പരനിലേക്ക് വിടർന്നവളും അപരനിലേക്ക് പടർന്നവനും : നമ്മുടെ പുണ്യവതിയും വല്ലുച്ചനും

ബ്ര. ജോയൽ പനച്ചിപ്പുറം

ഇന്ന് സോഷ്യൽ മീഡിയയിൽ ഒക്കെ ഏറെ തരംഗമാകുന്ന ഏതാനും ചില വാർത്തകളിൽ ഒന്നാണ് സ്ത്രീകളുടെ വസ്ത്രധാരണ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അപ്ഡേഷനുകൾ. ഞാൻ മുട്ടൊപ്പം ഇറക്കമുള്ള വസ്ത്രം ധരിക്കും, വേണമെങ്കിൽ തുടയൊക്കെ കാണിക്കും. അതിന് നിനക്കെന്താ? ഇതാണ് ഇന്നത്തെ യുവതലമുറയുടെ മനോഭാവം. ഇതിനെ വിമർശിക്കാനോ കുറ്റം പറയാനോ അല്ല ഈ ലേഖനം എഴുതുന്നത് അതൊക്കെ അവരുടെ വ്യക്തിപരമായ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ആണ് എന്ന വാദത്തിൽ ഉറച്ചു നിന്നുകൊണ്ട് വേറൊരു കാര്യത്തിലേക്ക് ശ്രദ്ധ കേന്ദ്രീകരിക്കുവാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. ഈയൊരു വാർത്ത വന്നതിൽ പിന്നെയാണ് ഞാൻ വളരെ പ്രത്യേകമായി നമ്മുടെ വല്ലുച്ചനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഓർത്തത്. Women have legs എന്ന് ആശീർവാദം മുഴക്കിക്കൊണ്ട് തങ്ങളുടെ വസ്ത്രസ്വാതന്ത്ര്യത്തിനുവേണ്ടി വാദിക്കുന്ന ആൺ പെൺ ഭേദമില്ലാത്ത യുവതലമുറയ്ക്ക് മുമ്പിൽ വല്ലുച്ചന്റെ ജീവിതം എങ്ങനെയാണ് ഒരു മെസ്സേജ് നൽകുന്നത്? ഒറ്റ വാചകത്തിൽ ആ മെസ്സേജിനെ ഒതുക്കാം, സ്വന്തം വസ്ത്രത്തിലെ ഇറക്കത്തെക്കുറിച്ചോ കയറ്റത്തെക്കുറിച്ചോ ആയിരുന്നില്ല അദ്ദേഹം ചിന്തിച്ചിരുന്നത്, മറിച്ച് ഉടുതുണിക്ക് മറുതുണി ഒന്നു മാറി ഉടുക്കുവാൻ ഇല്ലാതെ ഇരിക്കുന്ന അനേകായിരം പാവങ്ങളുടെ ദാരിദ്ര്യത്തിലേക്ക് ആയിരുന്നു അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ ദൃഷ്ടി പതിഞ്ഞത്. സ്വന്തം വസ്ത്രത്തെക്കാൾ ഉപരി തന്റെ സഹജീവികൾക്ക് മാറി ഉടുക്കുവാൻ എന്തെങ്കിലുമുണ്ടോ എന്ന് ആശങ്കപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു വ്യഭവൈദികൻ, തന്റെ മേശയിലെ വിഭവങ്ങളെക്കാൾ ഉപരി അവരുടെ മേശയിൽ എന്തെങ്കിലും കഴിക്കുവാൻ ഉണ്ടോയെന്ന് ആകുലപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു മനസ്സ്, തന്റെ ജോലിയേക്കാൾ ഉപരി അവർക്ക് അന്നന്നത്തെ അന്നത്തിന് വേണ്ടി ഒരു ജോലി ഉണ്ടോ എന്ന് ഉത്കണ്ഠപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു വ്യഭവനായ സാതികൻ, ഇങ്ങനെയൊക്കെയാണ് വല്ലുച്ചൻ

നമുക്ക് മാതൃകയായത്. അദ്ദേഹം തുടങ്ങിവെച്ച തേനീച്ച വളർത്തൽ കൃഷിയും മെഴുകുതിരി നിർമ്മാണവും തുടങ്ങി ഇന്ന് അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ മക്കളായ നമ്മൾ ആരംഭിച്ച പൂർത്തിയാക്കി കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന, നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്ന എണ്ണിയാലൊടുങ്ങാത്ത ഇൻസ്റ്റിറ്റ്യൂഷൻസിന്റെ എല്ലാം പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട അർത്ഥവും ആഴവും അടങ്ങിയിരിക്കുന്നത്, വല്ലാച്ചൻ കാണിച്ചുതന്ന അപരനിലേക്ക് വിടരുവാൻ ഉള്ള വിളിയാണ് നമ്മുടേത് എന്ന സത്താപരമായ വാചകത്തിൽ അധിഷ്ഠിതമായതാണ്. ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞാൽ എന്റെ സഹോദര വൈദികാ, ഈ സ്കൂളിന്റെ പ്രിൻസിപ്പൽ നീ അല്ല മറിച്ച് ജനങ്ങളാണ്, നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ നിനക്ക് ഏൽപ്പിച്ചു തന്ന ജനങ്ങൾ. നീ അവിടെ വെറും കൈക്കാരൻ മാത്രം. ഇടവകയുടെ വികാരി നീയല്ല ജനങ്ങളാണ്, നീ അവരുടെ ശുശ്രൂഷകൻ മാത്രം. ഈയൊരു മനോഭാവത്തോടു കൂടെ മറ്റുള്ളവർക്ക് നമ്മു ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ട് കടന്നുപോകാനുള്ള വലിയൊരു ആഹ്വാനം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ടാണ് നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ മരണതുപോയത് ചുരുക്കത്തിൽ വെച്ചുകൊടുക്കുകയും കൂടുതൽ ഡെക്കറേഷൻസ് ഒന്നും ഇല്ലാതെ മര്യാദയ്ക്ക് പറഞ്ഞാൽ, ഞാൻ ശ്വസിക്കുന്ന ശ്വാസവും കഴിക്കുന്ന ഭക്ഷണവും സഞ്ചരിക്കുന്ന വാഹനവും അടക്കം എല്ലാം മറ്റുള്ളവരുടെ നന്മയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി ഉപകരിക്കുന്നത് അല്ലെങ്കിൽ സഹോദരാ ഈ പണി വിട്ടു വേറെ പണിക്കു പോകുന്നതാണ് നല്ലത് എന്ന സന്ദേശമാണ് നമ്മുടെ സഭാ സ്ഥാപകൻ നമ്മുടെ മുൻപിൽ അടിവരയിട്ട് പറഞ്ഞു തരുന്നത്. അതിനെയാണ് ഞാൻ ആദ്യത്തെ തലക്കെട്ടിൽ സൂചിപ്പിച്ചത്, അപരനിലേക്ക് പടരുന്ന ദൈവവിളി കാണിച്ചുതന്ന വല്ലാച്ചൻ എന്ന്.

എങ്ങനെയാണ് അപരനിലേക്ക് നമുക്ക് ഇങ്ങനെ ഇറങ്ങി ചെല്ലുവാൻ സാധിക്കുക? അതിനുത്തരം നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധ കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യ പുണ്യവതി നമുക്കു പറഞ്ഞുതരുന്നുണ്ട്. നമ്മുടെ മിക്ക ആശ്രമങ്ങളുടെയും മുകളിൽ ടെറസ്സിൽ ആയി സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്ന ഒന്നാണ് സോളാർപാനൽ. സൂര്യനിൽ നിന്നും ശക്തി സ്വീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ഭവനങ്ങൾക്കുള്ളിൽ വെളിച്ചം നൽകുന്ന പാനലിനെ പോലെ, ദൈവത്തിൽ നിന്നും ശക്തി സ്വീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ജനങ്ങൾക്കിടയിൽ വെളിച്ചം വിതറി സഞ്ചരിക്കേണ്ടവരാണ്

ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭാംഗങ്ങളായ നാമോരോരുത്തരും. ഇതിനെയാണ് പരതിലേക്ക് വിടരുന്ന ദൈവവിളി എന്ന് പറയുന്നത്.

ഇന്ന് എന്നെ ഈ സഭയിൽ നില്ക്കുവാൻ വേണ്ടി പ്രേരിപ്പിക്കുന്ന പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ട ഘടകങ്ങളിൽ ഒന്ന് രണ്ട് ചോദ്യങ്ങൾ ആയിരിക്കട്ടെ. ഒന്നാമത്തെ ചോദ്യം ഇന്ന് വല്ലപ്പുഴൽ ഈ ലോകത്തിൽ ജീവിച്ചിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ ഈ ലോകത്തിൽ എന്തൊക്കെ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ വരുത്താൻ പരിശ്രമിച്ചേനെ? രണ്ടാമത്തെ ചോദ്യം, അവ എന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിലൂടെ പൂർത്തിയാക്കുവാൻ എനിക്ക് സാധിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ? നമ്മുടെ സഭ സ്ഥാപകനെ കുറിച്ചും വിശുദ്ധ കൊച്ചുതേന്ദ്ര പുണ്യവതിയെകുറിച്ചും നമുക്ക് എല്ലാവർക്കും അറിയാവുന്നത് കൊണ്ടാണ് അവരുടെ ജീവിതങ്ങളെ കൃത്യമായി സ്പർശിച്ച് എഴുതാതിരുന്നത്. അറിവില്ലായ്മ അല്ല നമ്മുടെ പ്രശ്നം, മറിച്ച് അത് പ്രായോഗിക പദത്തിൽ എത്തിക്കുവാനുള്ള നമ്മുടെ മടിയും അലസതയും ആണ് എന്ന തിരിച്ചറിവ് എന്ന് സന്യാസികൾക്ക് ഉണ്ടാകുന്നുവോ അന്ന് അവരുടെ സന്യാസ ജീവിതം കൂടുതൽ മെച്ചപ്പെടും എന്നുള്ള ശുഭാപ്തി വിശ്വാസത്തോടെ നിർത്തുന്നു. ദൈവം നമ്മളെ അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ. ◆

*Flower Dale Quotations*

I am certain that even if I had on my conscience every imaginable crime, I should lose nothing of my confidence; rather I would hurry, with a heart broken with sorrow, to throw myself into the Arms of my Jesus.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

## **THE LITTLE WAY: WAY TO PERFECT SPIRITUAL PATH**

**Bro. Albin Varakukulayil CST**

When we are desperate or in sorrows we will pray very bitterly for the help we are in need and we often guess doing that is just being human. This is the common tendency of the whole human beings. For example to find anything we have lost or something that is essential for our today's life or when we face some difficult situations we pray for the solutions. And of course, we pray for others also for their intentions. Often our prayers are focused on the benefits that we and others get in our lives as a result of our prayers. But we are often forgetting to pray for inspiration, to pray for strength to live in the middle of a vague world like we have today. And there is one lesson, one important lesson that applies to all of these and this is taught to us by a young saintly woman, St. Therese of Lisieux. She teaches us that our powerful God, our Creator, is interested in every single detail about our lives. All those things that in our lives which are our weaknesses, all the failures and all the things that we would like to cover over and hide away from other people it is these very things that God wants in us the most. The little way of St. Therese demonstrates for us that our weakness, our littleness is the very stuff of salvation.

In our Christian faith, there is a basic mistake that we can make or we do make in all the time and that is our religion is about what we do for God. We keep the commandments, we try to be kind, we give our money to charity, and we say our prayers but our faith is not first and foremost is about what we do rather it is about what God is doing for us. And the words of Prophet Isaiah speaks very tenderly about the care and affection that God has towards us for every time, "As one whom his

mother comforts, so I will comfort you” (Is. 66:13). When St. John Paul II declared St. Therese a Doctor of the Universal church he said that Therese taught us the signs of love i.e., God has loved us first we can know that love, we can experience it and we can live in it but we cannot own it or merit it. We can only receive this love as a free gift. The little way of St. Therese is based on this ‘love’. Her little way teaches us that first, we need to understand the love of God, we need to experience it and we need to live in it and then we need to love God. ◆

*Flower Dale Quotations*

Our dear Father makes his presence felt in a way which touches me deeply. How well he is going to repay you for the care you so generously bestowed on him! You were his Angel, now he will be yours.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

The Creator of the universe awaits the prayer of one poor little person to save a multitude of others, redeemed like her at the price of His Blood.

**-St. Therese of Lisieux**

# സിനിമ കാണണോ ഒന്നു നോക്കുക

ബ്ര. അജീൻ പാരെക്കാട്ടിൽ

ഏവർക്കും ആഗതമാകുന്ന വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ തിരുന്നാൾ മംഗളങ്ങൾ നേരുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ നാം ഇഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്ന ഒരു വിനോദമാണ് സിനിമ. കാലം അതിവേഗം വളർന്ന ഈ സാഹചര്യത്തിൽ സിനിമയിലൂടെയുള്ള സുവിശേഷ പ്രഘോഷണം ഇന്ന് ഏറെ സാധ്യമാണ്. സത്യത്തിൽ പറുദീസായാകുന്ന തിയേറ്ററിൽ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ കയ്യടി നേടേണ്ടയൊരു സിനിമയാണ് നാം ഓരോരുത്തരും. അതുപോലെ നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതവും. അതിന്റെ ലൊക്കേഷനോ ഈ ഭൂമിയിൽ നാമായിരിക്കുന്ന സ്ഥലങ്ങളും ദേശങ്ങളും. ഈ സിനിമയുടെ തിരക്കഥാകൃത്തും ഡയറക്ടറും പ്രൊഡ്യൂസറുമെല്ലാം ദൈവം തന്നെയാണ്. ഇന്നലെകളിലെ സീൻ മോശമാണെങ്കിൽ അത് എഡിറ്റ് ചെയ്ത് (കുമ്പസാരം, ആത്മശോധന) ഇന്ന് കൂടുതൽ നല്ല രംഗങ്ങൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കേണ്ട ഉത്തരവാദിത്വം നമ്മുടേതാണ്. നമ്മുടെ ഈ ജീവിതം ലോകത്തിലെ ആയിരങ്ങളുടെ മനസ്സിൽ ഹൗസ്ഫുൾ ആയി ഓടുകയാണെങ്കിൽ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ സമ്പത്താകുന്ന സ്വർഗ്ഗമാകുന്ന ക്ലബ്ബിൽ നമുക്കംഗമാകാൻ സാധിക്കും.

ഇങ്ങനെ സ്വർഗ്ഗമാകുന്ന ക്ലബ്ബിൽ ഗാലറിയിലുള്ള അനേകരുടെ കയ്യടിനേടി അംഗമായ ഒരു സിനിമയായിരുന്നു വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യ. അവളുടെ സിനിമയ്ക്ക് ഒരു ഹ്രസ്വചിത്രത്തിന്റെ (ഷോർട്ട് ഫിലിം) ദൈർഘ്യമേ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നുള്ളൂ. ദൈവം ആ ചിത്രം ചിത്രീകരിച്ചത് കുറച്ച് ലൊക്കേഷൻസിൽ വച്ചായിരുന്നു പക്ഷേ ആ കഥയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ അനേകരുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ മറക്കാനാവാത്ത ഒരു ടിസ്റ്റ് അവർക്ക് രൂപപ്പെടുത്തി. ആ ടിസ്റ്റായിരുന്നു അവരുടെ കുറുകുവഴിയായ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികശിശുത്വം. നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ വെളിച്ചമേകുന്ന യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാണ് ഈ കുറുകുവഴി. നമ്മുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ ഈ ഫിലിം ഹൗസ്ഫുള്ളായി ഓടാനുള്ള കാരണവും ഈ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മികതയാണ്.

ഇതിന് മറ്റൊരുദാഹരണമാണ് നമ്മുടെ സഭാസ്ഥാപകൻ ഫാ. തോമസ് പാണാട്ട്. വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ ആദ്ധ്യാത്മിക ശിശുത്വം അദ്ദേഹത്തെ ഏറെ സ്വാധീനിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ വല്ലാച്ചനിൽ നിന്നും, കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ ടിസ്സിൽ നിന്നും മറ്റൊരു ടിസ്റ്റ് കൂടി ഉടലെടുക്കുകയാണ് “ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭ”. അതുകൊണ്ട് തന്നെ ഈ ആചാര്യന്റെ ജീവിതം ഇന്നും നമ്മുടെ മനസ്സിൽ മറക്കാനാവാതെ കൊത്തിവയ്ക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഇതുപോലെ നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ദൈവം തരുന്ന ടിസ്റ്റുകൾ നാം തിരിച്ചറിയേണ്ടതാണ്. ഈ വഴിത്തിരിവുകൾ വഴിയാണ് നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതം വഴി പ്രൊഡ്യൂസറായ ദൈവം എന്താണ് ലോകത്തിന് നൽകാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നതെന്ന് നമുക്ക് തിരിച്ചറിയാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നത്. ചുരുക്കി പറഞ്ഞാൽ നമ്മുടെ ദൈവവിളിയാണ് (ദൈവീകപദ്ധതി) നമ്മുടെ ടിസ്റ്റ്. ഇത് തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ് അതനുസരിച്ച് പ്രവർത്തിക്കേണ്ടവരാണ് നാം. ചിലപ്പോൾ ഈ കൊറോണയും മറ്റുമെല്ലാം ഇത്തരം പദ്ധതികളായിരിക്കാം ചില പാഠങ്ങൾ നൽകി നമ്മുടെ കഥകളെ അവിടുന്ന് മോടിപിടിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

ഇങ്ങനെ, വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടേയും പെരിയ ബഹു. ബസീലിയൂസച്ചന്റെയും ജീവിതം ഓർക്കുമ്പോൾ ഒറ്റ കാര്യമേ പറയാനുള്ളൂ. ഈശോ വി. കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യയെ മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥയാക്കി ബഹു. ബസീലിയൂസച്ചന്റെ ജീവിതം വഴി നമുക്ക് തന്ന സഭയിൽ നമ്മുടേതായ എന്തെങ്കിലും ടിസ്റ്റുകൾ (സംഭാവനകൾ, വിശുദ്ധ വഴിയായ മാതൃകാജീവിതം) സൃഷ്ടിക്കാൻ നമുക്ക് ശ്രമിക്കാം.

ഇനി തലക്കെട്ടിലേക്ക് വരാം. നിങ്ങൾക്കിനി സിനിമ കാണണമെങ്കിൽ നിങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് ഒന്ന് തിരിഞ്ഞ് നോക്കുക. നിങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഒന്നും കാണുന്നില്ലെങ്കിൽ ഓർക്കുക നിങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതം എഴുതേണ്ട പേന നിങ്ങളുടെ കയ്യിൽത്തന്നെയാണ്. അത് ദൈവത്തിന് കൊടുക്കുക. നിങ്ങളുടെ തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ മാറ്റിവയ്ക്കുക. അപ്പോൾ നമ്മുടെയെല്ലാം സിനിമകൾ സുപ്പറാകും. അതിനാൽ ഇന്ന് നമ്മുടെ ടിസ്റ്റുകൾ തേടാം. അപരന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് ടിസ്റ്റാകാം. (വഴിത്തിരിവ്)

ഒരിക്കൽകൂടി ഏവർക്കും കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ തിരുനാളാശംസകൾ നേരുന്നു.





## FOUNDER OF A CONGREGATION - ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

### 1. **Introduction:**

The presence and actions of men and women Founders of Religious Institutes are at work from the beginning of the time of Pachomius in the fourth century. A Constitutional enquiry was conducted by the Sacred Congregation of Rites to spell out who can properly be called a Founder. We get ideas about the characteristics of a Founder of a Religious Institute from the Book - *Foundresses, Founders and their Religious Families* - written by John M. Lozano, CMF which was translated by Joseph Daries CMF and published by Claret Centre for Resources in Spirituality, Religious Life Series, Vol. 5 1983. We get some hints about the Characteristics of a Founder from the writings of George Nedungatt SJ - *Who Founded the Congregation of the Holy Family* - published by the Holy Family Congregation in *Charity Blossoms - Mother Mariam Thresia Bulletin*, a Biannual, Vol. 18, December 1997, No. 2. Fr. George Nedungatt is a great Scholar and Professor Emeritus of Canon Law at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome.

There were disagreements on whether Saint Mother Mariam Thresia Mankidiyan was the Foundress of the Congregation of the Holy Family as some considered Mar John Menachery, the Vicar Apostolic of Trichur, as the Founder of this Congregation. George Nedungatt SJ studied in detail this issue and his findings are published in the *Charity Blossoms* quoted above.

There is a sharp disagreement between CST Fathers and some CST Brothers regarding Very Rev. Fr. Basilius Panat CST as the Founder of Little Flower Congregation. This question could be seriously discussed and settled. An analysis of the characteristics of a Founder of a Religious Institute surely will give light to settle this confusion / dispute.

Four types of actions are usually associated with a Founder / Foundress viz 1. To conceive the idea of a Religious Institute or be inspired to be found. 2. To gather a group of followers 3. To give it a proper name 4. To frame its Rules or Constitution. The question is whether these are the only characteristics or there are some more like the divine call or Vocation to be a Founder, the Charism he / she developed for the Congregation etc. Can we have a list of fundamental characteristics without which a person cannot be considered as the Founder / Foundress.

## **2. General Notion of Founder / Foundress:**

Founder / Foundress is associated with the first beginnings in a causal relationship. St. Peter and St. Paul are considered to be Founders of the Church in Rome as they are connected with the first evangelization of this city. Even though there were Christians in Rome before Paul's arrival, he is still called a Founder of the Church in Rome. Hence, Foundation need not necessarily refer to the very earliest beginnings. On Page 07 of the Charity Blossoms Fr. George Speaks of the Foundation of the Church: *"The Foundation of the Church was not a single historical act but a reform movement within Judaism that overflowed to the gentile world. This process involved several events like Jesus' preaching of the Kingdom of God, the call of the disciple and their formation, the Last Supper, the death and resurrection of Jesus, the investiture of the Apostles (of whom Peter is the first as the type) with sacred power, and the commission to them to feed the flock, the pentecostal mission of the Holy Spirit, evangelization of the nations, the gradual division between the new "Way" and the old (Judaism) and their final split resulting in the socially recognizable reality of the Church. ....The founding of a Religious Congregation, too, involves a historical process, which differs from the founding of an institution like a hospital or orphanage or from laying the foundation stone of a building."* Fr. George quotes the definition:

“For a person to be called the Founder or Foundress of a religious family, what is needed above all is the fact of having gathered some nucleus, however small, of followers and of having fixed for them a specific scope.”(Cfr. Page 07 of Charity Blossoms) Fr. George says that successive studies have modified that notion and quoted John M. Lozano CMF, who has clarified the concept of Foundation. Accordingly, there are two essential requisites in a Founder or Foundress: (a) God’s Call to start a religious Family and (b) determining the ends and lifestyle and shaping its spirit. (Cfr. Page 5 of *Foundresses, Founders and their Religious Families* - written by John M. Lozano, CMF). Another definition is that the “Founder is the Person who sets the specific scope of an Institute.”(Cfr. Page 07 of Charity Blossoms). “*Founder is the one who discovers that it is God’s will that he or she should found this new Religious Family.*” (Cfr. Page 7 of *Foundresses, Founders and their Religious Families* - written by John M. Lozano, CMF). What is important is that the Founder defines the ends and shapes the life and spirituality of the Religious Institute.

The founding of a Religious Institute by a charismatic leader may be regarded as paradigmatic of the various ways of foundation. It is normally a process that matures only gradually. In this process some events may stand out marking the common will of the group to unite, to live and work together following the charismatic leader. Often, no single moment can be isolated as the act of Foundation, though one or the other may strike as decisive in certain cases. When it is not possible to single out a particular date for their foundation, it is conventional to take the date of its canonical erection or juridical approbation as the date of its birth. This will be very concrete, memorable and more visible than any isolated event in the Foundation process. But, this convenient way of understanding may lead to confusion between foundation and approbation, as if the birthday of a child could be identified with the day of its

Baptism. Just as baptism is a new birth, there is some meaning in regarding the day of the hierarchical approval of a Religious Institute as its birthday. Yet, Foundation traces a line beyond the birth of the child through the period of gestation to the first moment of conception. (Cfr. Page 09-10 of *Charity Blossoms*).

The foundational Charism is expressed basically in the life of the Founder. It may be formulated in words, orally or in writing. In the written form it may be enshrined in an embryonic Rule or be more fully articulated in the Constitutions of the Institute. But this is not essential to the activity of the founder, if the Founder is the person who sets the specific scope of an Institute, as this can be done without articulating explicitly the foundational Charism in the Constitutions and without giving a name to the Institute.

Fr. George Nedungatt further clarifies in his writing: *“Even the idea of foundation need not have originated with the founder. Anthony Rosmini founded the Institute of Charity under the pressure from Marquise of Canossa. There are cases in which the idea of foundation was suggested by another person like the Bishop or Confessor to the future founder. What is crucial is that the latter accept it as his own vocation.”* (Cfr. Page 11 of *Charity Blossoms*).

Fr. George made it clear: *“Many Founders and Foundresses have taken the over the Rules of St. Basil, St. Augustine or St. Benedict. The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, drawn up by St. Ignatius of Loyola has been borrowed and used by many other Founders and Foundresses. Borrowing the Rule or Constitutions for a new foundation does not make the latter a branch of the original Religious Institute nor does the original Founder necessarily become thereby the Founder of the new Institute. The Rule or Constitutions may be adopted or adapted or it may be given to the Founder or to the Institute by the concerned hierarchical authority. In short, the framing of the*

*Constitutions is not a necessary part of the Charism of the Founder. More than a written document the life and example of a charismatic Founder can set the scope of an Institute.”* (Cfr. Page 11 of Charity Blossoms).

### **3.      *Erection of a Religious Institute:***

The Hierarchy has a definitive role in the birth of a Religious Institute. A Religious Institute does not exist in the eyes of Law if it is not canonically erected by the competent ecclesiastical authority, just like a child is not enrolled member of the Church, if it is not baptized. The Council of Chalcedon forbade the building of monasteries and oratories without the consent of the Local Bishop. It is this consent that has developed liturgically and canonically into the erection of Religious Institutes. It is the positive hierarchical response to a charismatic event in the Church. Any of Christ’s faithful may found a Religious Institute, but it becomes a Religious Institute in the eye of Law only when it is canonically recognized and approved by a diocesan Bishop or a higher authority like a Patriarch or the Pope. This is achieved by the hierarchical act of erection. Without it, we may have a private association but not Religious Institute with legal standing in the Church. The more accurate canonical term is “*erect,*” though terms like *Constitute* and *Establish* are used to express this hierarchical act.

Foundation is normally a process stretching over a period, whereas erection is essentially a single act of hierarchical consent. This consent may find expression either in a liturgical rite or a canonical act or preferably both. The liturgical rite takes the form of the blessing of a monastery, convent, first house or its church or chapel with or without the reception of Vows or conferral of the habit or veil. The hierarchical consent which is implicit in the liturgical rite is made explicit and articulate by issuing a written document signed by the competent authority, though such a document is not necessary for the validity of

erection, but is never to be omitted, since it can serve later, as a proof of hierarchical recognition.

Fr. George Nedungatt says: *“Foundation and Erection are distinct and complementary. The Church cannot live by Charisms alone. The ministry of authority and institutional structures are also divine gifts and vehicles of Charisms. Bearing this in mind we can still say summarily: foundation is a charismatic event, erection is a juridical act of institution. Radiating his Charisma a Founder inspires and attracts followers, but his authority over them is only moral. With the canonical erection by the competent church authority the Religious Institute becomes a juridical person, and the legitimate Superiors obtain legal authority in it. Unless the Founder also becomes a Superior, he as Founder does not possess legal authority or power over and above his moral authority.”* (Cfr. Page 13 of Charity Blossoms).

#### **4. Benefaction:**

There is a third role that is of the *Benefactor* usually at work in the founding a Religious Institute, besides the role of the Founder and the Hierarchy. The Benefactor gives materials or moral or spiritual help and thus promotes the work of Foundation. Thus any person Christian or not can become a Benefactor by building a Monastery / Convent / Religious House, by donating land or material for the building of the Religious House, or by placing a building at the disposal of the Founder. These are forms of helps to sustain the Founder in the trials and tribulations or guiding them with spiritual direction. But the Benefactors do not become Founders or Co-Founders merely due to the cooperation and support alone, according to the modern usage of these terms. The three roles can be distinguished - the Founder, the Hierarchy and the Benefactor. Failure to distinguish them sometimes give rise to confusion and misnomers. The common denominator or the minimum requirement that must be verified in all founders

and Foundresses has been expressed as : *“There is a minimum requirement if a person is to be regarded as a Founder in a formal sense, such a person should be the bearer of an original inspiration, and at least in a certain measure, operative in its realization by giving a code of life or by forming the first members.....Thus what is really common in the typology of Founders and applies to all Founders and Foundresses across the spectrum of the history of the Church, seems to be reduced to the following: one who sets up or inspires an initial group to live radically a life patterned on the evangelical counsels either by the actuation of an original inspiration or by helping to form that group spiritually or physically with or without a code of life. A typology of Founders, however, should not make us lose sight of the fact that what is primary and paradigmatic of foundation is not the least common denominator but the figure of the charismatic Founder.”* (Cfr. Page 32-33 of Charity Blossoms).

Summarizing the discussions we can find that the following points stand out:

- *“The first idea that receives particular stress is that of the unique mission of Founders. They are the ones, who present the Rules, Constitutions or Statutes to the Hierarchy of the Church for approval. They are also the ones who define the aims proper of their institutions. Founders are then the source of a particular tradition in the church and their sons and daughters must draw their inspiration from them throughout history. The renewal of their Religious Life consists precisely in a return to the Founder. This idea which was already sketched out by Pope Pius XII, received definitive expression in the Decree Perfectae Caritatis and was insistently proposed by Pope Paul VI.*

- *The Constitution – Lumen Gentium seems to be referring to the sanctity of Founders when it calls them “Illustrious Men and Women...”*
- *Among the particular elements that characterize the mission of the Founders these Documents single out a) Their Aims b) Their Spirit and c) Their Charisms.*
- *Special stress is laid on the “Inspiration of Founders.”*  
(Cfr. Page 16-17 of *Foundresses, Founders and their Religious Families* - written by John M. Lozano, CMF).

### **5. Sufferings of the Founders an Foundresses:**

In studying the life of the Founders and Foundresses, we can understand the great frequency with which these men and women underwent severe trials. These trails are not simply the difficulties they had to overcome initially in order to pursue their vocation, not the efforts it cost some of them to define the foundational traits of the spirit that was to animate their woks. There were harsh oppositions raised against them, even by their own disciples. It is an interesting, sorrowful and glorious aspect of the life of Founders and Foundresses. There were occasions in the cases of dew Founders who had to face the rise of certain tendencies among their first disciples which they knew to be contrary to the spirit of the Religious Institute. The sufferings brought on the Founders have a particular meaning for them and they are considered to be part of a deep purification, a particular form of the dark night of the spirit, during which God purifies the legitimate love which these men and women have for their works and from the least roots of human attachments. *“We must also take into account the co-redeeming value of their sufferings. The founding Charism which they have received is a source of life and the giving of life in the Spirit, within the living context of Jesus, is always related to the Cross. These sufferings are, then, part of the intercessions before God on behalf of their sons and daughters, which is proper*



to Founders and Foundresses.” (Cfr. Page 70 of *Foundresses, Founders and their Religious Families* - written by John M. Lozano, CMF).

**6. Very Rev. Fr. Basilius Panat CST - Founder of Little Flower Congregation:**

Based on the above discussions, we can definitely say that Very Rev. Fr. Basilius Panat CST, fulfills all these criteria to assume the title as the Founder of Little Flower Congregation. Some of the highlights and milestones in the life of Very Rev. Fr. Basilius substantiate this:

1. In 1921 he got the golden opportunity to translate four chapters of the Autobiography of St. Therese of Child Jesus. Very Rev. Fr. Basilius collaborated with Justice Joseph Thaliath, who took leadership in publishing the Malayalam version of the Autobiography with the name “*Navamaalika.*” With that translation he became enamoured of the life and spirit of St. Therese, more commonly known as St. Little Flower, that erupted within him and overflowed from the interior of his heart.
2. On 17 May 1925 St. Therese was canonized. On the same day Very Rev. Fr. Basilius started special devotion to St. Therese at Mookkannur and dedicated to the Saint the newly built Chapel adjacent to the Orphanage. He initiated the steps to make Mookkannur as a Pilgrim Centre and promoted Theresian Spirituality through various ways.
3. He got the first inspiration and cherished the dream of founding a new Congregation, shared this idea with some Priests of the Archdiocese who are his close Friends. Eventually he got the oral permission from Mar Augustine Kandathil and started *Cherupushpa Sahodara Sangham.*
4. This new Congregation was formally erected on 19 March 1931 with a simple liturgical celebration.

5. Even before the establishment of some of the Parishes and Institutions like Hospitals and Schools in the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly under the patronage of St. Little Flower, Very Rev. Fr. Basilius had begun the devotion to St. Little Flower and promoted Theresian Spirituality.
6. As the progress of the new Congregation was not steady and hopeful, he thought of re-organizing the Congregation and with the permission of Mar Augustine Kandathil made it a Clerical Congregation in 1945.
7. He prepared the Rules and Regulations for *Cherupushpa Sahodara Sangham* but the Archbishop did not approve it. After Re-organization, he submitted a new Constitution for the Clerical Congregation and articulated the Vision, Charism and all other details of the Congregation. Mar Augustine Kandathil approved it in October 1946.
8. He recruited Candidates and took all efforts to train them in the Charism of the Congregation. He also took all the efforts for the establishment of the Congregation.
9. He is the person who suffered a lot, both from internal and external forces, for this new Congregation.

**Prepared by: Fr. Francis Kilivallickal CST**



***Flower Dale Quotations***

Our dear Father makes his presence felt in a way which touches me deeply. How well he is going to repay you for the care you so generously bestowed on him! You were his Angel, now he will be yours.

***-St. Therese of Lisieux***

# Days to Remember

- October 01 - Feast of St. Therese of Child Jesus
- October 04 - Feast of St. Francis of Assisi
- October 04 - D.A. of Very Rev. Fr. Basilius Panatt CST
- October 04 - D.A. of Bro. Ajimon Joy Kuzhiyalil
- October 07 - Feast of Our Lady of Holy Rosary
- October 15 - Feast of St. Therese of Avila
- October 17 - D.A. of Fr. Christopher Puthumana
- October 19 - D.A. of Fr. Shanoj Mattathilanickal
- November 01 - Feast of All Saints
- November 02 - All Souls Day
- November 03 - D.A. of Bro. Arsenius Nedumpuram
- November 13 - D.A. of Fr. Felix Nellikkunnath
- November 14 - Children's Day
- November 17 - D.A. of Fr. George Kudukkamthadathil
- December 03 - Feast of St. Francis Xavier
- December 08 - Feast of Immaculate Conception of Our Lady
- December 25 - Christmas
- December 27 - Feast of the Apostle St. John
- December 30 - D.A. of Fr. Sibichan Embrayil

# LITTLE FLOWER PROVINCE, GORAKHPUR



VERY REV. FR. BASILIUS PANAT CST  
FOUNDER  
LITTLE FLOWER CONGREGATION



*Dear Rev. Fathers and Brothers,*

*Prayerful greetings from Little Flower Provincial House, Gorakhpur!*

*We are very happy to invite you to the celebration of the Feast of St. Therese of Child Jesus and the concluding celebration of the Golden Jubilee year of the CST mission in Gorakhpur on Thursday, 01 October 2020.*

*His Excellency Most Rev. Bishop Thomas Thuruthimattam CST, Bishop of Gorakhpur will preside over the Holy Eucharist and His Excellency Most Rev. Bishop Dominic Kokkat CST, Bishop Emeritus of Gorakhpur will be joining us for the concluding ceremony of the Golden Jubilee Year at 06.00 pm in Little Flower Provincial House, Chargawan, Gorakhpur.*

*Kindly bless us with your presence and join us for the agape thereafter.*

*With regards,*



*Fr Lona Kallely CST  
Provincial Superior*

എല്ലാ ചെറുപുഷ്പസഭാ മക്കൾക്കും  
വിശുദ്ധ കൊച്ചുത്രേസ്യായുടെ  
തിരുനാൾ മംഗളാശംസകൾ...