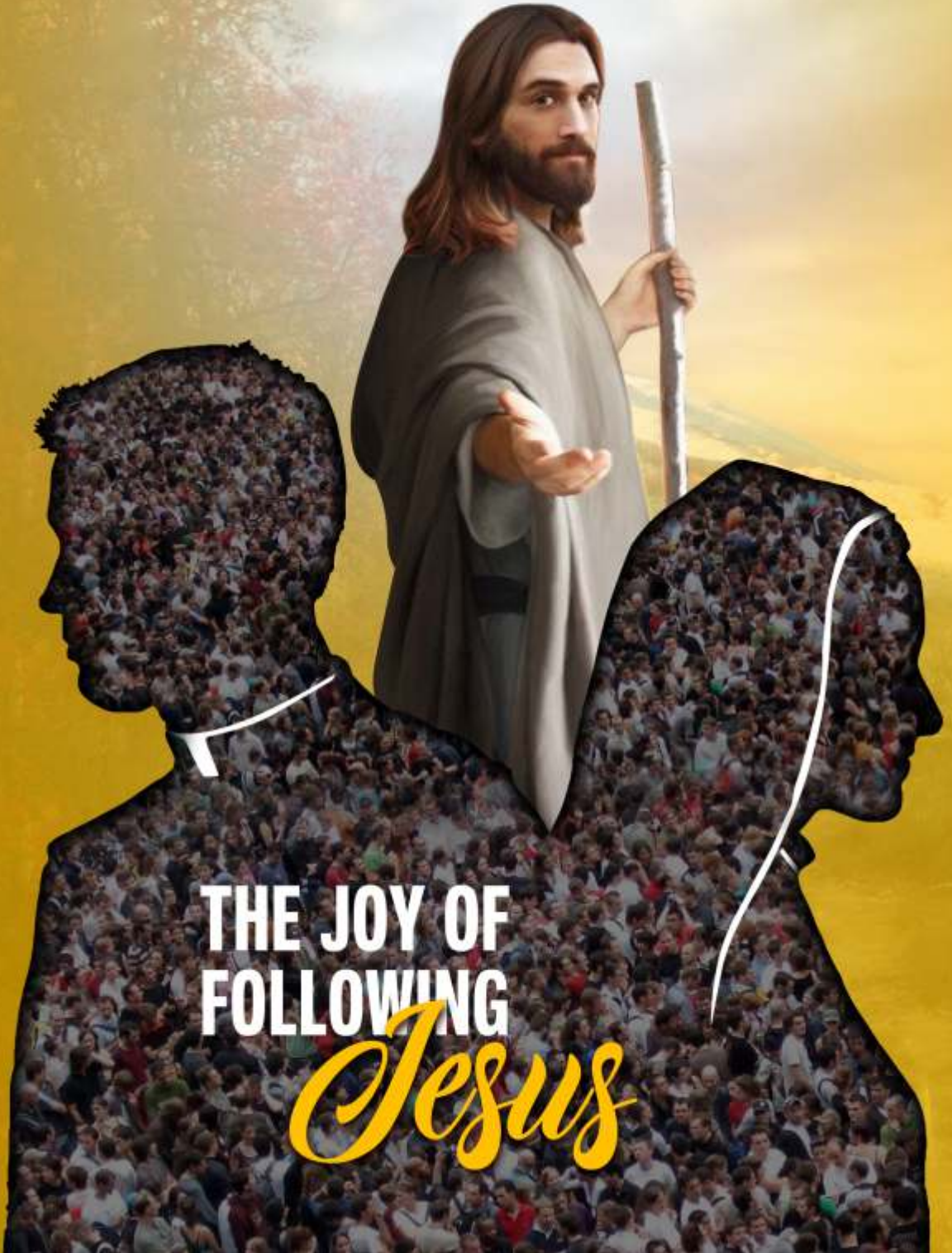


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# സമർപ്പിതജീവിതമാണ് ഇന്നത്തെ ലോകത്തിന് സുവിശേഷം

“Everything we do is the Service of the Gospel, and you, in particular, serve, that ‘Gospel’ which is consecrated life, so that it may be the Gospel for the world today”. Pope Francis, made the remark to members of Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

ഭൗതിക സുഖസൗകര്യങ്ങൾ പൂർണ്ണമായും ഉപേക്ഷിച്ച്, ആത്മീയകാര്യങ്ങൾക്കായി ജീവിതത്തെ സമ്പൂർണ്ണമായി സമർപ്പിക്കുന്നതാണ് സന്യാസജീവിതം. സന്യാസി (Monk) എന്ന പദം മോണക്കോസ് (Monochos) എന്ന ഗ്രീക്ക് പദത്തിൽ നിന്നും ഉത്ഭവിക്കുന്നതാണ്. ഒറ്റക്ക് എന്നർത്ഥം, എല്ലാവരിൽ നിന്നുമായി ദൈവവുമായി മാത്രം ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട് ജീവിക്കുന്നവരായിരുന്നു സന്യാസികൾ. പിന്നീട് കാലാന്തരത്തിൽ സമൂഹസന്യാസജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് വഴി തെളിച്ചു. വ്യത്യസ്തങ്ങളായ ലക്ഷ്യങ്ങളോടെ, എന്നാൽ ദൈവവുമായി ഒന്നായി തീർന്ന്, ആത്മീയ ആനന്ദം അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന ആത്മീയ ലക്ഷ്യങ്ങളും സന്യാസത്തിലുണ്ട്. കൃത്യമായ നിയമങ്ങളും ചട്ടങ്ങളോടുകൂടി സന്യാസസമൂഹങ്ങൾ ദൈവത്തെ അനുഗമിക്കുക എന്ന അടിസ്ഥാനതത്വം മനസ്സിലാക്കി സാമൂഹ്യപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിലേക്കും ചില സന്യാസസമൂഹങ്ങൾ അവരുടെ പ്രവർത്തനശൈലികൾ വിന്യസിച്ചു. ഈ ലോകത്തിൽ സന്യാസസമൂഹങ്ങളുടെ സാന്നിധ്യം ആത്മീയമേഖലയിലും, സാമൂഹ്യമേഖലകളിലും കാര്യമായ സംഭാവനകൾ നൽകി വരുന്നു. അവരുടെ വിശ്വാസതീക്ഷ്ണതയും, ആത്മീയശക്തിയും മനുഷ്യന് എന്നും ഒരു കരുത്താണ്.



YOUR WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET & A LIGHT TO MY PATH

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# സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതത്തിലെ ആനന്ദം



Fr. Martin Vithayathil CMF  
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(Institute of Consecrated Life)

സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതം യേശുവിനോട് ചേർന്നിരിക്കാനുള്ള വിളിയാണ്. എപ്പോഴും ദൈവത്തെ അന്വേഷിക്കാനും അവിടുത്തെ മാത്രം അനുഗമിക്കാനുള്ള വിളി. ദൈവത്തിൽ മാത്രം ദൃഷ്ടി പതിപ്പിച്ചുള്ള യാത്ര ഏതൊരു ജീവിതവും പൂർണ്ണമാക്കുന്നത്. ആ വിളി സ്വീകരിച്ച് മുന്നേറുന്നവരുടെ ആനന്ദത്തിലും സംതൃപ്തിയിലുമാണ്.

നാലാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ ആരംഭത്തിൽ ക്രൈസ്തവ മതത്തിന് രാഷ്ട്രീയ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം ലഭിച്ചപ്പോൾ ക്രിസ്തുവിനോടും ക്രൈസ്തവ മൂല്യങ്ങളോടും കൂടുതൽ ചേർന്നിരിക്കാൻ മരുഭൂമിയിലേക്ക് പോയവരിൽ നിന്നാണ് സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതം ആരംഭിക്കുന്നത്. അവർ തങ്ങൾക്കുള്ളതെല്ലാം വിറ്റ് ദരിദ്രർക്ക് കൊടുത്ത് ക്രിസ്തുവിൽ പൂർണ്ണമായി അർപ്പിച്ചു. ക്രിസ്തുവിനെ മാത്രം ചിന്തിച്ച്, ക്രിസ്തുവിനോടുകൂടെ ആയിരിക്കാനാണ് മരുഭൂമിയിലേക്ക് പോയത്. ഇത് അവർക്ക് ആനന്ദം കൊടുത്തതുകൊണ്ടാണല്ലോ അവർ മരുഭൂമിയിലും തുണിന്റെ മുകളിലും മരപ്പൊത്തുകളിലും ദൈവവിചാരത്തോടെ തനിച്ചിരുന്നത്.

ആദിമസമർപ്പിതർ അവരുടെ ജീവിതത്തിലൂടെ നമുക്ക് പറഞ്ഞു തരുന്നത് ദൈവാശ്രയബോധം ആണ് സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ആനന്ദത്തിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനം. ലൂക്കായുടെ സുവിശേഷം 10-ാം അദ്ധ്യായത്തിൽ എപ്രകാരമുള്ള സമർപ്പണമാണ് ആനന്ദം നൽകുന്നത് എന്ന് പറയുന്നുണ്ട്. 72 പേരെ അയക്കുമ്പോൾ, അയച്ചവനിൽ ആശ്രയിക്കാൻ, ഭൗതിക വസ്തുക്കളിൽ നിന്ന് അകന്ന് നിൽക്കാൻ യേശു അവരോട് പറയുന്നത്. മടിശീലയോ, സഞ്ചിയോ, ചെരിപ്പോ നിങ്ങൾ കൊണ്ടു പോകരുത്. ഇതിലൂടെ അയച്ചവനിൽ കൂടുതൽ ആശ്രയിക്കേണ്ടതിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതയെ യേശു അടിവരയിട്ടു പറയുന്നു.

ദൈവം വിളിച്ച ഓരോ ജീവിതാനന്ദിപ്പിലുള്ളവർക്കും അവരുടെ ജീവിതം ആനന്ദകരമാക്കാനുള്ള വഴി, വിളിച്ചവൻ അവർക്ക് കാണിച്ച് കൊടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതനും അവരുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ക്രിസ്തുവിനെ അടുത്ത് അനുഗമിക്കാൻ വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടവരാണ്. മറ്റൊരു ക്രിസ്തു ആകാൻ വേണ്ടി വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടവർ, ക്രിസ്തു ജീവിച്ച ജീവിതം നയിക്കാൻ വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ടവർ. ഈ ജീവിതത്തിൽ സന്തോഷം നൽകുന്നത് ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ മനോഭാവങ്ങൾ ആണ്. ക്രിസ്തുവിന് തന്നെ അയച്ച പിതാവിനോടും വ്യക്തികളോടും വസ്തുക്കളോടും ഉണ്ടായ മനോഭാവം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതർക്കും ഉണ്ടാകുമ്പോൾ അവർ ആനന്ദം അനുഭവിക്കും.

യേശുവിന് തന്നെ അയച്ച പിതാവിനോട് ഉണ്ടായ അതേ മനോഭാവം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതനും ഉണ്ടാകണം. തന്റെ പരസ്യജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഓരോ നിമിഷത്തിലും പിതാവിന്റെ ഇഷ്ടത്തിന് അനുസരിച്ചാണ് ഈശോ ജീവിച്ചത്. അത് അത്ഭുതം ചെയ്തപ്പോഴും മറ്റുള്ളവർ എറിയാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോഴും, യേശു കുരിശിൽ തറച്ചവന്റെ ഇഷ്ടത്തിനാണ് മുൻതൂക്കം കൊടുത്തത്. ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതന്മാരുടെയും ജീവിതത്തിൽ തങ്ങളെ അറിഞ്ഞ് പേർ ചൊല്ലി വിളിച്ച്, അയക്കുന്ന യേശുവിന് പിതാവിനോട് ഉണ്ടായ മനോഭാവം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതർക്കും ഉണ്ടാകണം. തങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതത്തിലെ ഓരോ നിമിഷവും ക്രിസ്തുവിനും ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ സ്വരം



അവരിലേക്ക് പകർന്നു നൽകുന്ന അധികാരി കളിലും ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ സ്വരം തിരിച്ചറിഞ്ഞ് അവർക്ക് കീഴ്പ്പെട്ട് ജീവിക്കണം.

ക്രിസ്തുവിന് വ്യക്തികളോട് ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന മനോഭാവമായിരിക്കണം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതർക്കും വ്യക്തികളോട് ഉണ്ടാകേണ്ടത്. ക്രിസ്തു ഒരിക്കലും ഒരു വ്യക്തിയിൽ മാത്രമായിരുന്നില്ല തന്റെ സ്നേഹം പങ്കുവെച്ചത്. താൻ കണ്ടുമുട്ടിയ എല്ലാവരോടും തന്റെ സ്നേഹം പങ്കുവെച്ചു. ചുങ്കക്കാരോടും പാപികളോടും മുതിർന്നവരോടും ഒറ്റിക്കൊടുത്തവരോടും ശിശുക്കളോടും കുരിശിൽ തറച്ചവരോടും യേശുവിന് ഒരേ സ്നേഹമായിരുന്നു. ക്രിസ്തുവിന് വ്യക്തികളോട് ഉണ്ടായ ഈ മനോഭാവം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതർക്കും ഉണ്ടാകുമ്പോൾ സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതം യഥാർത്ഥ ആനന്ദത്തിലേക്ക് കടന്നു വരുന്നു.

ക്രിസ്തുവിന് വസ്തുക്കളോട് ഉണ്ടായ മനോഭാവം ആയിരിക്കണം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതർക്കും വസ്തുക്കളോടു ഉണ്ടാവേണ്ടത്. യേശുവിന്റെ പരസ്യജീവിതം ഒരിക്കലും പരസ്യജീവിതത്തിൽ ഉടക്കി കിടന്ന ജീവിതം ആയിരുന്നില്ല. യേശുവിന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ആവശ്യമായവ നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് പിതാവ് പുത്രന്റെ ജീവിതം ദൈവികമാക്കിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതത്തിൽ ആനന്ദത്തിൽ വളരാനും നിലനിൽക്കാനും വിളിച്ചവന് കൊടുക്കേണ്ട ഇടം വസ്തുക്കൾക്ക് കൊടുക്കാതെ വിളിച്ചവന് നൽകണം.

സമർപ്പിത ജീവിത അനുഭവത്തിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ ഒത്തിരി സമർപ്പിത ജീവിത അനുഭവത്തിലൂടെ കടന്ന് പോയതിന്റെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ മനസിലേക്ക് യഥാർത്ഥ ആനന്ദം ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതരും അനുഭവിക്കുന്നത് യേശുവിൽ നിന്നാണ്. ഓരോ സമർപ്പിതന്റെയും ജീവിതം വസ്തുക്കളിലും വ്യക്തികളിലും ലോകത്തിന്റെ അനുഭവങ്ങളിലും ഉടക്കിക്കിടക്കാതെ യേശുവിൽ ആയിരിക്കുമ്പോഴാണ് യഥാർത്ഥ ആനന്ദം അനുഭവിക്കുന്നത്.

യേശുവുമായിട്ട് ഒന്നിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന സമയത്തെ പ്രാർത്ഥന എന്ന് വിളിക്കുമ്പോൾ ഓർക്കുക അനുഭവ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ദിവ്യബലിയും കഴിഞ്ഞ് യേശുവിനെ സുരക്ഷിതമായ സ്വകാര്യയിൽ അടച്ചു വെച്ച ലോകത്തിലുള്ള ജീവിതം ആയിരിക്കരുത് സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതം. തോമസ് മാർട്ടിനോസിന്റെ വാക്കുകളിൽ പറഞ്ഞാൽ പ്രാർത്ഥന ശ്വാസോച്ഛ്വാസം പോലെ ആയിരിക്കണം. എപ്പോഴും അറിഞ്ഞും അറിയാതെയും യേശുവിനോട് കൂടെ യേശു സാന്നിധ്യത്തിൽ, യേശു വിചാരത്തോട് മാത്രം ഉള്ള യാത്ര. അത് ആനന്ദത്തിന്റെ യാത്ര ആയിരിക്കും.

## CMC (Congregation of Mother of Carmel)

Founder: St.Kuriakose Elias Chavara & Fr.Leopold Becaro

Year of foundation: 1866 Feb 13

Charism: Be Holy and Lead Others to Holiness especially women and children

Motto: Remain United to me in Contemplation and consecrated to me in action

Main Apostalate of Congregation: Christian formation, Education, Healing Ministry, Social Activities, Media Ministry

Saints if any: St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and St. Euphrasia

## S.A.B.S. (Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament)

Founder: Venerable Mar Thomas Kurialacherry & Servant of God Mother Mary Francisca De Chantal.

Year of foundation: 8 Dec.1908

Charism: Eucharistic Devotion

Motto: Renew everything in Christ

Main Apostalate of Congregation: Education

## LSMS (Little Sisters of Mother of Sorrows)

Founder: Clelia Barbieri

Year of foundation: 01/05/1868

Charism: Let's join together to live a life of contemplation and to do good.

Motto: Love God.

Main Apostalate of Congregation: Work in mission territories, education field, helping sick and aged,etc Collaboration with all the local church in her needs.



# The Consecrated Life Today: Challenges and Prospects



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If we look at the institutional history of consecrated life from Antony of Egypt and the Desert Fathers to our times, we may perceive that it evolves and accomplishes its mission in the Church under the seduction of the Holy Spirit who draws a person to Jesus Christ who is both the revelation of God and of the highest vocation of a human being according to the mind of God the Father (cf. GS 22). In every epoch, we may also note, the onward journey of those specially called and consecrated, is also an *agere contra*, a fight against the “demons” within and without. Often, we are conscious of the cultural and political currents that try to impede the growth and accomplishment of the mission the Church entrusts to the consecrated. However, ultimately every consecrated person stands “alone with God alone” as St. Ignatius of Loyola reminds, and to become light, leaven and salt in the society. It is from this conviction that we try to reflect on a few significant challenges of consecrated life today drawing from the recent teachings of the Church this precious and decisive form of Christian existence.

To understand the reality of consecrated life today with its problems and prospects, one of the best ways is an attentive reading of the recent documents published by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL): *New Wine in New Wineskins. The consecrated life and its ongoing challenges since Vatican II* (NWNW 2017) and *The Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance* (GFJP 2020). These “guidelines” are published after prolonged

studies of the reports of the national conferences of consecrated life and consultation with experts in different aspects of consecrated life in the Church. These documents present with realism the actual global scenario of consecrated life from different perspectives. In this article we also keep as backdrop the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996) which presents in synthesis and in depth the identity of consecrated life and its mission in the Church, and which is often the point of reference for the above-mentioned documents. Since its publication, *Vita Consecrata* constitutes the principal magisterium on the consecrated form of Christian existence in the Church.

The problem of abandonment and mediocrity

*New Wine in New Wineskins* focuses on the 50 years of post-conciliar journey consecrated life has made and tries to summarize the ongoing challenges”. (NWNW, Introduction). *The Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance* parts with the succinct statement: “Our time is a time of trial” and the observation of Pope Francis that “it is more difficult to live as a consecrated person in today’s world” (GFJP, 1). It calls the current epoch of consecrated life as “a time when fidelity is at test” (GFJP, 2), a time of preoccupying phenomenon of abandonment from consecrated life which, Pope Francis calls as “haemorrhage that weakens the consecrated life and the very life of the Church”. According to the latest statistics available, and which CICLSAL made public during the presentation of the GFJP, every year an average of more than 2,353 consecrated persons leave the life they chose. The chart shows India as the country with the highest number of dropouts from consecrated life followed by Brazil. The CICLSAL points out the main reasons for abandoning consecrated life as: inauthentic spiritual life, loss of the sense of belongingness, problems in community life, and problems of affectivity like falling in love,

violation of the vow of chastity, etc. During the presentation of GFJP it was also noted that the same are the reasons for the mediocrity of the majority who 'nest' inside the religious institutes! Disregard of the code of sanctity of the chosen state of life debilitates today the institutional form of consecrated life resulting in the phenomenal abandonment and in the mediocrity.

The "struggle of fidelity"

These documents, however, do not breathe pessimism. While presenting such a realistic picture of the consecrated world, they are also guided and stimulated by the observations, orientations and challenging words of Pope Francis who knows well such a world as one who served several years as formator and at the service of authority in his religious family. GFJP points out also that "the struggle of fidelity and the lack of strength to preserve are experiences which belong to the history of religious and consecrated life." In order to help the consecrated persons to come alive joyfully to their vocational life, both these documents ("Guidelines") draw attention to their identity and mission in the Church. Both NWNW and GFJP indicate and reflect on the challenges that are to be realistically addressed. We may note the following interrelated concerns regarding consecrated life today: (1) attention regarding an "authentic spiritual life" (2) the decisive need to recognize and embrace one's vocational identity as consecrated persons, (3) the urgency of a formation that facilitate docility to the moulding action of the Holy Spirit according to God's dream of a person.

The need for "an authentic spiritual life"

The main reason pointed out by the recent studies of CICLASAL, both for the "haemorrhage" that weakens the consecrated life and thus the very life of the Church, as well as for the mediocrity of the majority who are within the institutional structures, is an "inauthentic spiritual life". Such an observation urges the consecrated persons to go beyond moralism and piety to live and walk in the Spirit (cf. Gal 5: 25; VC 93; SAC part III). The Holy Spirit guides a person to come alive progressively to one's "vocational identity", to embrace it with amazement and gratitude, and to live

## DST (Daughters of St. Thomas)

Founder: Rev Fr. Jacob Thazhathel

Year of foundation: 1969

Charism: To experience the Risen Lord in the Word of God and share this experience with the humanity especially with whom the Word of God has not yet been preached. This sharing of the experience of Christ is sustained by prayer, asceticism, selfgiving, and life witness and above all by proclamation of the Good news, following example of St. Thomas the Apostle "

Motto: Let us also go, that we may die with Him. (Jn 11:16)

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Mission activities like education, health care, socio-pastoral apostolate, running boardings for the poor children, special education, apostolate of press, caring the old and dying, service among mental patients and family apostolate

## F.M.S.C. (Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart)

Founder: Venerable Fr. Gregory Fiorovanti (OFM) Laura Leroux

Year of foundation: 21st April, 1861

Charism: Contemplation of the Pierced Heart of the crucified Jesus

Motto: Peace and Joy

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Mission of Education and Charitable assistance

## School Sisters of St. Francis

Founder: Mother Antonia Lampel

Year of foundation: 1843

Charism: Intimate union with God in the midst of apostolic services.

Motto: To glorify God by extending God's kingdom and living in Holiness

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Teaching



consequently. It is from this perspective that H. U. von Balthasar studies the life of Saint Therese of Child Jesus, who is placed in relief as one of the saintly models of life consecrated entirely to God. Therese discovers that deception can hide where one least expects to find it, and can cause damage to her holy ideals. She seeks diligently the truth of her call and life consecrated to God. "Always I have said to the good God: O God, I will listen to you gladly; I beg of you to answer me when I humbly ask you: What is the truth?"

An authentic spiritual life, exigently inscribed in the very essence of consecrated life, is a relentless pursuit of one's God-given truth and constant surrender to it. Hence, a shift from a sense of functional identity (even from a canonical and charismatic identity) to a consciousness of theological identity is underscored as the need of the time. The question that emerges then is: Who can teach, instruct a consecrated person regarding the truth as one consecrated to God? For every baptized person, especially for a consecrated person who gives oneself to live radically the baptismal grace, the Holy Scripture, especially the Gospels and the maternal teachings of the Church, go on revealing who, whose, and why one is. Here again we note the testimony of St. Therese as presented by Balthasar: "... truth in her case has all the richness, strength and decisiveness that one finds in the words of the Holy Scripture: truth as a witness to the light of God illuminating the farthest reaches of one's being. Her whole life becomes an exposition of God's word, a sacrifice of all her own truth to the unique truth of God within her".

The recent guidelines of the CICLSAL underscore the decisive need of paying attention to and embracing the important pronouncements of the Church on those who respond to the call to consecrated life. They point out particularly to the precious teachings of the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* regarding the identity and mission as of fundamental significance to understand the consecrated form of Christian existence in the Church. More than three decades of reflections on consecrated life since the Vatican II confluence in this document, and every subsequent magisterium on consecrated life, *Vita*

## Papal Teachings on Consecrated Life



Consecrated life is a living encounter with the Lord in His people. It's a call to the faithful obedience of daily life and to the unexpected surprises from the spirit. It is the vision of what we need to embrace in order to experience joy; Jesus. - Pope Francis



Consecrated life means going to the very root of the love of Jesus Christ with an undivided heart and putting nothing ahead of this love. - Pope Benedict XVI



When our whole life is one faith, hope, love, prayer and silence, consecrated life is always bound up in the "Eucharist and then the 'urge' towards God springs. - Pope John Paul II

*Consecrata* as its interpretive point of reference. It stands in good stead also to note that the publication of this Exhortation took well beyond an year and a half since the celebration of the Synod and the presentation of the Prepositions to Pope John Paul II (October 1994 – March 1996). The saintly Pope's prolonged meditation on this crucially significant form of Christian life brought precious theological affirmations regarding its unique identity and inalienable role in the accomplishment of the mission of the Church for the entire humanity.

*Vita Consecrata* speaks of the consecrated life as "one of the tangible seals which the Trinity impresses upon history, so that people can sense with longing the attraction of the divine beauty." (VC 20). Only with amazement and profound gratitude toward God the consecrated persons can read the numerous affirmations regarding their vocational identity as prolongation of the mystery of Incarnation to reveal the marvellous mystery of the Holy Trinity to amaze the world. In the 112 paragraphs of the Exhortation, in fact, more than 200 times Jesus and his appellatives are used to present who and whose the consecrated persons are, and why they are in the heart of the Church. Towards the conclusion of the Exhortation, in



explicit and challenging words, Pope John Paul reminds them: "Do not forget that you, in a very special way, can and must say that you not only belong to Christ but that *you have become Christ.*" (VC 109). Growth in such a Christic identity of a consecrated person is "a path of increasing faithfulness, on which the consecrated person is guided by the Spirit and configured by him to Christ, in full communion of love and service in the Church" (VC 93). Here is then the essence of an authentic spirituality for a consecrated person: letting the Holy Spirit manifest, make visible, and audible the Son of Man who "passed doing good and healing all" (Acts 10:38) in the today of human history.

A time to "question seriously the formative system"

In sum, the identity of a consecrated person consists in becoming the prolongation of the mystery of Incarnation in the heart of the Church to complete the history of salvation. It is around this central truth regarding the consecrated life that the recent documents discuss other felt exigencies concerning consecrated life today, especially the formation. For, "Identity, with all its magnitude, is not perceived as an immobile and theoretical fact, but as a shared process of growth" (NWNW 33). As a matter of fact, since several years, the responsible organs of the Church for the consecrated life have been asking those in authority in the religious families to "question seriously the formative system" to respond creatively and concretely to "the need of a fecund, systematic and organic process of formation". The apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* emphasised the need and urgency to promote the preparation of "quality" formators through adequate structures (cf VC 66). In the documents we have been citing, *For New Wine New Skins and the Gift of Fidelity and the Joy of Perseverance*, reflect on the challenges still open in consecrated life since the Vatican Council II, and point out formation as "fundamental for the future of consecrated life", and note that the field of formation has seen in these years "a profound transformation in the method, language, dynamics, values, finality and the stages". However, the document NWNW

## MSMI (Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate)

Founder: Late Msgr. C.J. Varkey

Year of foundation: 1962, Sept 8th

Charism: To spread the REDEEMING LOVE of Jesus

Motto: "Behold, the Handmaid of the Lord".

Main Apostolate of Congregation: "Family Apostolate which includes: - House visits- Conducting retreats and seminars to people of all age groups, - Counselling and spiritual guidance by the integrated use of charismatic gifts, - Village Evangelisation - Pro-life mission, - Media activities- Running Institutes for street children, lepers, elderly destitute and orphan children."

## SH (Sacred Heart Congregation)

Founder: Venerable FR Mathew kadalikkattil

Year of foundation: 1911

Charism: Overflowing compassionate love of Sacred Heart of Jesus

Motto: Snehaya, Dhanaya, Cha, Rekshnaya

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Evangelisation, Education, Charitative activities, Social Service

## D.P.M.T. (Daughters of Presentation of Mary in the Temple)

Founder: Francesca Butti and Maria Rossi

Year of foundation: 1833

Charism: Inspired by the spirit of behold (Eccomi) We educate children and the young women and promote poor and marginalized in an attitude of accipe (acceptance)

Motto: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Education, pastoral work and Social Work.

voices the preoccupation that “despite all efforts and profuse commitments, formation does not reach to touch the hearts of the persons and really transform them”. It observes that in the area of formation there is quite a widespread scarcity of “subjects with adequate preparation for the task of formation”. It insists hence on the widely felt need “a solid formation of the formators” for a real and promising accompaniment of those who enter at a young age in response to God’s call to consecrated life.

### Formed in the Teachings of the Church

A formation that does not feed the intellect with the teachings on the theological truths regarding consecrated life will remain superficial, fragile, inclined to abandon its code of sanctity or at best will survive the façade with moralism and piety. Formation to consecrated life requires today a theological outlook on the truth regarding the essential identity and mission of a consecrated person based on the magisterium on consecrated life that offers precious teachings regarding the same drawing from the Sacred Scripture and the models of consecrated sanctity down through the centuries. In this regard, it is imperative to draw from documents that pronounce on the identity of consecrated life and its mission like *Lumen Gentium* Chrs 5-6, the Apostolic Exhortation, *Vita Consecrata*, the plenary assembly document in the jubilee year *Starting Afresh from Christ*, the inspiring document for the religious *Redemptionis Donum* written entirely by John Paul II, the stimulating Letters for the Consecrated persons in the year of consecrated life, especially *Contemplate*.

### Formators Seasoned in Pneumatodynamics

Taking into account the main reason both of abandoning as well as of the mediocrity in living consecrated life is lack of a “sound and deep spirituality”, the need of the time is formators seasoned in the ways of the Spirit which we may call *Pneumatodynamics*. However, many religious institutes invest persons and funds more to prepare formators specialized in the knowledge of *psychodynamics*. While we certainly agree upon the need for a wholistic human formation of the candidates to consecrated life, what we perhaps

Brothers and sisters, the Lord never fails to give us signs that invite us to cultivate a renewed vision of consecrated life. We need to do this, but in the light of the Holy Spirit and docile to his movements. We cannot pretend not to see these signs and go on as usual, doing the same old things, drifting back through inertia to the forms of the past, paralysed by fear of change. I have said this over and over again: nowadays the temptation to go back for security, out of fear, in order to preserve the faith or the charism of the founder... is a temptation. The temptation to go back and preserve “traditions” with rigidity. Let’s get this into our head: rigidity is a perversion, and beneath every form of rigidity there are grave problems. Neither Simeon or Anna were rigid; no, they were free and had the joy of celebrating: Simeon by praising the Lord and prophesying with courage to the child’s mother. - Pope Francis



note in today’s world of formators and formative process is a disproportionate investment of time and effort to study and apply the principles of *psychodynamics*. At best, it is taken for granted. Initiating, sustaining, and accompanying the formees, in the path of *pneumatodynamics* do not assume due significance as the decisive need in the process of formation. It is not to be forgotten that, while the *psychodynamics* centres on self-realization or self-fulfilment, attention to the *pneumatodynamics* takes a person farther in the path of a self-forgetful gift form of life, in Jesus’ like *kenotic-agapeic* form of life which exactly is the truth of consecrated life as the “living memory of Christ”, or as “the prolongation of the mystery of incarnation” in the heart of the Church for the salvation of the world. On formation as docility to the *pneumatodynamics*, we read thus in the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*:

God the Father, through the unceasing gift of Christ and the Spirit, is the educator *par excellence* of those who consecrate themselves to him... Formation then is a sharing in the work of the Father who, through the Spirit, fashions the inner attitudes of the Son in the hearts of young men and women. Those in charge of formation must therefore be very familiar with the path of seeking God (guided by the Spirit), so as to be able to accompany others on this journey. (VC 66).

In short, it is the Spirit who guides a person to come

alive progressively to one's "vocational identity" as conformity with Jesus the Son of Man who is, to paraphrase *Gaudium et spes* 22, perfection of humanity and transparency of God to embrace such a gift with amazement and gratitude, and live consequently the truth of one's consecration, as Pope John Paul II reminds, not just as belonging to Christ or for Christ, but as one's becoming Christ guided by the Holy Spirit (cf. VC 93, 109) to bring the history of salvation to its fulfilment.

### Conclusion

The consecrated life, which Vatican Council II describes as "fuller expression of the baptismal grace" (LG 44; PC 5; ET 8), emerges and evolves in the Church under the twin interrelated thrusts of the vocation to be *signum ecclesiae* (sign of the Church) and to be *signum in ecclesia* (sign in the Church). The consecrated persons accomplish this mission not by being part of the hierarchical structure of the Church, but by being part of her "pneumatic" life and her holiness (cf. LG 44), by belonging "to her deepest being", and by being "part of all that pertains to her very life".<sup>11</sup> These essential tasks of consecrated life of being sign of the Church and prophetic sign within the Church, are realized not so much by words, but "by the eloquent language of a transfigured life, capable of amazing the world" (VC 20) as may be verified in a consecrated person like Francis of Assisi. Toward the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th, the Church was wallowing in wealth and power, keeping almost in oblivion Jesus Christ, her Lord and reason to be. It is then that Francis, under the action of the Holy Spirit, is seduced by Jesus Christ poor, humble and crucified, becomes a sacrament of the Church and a prophetic sign within her, and awakens the Church to her truth. Such a Spirit-guided Spirit-filled life of being sign of the Church and of being sign in the Church seem to be the urgent need of our times. It is possible in so far as the consecrated persons render themselves passionately docile to the action of the Holy Spirit, the protagonist of this concluding phase of the history of salvation between "Easter and Fulfilment" (VC 23f), between Pentecost and Parusia.

## SD (Sisters of the Destitute)

Founder: Venerable Fr. Varghese Payappilly

Year of foundation: 1927

Charism: To carry on the mission of Christ by becoming a channel of compassionate love and by personalizing the inner attitudes of Christ who revealed the infinite compassion and love of the Father to the poor who are destitute and oppressed

Motto: The compassionate love of Christ urges us

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Destitute Homes for the aged and infirm; Rehabilitation Centers for physically and mentally challenged; Terminal Care Centers for those who are suffering with incurable diseases such as cancer, HIV/AIDS; Care Centers for dementia and wandering ladies; Palliative Care Centers for the aged and sick; Healing ministry in both Govt. and private hospitals; Imparting education in schools; Providing moral education and counseling; Non-formal education in slums and villages; Family welfare services including de-addiction in slums and villages; Prison ministry; Women empowerment Programs; Pastoral ministry and Legal Aid & Human resource law network.

## CMF (Cordis Mariae Filii Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary / Claretians)

Founder: St. Anthony Mary Claret

Year of foundation: 1849 in Spain

Charism: Servant of the Word

Motto: Love of God Impels Us

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Preaching, Education, publication and media ministry, pastoral ministry, social ministries such as care homes, rehabilitation of the abandoned and dying destitute, mentally retarded, care for the bedridden, Jail ministry, youth ministry, family apostolate

Saints if any: St. Anthony Mary Claret



# Ask the Religious!

Being a nun there are a lot of restrictions. Do you ever regret missing out on the outside world that you had access to when you were younger?

Never. Every organization and establishment has its own rules and regulations. Similarly, Religious life also has its own rules and regulations. I am extremely happy with my brave decision to join the Religious Life with great desire, overcoming all obstacles and oppositions. I always found that the rules and restrictions of the Religious Life were guiding lights for my integrated personality development.

Just like Jesus in his worldly sojourn chose many disciples, I am extremely happy that I too am called to Religious Life to witness the Glory of Lord and to serve Him. I never felt disheartened and never regret choosing this vocation. I am sure that even if I had a hundred more births in this world, I would love to choose and live a Religious Life only. The Gospel says, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Being in the presence of God always helped me to feel his all-encompassing love throughout my life. Thank you, Jesus, for everything that you have given me.

Sr. Suja Choithirakunnel  
Apostolic Oblates

If one feels a call towards religious life, but is uncertain about it, what signs must be considered? What way must they prepare to identify/confirm it as their God willed vocation?

Religious life is essentially a person's response to God's call. God calls the chosen ones very personally and so it is the person himself/herself who realizes or senses the calling more than anybody else. But quite often we also need signs to confirm that it is truly God who is calling and not merely a fascination of one's mind. Though there are no hundred present full proof signs, that can be considered as firm indicators of God calling, yet to some extent the following signs can help in the discernment process. Some of them are:

- Irresistible attraction towards God, prayer life or spiritual matters.
- Sense of joy and peace in a spiritual realm in contrast to the sense of emptiness while being in worldliness.
- Despite the attraction and the peace and joy one experiences while thinking about religious life, there also could be a simultaneous internal resistance to the thought. Yet, the more the person resists the more restless he/she feels. This restlessness could be the result of God's incessant calling of the person.
- Sometimes more than the person himself/herself it is others who would identify your calling. If you have had family members, friends or even spiritual leaders tell you often that you are an ideal candidate for religious life, it could be an external sign that God is indeed calling you.

Irrespective of the above indicators, it is only in deep prayerful reflection and solitude that one can identify and confirm the vocation and ease out confusions and uncertainties. Hence, spiritual elders recommend that if one feels drawn to religious life the next wise step to take is join the 'Come and See' program which enables the person to experience the religious life closely by staying in the convent or seminary for a few weeks/months. The spiritual atmosphere accompanied by spiritual guidance almost always gives a clarity to the candidate about his/her suitability for religious life.

Fr. Vinu Kattuparambil CMF

## What is the greatest and most common challenge when one decides to join the convent?

There are several challenges that a candidate struggles to overcome when he/she decides to join Religious Life.

- ? The most common difficulty to overcome is leaving the family and loved ones behind. Religious Life is a call to set out for a radical following of the Lord which entails leaving familial ties. With most modern families being nuclear in size, the responsibility towards parents especially during times of sickness and old age, the candidate is left in a state of dilemma. But Jesus said, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God" (LK 9: 62).
- ? Pressure from peer groups questioning the sanity of one's decision to live a life that is contrary to the worldly view of success is another challenge. The secular world which is increasingly losing the 'sense of the sacred' pitches the Gospel values of Poverty, Humility and Selfless Charity as contrary to leading a successful lifestyle which aims at amassing wealth, fame and power. The notion of joining a Religious Life stands in stark contrast to this worldly

lifestyle. Little do such people who pressurize realize that religious life is 'not a call to be successful but faithful' to God and His laws which brings with it eternal reward.

To add to it, there are several false pictures about convent life like strict life, rules, and regulations, abuse, etc. The American Archbishop Fulton J Sheen once said ' *There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.*' The same can be said about the wrong views that circulate about Convent life.

- ? The Misguiding influence of social media is another challenge young girls and boys face when they wish to answer the call to religious life. Social media which these days tends to amplify the shortcomings and scandals generate a sense of insecurity and anxiety for the parents making them pessimistic of religious life. The Aspiring girl's/boy's challenge is to instill in such family members, relatives and so-called well-wishers a conviction of the never diminishing God willed goodness of religious state of life and its power to impact the society positively through a life of prayer, sacrifice and service.

Sr. Asha Maria Jose MSMI  
Student of JD, Pune

## Do I need to love and serve Jesus in a convent setup? Can I not serve Jesus by being part of some ministries like Jesus Youth?

Blessed Fulton J. Sheen describes that a genuine vocation is not when one is taken over by ambitions of serving God in heroic ways rather it lies in an irresistible attraction that one feels towards God and the Transcendent. So, it is a desire to belong wholly to God and God alone that should be prime most motivation to join religious life. So, the important question to ask for one struggling with aforesaid doubts is 'What state of life is God calling me to? But to ask this question one needs to be predisposed to surrender to God's Will unconditionally. It was the saintly Archbishop who also said '*Once you have surrendered yourself, you make yourself receptive. In receiving from God, you are perfected and completed.*' Knowing His will and surrendering to it wholeheartedly is the essence of answering God's call to religious life.

Sr. Tensy CSC  
Malad

Compiled by:  
Sr. Shimi MSMI, Panvel



## The Consecrated life: A Gift to the Church

- St. John Paul II

The consecrated life, through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, "constitutes a closer imitation and an abiding re-enactment in the Church" of the way of life which Jesus, the supreme Consecrated One and missionary of the Father for the sake of his Kingdom, embraced and proposed to his disciples (cf. Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:10-11; Jn 15:16). In the light of Jesus' consecration, we can see in the initiative of the Father, the source of all holiness, the ultimate origin of the consecrated life. Jesus is the One whom "God anointed... with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38), the One "whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world" (Jn 10:36). Accepting his consecration by the Father, the Son in turn consecrates himself to the Father for the sake of humanity (cf. Jn 17:19). His life of virginity, obedience and poverty expresses his complete filial acceptance of the Father's plan (cf. Jn 10:30; 14:11). his perfect offering confers an aspect of consecration upon all the events of his earthly existence.

Jesus is the exemplar of obedience, who came down



Sometimes we risk getting lost and dispersed in a thousand things, fixing ourselves on secondary aspects or immersing ourselves in things to do, but the center of everything is Christ, to be welcomed as the Lord of our life." Those in consecrated life must not lose their ability to be amazed.

- Pope Francis



from heaven not to do his own will but to the will of the One who sent him (cf. Jn 6:38; Heb 10:5, 7). He places his way of living and acting in the hands of the Father (cf. Lk 2:49). In filial obedience, he assumes the condition of a servant: he "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant... and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:7-8). In this attitude of submissiveness to the Father, Christ lives his life as a virgin, even while affirming and defending the dignity and sanctity of married life. He thus reveals the sublime excellence and mysterious spiritual fruitfulness of virginity. His full acceptance of the Father's plan is also seen in his detachment from earthly goods: "though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9). The depth of his poverty is revealed in the perfect offering of all that is his to the Father. The consecrated life truly constitutes a living memorial of Jesus' way of living and acting as the Incarnate Word in relation to the Father and in relation to the brethren. It is a living tradition of the Saviour's life and message.

## AO (Apostolic Oblates)

Founder: Servant of God William Giaquinta

Year of foundation: 1950

Charism: Promotion of the doctrine of Universal Call to Holiness.

Motto: To be Sowers of Hope in the World.

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Retreat, Conventions, Prayer meetings, Festival of faith for children and youth, Counselling, Family Apostolate, School of Spirituality. We are actively involved in the Parish activities.

## CHF (Congregation of Holy Family)

Founder: St. Mariam Thesia

Year of foundation: 1914

Charism: Compassionate love emanating from deep union with the Crucified Lord and liberative mission accomplished through family apostolate in the spirit of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

Motto: Thy will be done

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Family Apostolate

Saints if any: St. Mariam Thesia

## ASI (Ancillae Secular Institute)

Founder: Mother Maria Perpetua Radlmair

Year of foundation: 1946

Charism: Like Mary, following Jesus of the Gospels, in the midst of the World, with Unconditional Surrender and Selfless serving Love.

Motto: To participate in the Salvation Ministry of Jesus through our Consecrated presence in the World.

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Any job that is ethically and morally acceptable and promotes Christian Values.

# ഞാൻ തന്നിച്ചല്ല!!!



ചെറുപ്പത്തിലെ തന്നെ മാതാപിതാക്കൾ പള്ളിയിൽ പോകുവാനും പ്രാർത്ഥനയിലും, ഭക്തികാര്യങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുവാനും എന്നെ പഠിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നു. അങ്ങനെ എന്റെ വിവാഹം കഴിഞ്ഞു. എന്റെ ഭർത്താവ് തോമസ് ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് രണ്ടു മക്കൾ ഫെബിൻ, ഫെസ്റ്റിൻ. കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളെയും ചെറുപ്പത്തിൽ തന്നെ ദിവസവും കുർബ്ബാന മുടക്കാതിരിക്കാൻ പഠിപ്പിച്ചു. മക്കളോട് പറഞ്ഞു കൊടുത്തു. ഒരു ദിവസം പോലും ഈശോയെ സ്വീകരിക്കാതിരിക്കരുത്. എന്ത് പ്രയാസങ്ങളും സഹനങ്ങളും വന്നാലും ദൈവഹിതം അതാണ് എന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കി എപ്പോഴും നന്ദി നിറഞ്ഞ ഹൃദയത്തോടെ ദൈവത്തെ സ്തുതിക്കാനും മക്കളെ പഠിപ്പിച്ചിരുന്നു. മക്കൾ രണ്ടുപേരും നന്നായി പഠിക്കുമായിരുന്നു.

പത്താം ക്ലാസ് ആയപ്പോൾ മുത്തയാൾ ഫെബിൻ പറഞ്ഞു എനിക്ക് സെമിനാരിയിൽ ചേരണമെന്ന്. അങ്ങനെ സെമിനാരിയിൽ ചേർന്നു. അപ്പോൾ ഇളയ ആളിന് ഒരു സങ്കടം പോലെ “ഇനി എന്നെ വിടില്ലേ എന്ന്”. പത്താം ക്ലാസ് കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങളോട് ചോദിച്ചു. ഞാനും സെമിനാരിയിൽ പൊയ്ക്കൊട്ടെ എന്ന്. പപ്പാ പറഞ്ഞു. ‘നിനക്ക് ഇഷ്ടമാണെങ്കിൽ പൊയ്ക്കൊ’ എന്ന്. ഞാനും സമ്മതം മുളി. ബന്ധുക്കളൊക്കെ തടസ്സം പറഞ്ഞു. രണ്ടു പേരെയും വിട്ടാൽ നിങ്ങളെ ആരു നോക്കും. പപ്പയും ഞാനും ഏകസ്വരത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞു “ഞങ്ങളെ ദൈവം നോക്കിക്കൊള്ളും”.



നിങ്ങൾക്ക് താല്പര്യം അങ്ങനെയൊന്നെങ്കിൽ അത് നടക്കട്ടെ എന്ന്. അങ്ങനെ രണ്ടാമനും സെമിനാരിയിൽ ചേർന്നു. ഒന്നാം റാങ്കോടെ കൂടി ഡിഗ്രി പാസ്സായി. പിന്നെ പിജിക്ക് ചങ്ങനാശ്ശേരിയിൽ ചേർന്നു. തുടർന്ന് ബി. എഡിന്.

ബാംഗ്ലൂർ ക്രൈസ്റ്റിൽ ചേർന്നു. വീണ്ടും സെമിനാരിയിൽ വന്ന് ബാക്കി പഠനം പൂർത്തിയാക്കി. മുത്തയാളുടെ പഠനം കഴിഞ്ഞ് 2015 മെയ് 3ന് “തിരുപ്പട്ടം” സ്വീകരിച്ചു.

രണ്ടാമത്തെ ആൾ ഫെസ്റ്റിന്റെ പട്ടം 2017 ജനുവരി 3-ാം തീയതി തീരുമാനിച്ചു കാർഡും അടിച്ചു എല്ലാവരെയും വിളിച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞപ്പോൾ, ഇടുകി പിതാവിന് ഒരു രോഗാവസ്ഥയിലൂടെ, കടന്നു പോകേണ്ടി വന്നു. അവനവന്റെ ഇടവകയിൽ



നടക്കേണ്ട പട്ടം, എല്ലാവരുടെയും ഒരുമിച്ച് വാഴത്തോപ്പ് കത്തീഡ്രലിൽ നടത്താൻ തീരുമാനിച്ചു. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മൂന്നു പിതാക്കന്മാരുടെ സാന്നിധ്യത്തിൽ 2016 ഡിസംബർ 26-ാം തീയതി നിശ്ചയിച്ചു. പതിനഞ്ചാം തീയതി ഇവരിൽ മൂന്ന് പേർ ഒരുമിച്ച് പാട്ടും കുർബ്ബാനയും പഠിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നപ്പോൾ എന്റെ ഇളയമകൻ ഫെസ്റ്റിന്റെ കൈക്കും കാലിനും ഒരു തളർച്ച പോലെ. മൂന്നു പ്രാവശ്യം ഛർദ്ദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. അടുത്തുള്ള ആശുപത്രിയിൽ പ്രവേശിപ്പിച്ചു. ഒരു ന്യൂറോയെ കാണിക്കാൻ ഡോക്ടർ പറഞ്ഞു. അങ്ങനെ രാജഗിരിയിൽ കൊണ്ടുപോയി. അപ്പോഴേക്കും ആൾ ക്ഷീണിതനായി. അവിടെ ചെന്നപ്പോൾ ഡോക്ടർ പറഞ്ഞു സേ്ട്രാക്ക് ആണെന്ന്. പിന്നെ മരുന്നുകളും തെറാപ്പിയും. അഡ്മിറ്റായി. ഡിസംബർ 26ന് ബാക്കിയുള്ളവരുടെ പട്ടം നടന്നു. എന്റെ മോന്റെ മാത്രം കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. ഞങ്ങൾ ഭയങ്കര വിഷമാവസ്ഥയിൽ കൂടിയാണ് ആ സമയങ്ങളിൽ കടന്നുപോയത്. എല്ലായിടത്തും പ്രാർത്ഥനാനിയോഗങ്ങൾ അറിയിച്ചു. ലോകം മുഴുവനും പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചു. എല്ലാ പള്ളികളിലും

അറിയിച്ചു. അങ്ങനെ ജനുവരി ഒന്നാം തീയതി ഹോസ്പിറ്റലിൽ നിന്ന് ഡിസ്ചാർജ്ജ് ആയി. ഇടുക്കി പിതാവ് അപ്പോഴും ഹോസ്പിറ്റലിലാണ്. ഞങ്ങൾ നാല് പേരും കൂടി പിതാവിന്റെ അടുക്കലേക്ക് ആണ് ആദ്യം പോയത്. അവിടെ ചെന്ന് മൂന്നാം തീയതി പട്ടം വയ്ക്കാമോ എന്ന് അനുവാദം ചോദിച്ചു. അനുവാദം തന്നില്ല. കാരണം മകൻ ക്ഷീണിതനും, തളർന്നതു പോലെയും ആയിരുന്നു. ഹോസ്പിറ്റലിൽ നിന്ന് വന്നതല്ലെ ഉള്ളൂ, കുറച്ചു കഴിയട്ടെ എന്ന് പറഞ്ഞു. ഞങ്ങൾ വിഷമിച്ച് തിരിച്ചു പോന്നു. പിറ്റേന്നു പിതാവിന്റെ ഫോൺ കോൾ! മൂന്നാം തീയതി പട്ടത്തിന് ഒരുങ്ങിക്കോ. ഞാൻ എങ്ങനെയെങ്കിലും വരാമെന്ന്. അപ്പോൾ ഞങ്ങൾക്കുണ്ടായ സന്തോഷം പറഞ്ഞറിയിക്കാൻ വയ്യ. ഫെസ്റ്ററിനാണെങ്കിൽ ഇരട്ടി ആരോഗ്യം കിട്ടിയതുപോലെ. അങ്ങനെ എല്ലാ ക്രമീകരണങ്ങളും പെട്ടെന്ന് ചെയ്ത്, 2017 ജനുവരി മൂന്നാം തീയതി തന്നെ ആനിക്കുഴിക്കാട്ടിൽ പിതാവിന്റെ കൈവെപ്പ് വഴി പട്ടം സ്വീകരിച്ചു.

എന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ ഒത്തിരി സഹനങ്ങളിൽ കൂടിയാണ് മുന്നോട്ടു നീങ്ങിയത്. ഒരു പ്രാവശ്യം വീടിന് തീ പിടിച്ചു. ഗ്യാസ് ലീക്ക് ആയതാണ് കാരണം. അതിൽ നിന്നും ദൈവം രക്ഷിച്ചു. അങ്ങനെ മുന്നോട്ടു പോകുമ്പോൾ 2020 എന്റെ ഭർത്താവിന് കാൻസർ എന്ന മരകരോഗം പിടിപെട്ടു. രാജഗിരി ഹോസ്പിറ്റലിൽ വച്ച് കണ്ടു പിടിച്ചു. പിന്നെ RCC യിൽ പ്രവേശിപ്പിച്ചു. OCD ഫാദേഴ്സിന്റെ ഹൗസിൽ താമസിച്ച് ട്രീറ്റ്മെന്റ് നടത്തി. മുത്തയാൾ ഫെബിൻ അച്ചനെയും കൂടെ ശുശ്രൂഷിക്കാൻ ബിഷപ്പ് പറഞ്ഞു വിട്ടു. പക്ഷേ ദൈവഹിതം മറ്റൊന്നായിരുന്നു. ദൈവസന്നിധിയിലേക്ക് ഫെബിൻ, ഫെസ്റ്റിൻ അച്ചൻമാരുടെയും പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട പപ്പ പറന്നുയർന്നു. അങ്ങനെ എന്നെ തനിച്ചാക്കി എന്റെ പ്രിയപ്പെട്ടവൻ യാത്രയായി. മക്കൾ വൈദികരായതുകൊണ്ട് എന്റെ അടുക്കൽ നിൽക്കാൻ പറ്റില്ലല്ലോ. എന്റെ കൂടെ പരിശുദ്ധ അമ്മയും, ഇഘശോയും ഉണ്ട്. ആ വിശ്വാസത്തോടും പ്രാർത്ഥനയോടും കൂടി സന്തോഷത്തോടെ ജീവിക്കുന്നു. എന്റെ തമ്പുരാൻ എന്നെ നയിക്കുന്നു. കാവലായി! കോട്ടയായി! ആ വിശ്വാസവും പ്രത്യാശയും എപ്പോഴും എനിക്കുണ്ട്. ഞാൻ വേദപാഠം പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്ന അദ്ധ്യാപിക കൂടിയാണ്. 20 വർഷമായി പഠിപ്പിക്കാൻ തുടങ്ങിയിട്ട്. കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങളുമായി സന്തോഷം പങ്കിടുന്നു. അങ്ങനെ എന്റെ ദൈവം എന്റെ എല്ലാ കാര്യങ്ങൾക്കും സഹായിക്കുകയും അനുഗ്രഹിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

### Sisters of Charity of St. Anne

Founder: Ven. Fr John Bonal  
Year of foundation: 1804  
Charism: Universal Charity  
Motto: Service With the greatest Care with Full Detail and with Whole Love  
Main Apostalate of Congregation: Health , Education, Social and Pastoral Apostolate  
Saints if any: Bl. Blessed Maria Rafols

### CMI (Carmelites of Mary Immaculate)

Founder: St . Kuriakos Ellias Chavara, Fr. Thomas Palakkal, Fr. Thomas Porukkara.  
Year of foundation: 1831  
Charism: To share with others the fruits of contemplation  
Motto: I have been burning with zeal for the Lord,God of hosts.(1King 19:14)  
Main Apostalate of Congregation: Pastoral, social and Education  
Saints if any: St Kuriakos Ellias Chavara

### Sisters of the Poor of St. Catherine of Siena

Founder: Blessed Savina Petrilli  
Year of foundation: 1873  
Charism: To Imitate the Christ the Priest and Victim  
Motto: Everything is Little for Jesus.  
Main Apostalate of Congregation: All the activities for the upliftment of the poor: Mentally challenged, Blind&Handicapped, residential Education for the less privileged girls, Parish activities





## God-given Gift, to others

Fr. Ajith Chittilappilly



Fr. Ajith who hails from the Thiroor parish of Trichur diocese, is a priest with a difference, setting a remarkable model and delivering a novel message to the challenges of the world at large. Keenly enveloped by a passion for fine arts of various forms classical dance, storytelling, Fr. Ajith was a promising artist during his school days. He won many laurels and accolades in state level and diocese level stage competitions and was awarded the title "Kalathilakam and Samskrita thilakam".

Following his school life, he pursued nursing studies with an ardent desire to serve the invalids that he regarded as a noble cause of life simultaneously satisfying his dance skills and talents.

However, the end of nursing studies witnessed a twist for the better in his life. He took the courage to answer a divine call into the priesthood and joined a minor seminary of the Trichur diocese.

Fr. Ajith Chittilappilly decided to use the God given talents and skills for the purpose of evangelisation hitherto unknown to the common man. He chose to present his Master and Lord Jesus to the people of God in various dance forms that made serious inroads into the secrets of salvation and Christian values. Powerfully presented and conveyed were the absolute truths of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection more readily understood and appreciated by the people of God. Fr. Ajith, thus, was a trend setter in the field of Christian evangelization and is a promise for the future church.

Ever since his ordination in the year 2020 Fr. Ajith has been tirelessly at his work of designing and delivering short art forms of biblical themes. He intends to propagate the unique nature of God's love to the people aspiring for good Christian living. He adds the flavour of love and concern for fellow beings, conveying that salvation is not for oneself alone but for one's neighbors too.

Let us wish him all success in his future initiatives.

## A unique call and response:

Dr. Libby Osgood

The call is always mysterious! People respond to it in a unique way. Each call is important and precious because the call is from God. Here Dr. Libby, who was excelling in NASA, doing a job of an aerospace engineer, responded to God "The great architect" of her life at the age of 32. Even though she was at the pinnacle of her career and consequent fame and honour, she recognized the deep sense of longing for God and embraced the style of life that demanded her to be poor, chaste and obedient.

As she says "Knowledge of science comes from God and He is the creator of everything." It came true in her life too. Her knowledge of science paved a way to choose Him as her spouse. Despite her being in the world and knowing all the mesmerizing facts of it she should fathom the love of God. She started talking with Sisters from the Congregation of Notre Dame and understood that they followed a different kind of education which facilitated both teaching and to be a nun. And she combines both of her passions into something wonderful.

When she started coming up with her willingness and decision to become a nun, initially she felt quite nervous but her co-workers and friends encouraged and supported her.



She took a firm step in the year 2019, by joining in the Notre Dame Congregation to fulfill His plan for her. Thus she became part of a group of dedicated people composed of scientists, engineers, teachers, social workers, doctors etc. who hold their basic identity as religious, in serving God hand-in-hand to become the sparks of God. According to Libby Osgood, the sister- trainee cum scientist, the existence of the Universe for 13.7 billion years pictures the beauty of the love of God towards humankind! In short, the life story of Libby Osgood proves – FOR THE LORD GIVES WISDOM, FROM HIS MOUTH COMES KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING (PROVERBS-2:6)

## Order of Friars Minor Capuchins

Founder: St. Francis of Assisi

Year of foundation: 1528

Charism: To observe the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience, without anything of one's own, and in chastity.

Motto: To imitate the poor, humble, and crucified Christ, following the footprints of St. Francis of Assisi

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Preaching, Pastoral, Charitable and Social ministries

Saints if any: 115 Capuchin Friars and Nuns from 16th to 21st century who have been honored by the Church. Capuchin Saints 16

## F. C. C. (Franciscan Clarist Congregation)

Founder: Bishop Charles Lavigne & Eight Mothers

Year of foundation: 14th December, 1888

Charism: To follow the Poor humble and crucified Jesus joyfully bearing witness to the Gospel.

Motto: Holiness to Lowliness.

Main Apostolate of Congregation: Prayer & Evangelization, Care of the poor, Education, Social Service, healing Ministry & Special Ministries.

Saints if any: 1. St. Alphonsa

2. Blessed Martyr Sr. Rani Maria

3. Servant of God - Sr. Mary Colette

## SNDS (Society of Nirmala Dasi Sisters)

Founder: "Mar Joseph Kundukulam Co-founder: Msgr. Joseph Vilangadan"

Year of foundation: 1971

Charism: To serve Christ in the most abandoned, neglected section of the society, poor, the sick, and the destitute without any discrimination.

Motto: Yes Lord Here I am

Main Apostolate of Congregation: "Service for unwed mothers, Destitute babies, Leprosy and HIV patients, Home of aged people, De-addiction centres, Mentally and Physically challenged persons, Service among Slum, we are actively involved in parish activities. Saint: Mother Mary Immaculate"

## Sisters of Our Lady of the Refuge in Mount Calvary

Founder: St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli.

Year of foundation: 1631

Charism: With love, dedication and service at the various Calvaries of suffering and pleading men

Motto: Love and Service

Main Apostolate of Congregation: "Service at Hospitals, Education of Mentally Challenged and disabled, Education of youth specially homeless & children, Care of Old people, Missionary work, Catechism at Parish, also according to the need of the church."

Saints if any: "Foundress St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli and Bl. Sr. Maria Repetto."

## CSC (Congregation of the Sisters of Charity)

Founder: Venerable Fr. Augustin John Ukken

Year of foundation: 1944 Nov 21

Charism: Identity with the crucified Christ and share His compassionate love with the poor and the needy

for their integral liberation

Motto: Love, Service, and Sacrifice

Main Apostolate of Congregation: "Health care Value education Evangelization Uplifting differently abled Family welfare projects Vocational training centers Caring for the old and destitute Marginalized Prison ministry."

# അനുഗ്രഹത്തിന്റെ നാളുകൾ...



Sr. Zeena S D  
S D Convent, Navi Mumbai.

ആദ്യ ശ്വാസം .... ആനന്ദമായി .....  
അനന്തതയിലേക്ക് ..... സായുജ്യമാകാൻ ....

“അവിടുത്തെ നോക്കിയവർ  
പ്രകാശിതരായി,  
അവർ ലജ്ജിതരാവുകയില്ല.” Ps. 34 : 5

സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ നിറവിൽ  
ആയിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ എന്റെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ നിന്ന്  
ഉയരുന്നത് നന്ദി മാത്രം. സങ്കീർത്തകപോട്  
ചേർന്നു ഞാനും പറയുന്നു. “ഞാൻ കർത്താവിനെ  
പാടിപ്പുകഴ്ത്തും, അവിടുന്ന് എന്നോട് അതിരൂ  
കരൂണ കാണിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു” Ps. 13 : 6.

അമ്മയുടെ ഉദരത്തിൽ ഉരുവാകുന്നതിനുമുമ്പ്  
എന്നെ അറിഞ്ഞ് സ്നേഹിച്ച നല്ല ദൈവം,  
സന്യാസ ദൈവവിളി നൽകി എന്നെ സ്വന്തമാക്കി.  
കഴിഞ്ഞ 50 വർഷം അത്ഭുതകരമായി കരൂണ  
ചൊരിഞ്ഞ്, വൈവിധ്യമാർന്ന ജീവിതാനുഭവങ്ങൾ  
നൽകി, സുവർണ്ണജൂബിലി ആഘോഷിക്കുവാൻ  
അവിടുന്ന് എന്നെ അനുഗ്രഹിച്ചു.

തന്നോടുകൂടി ആയിരിക്കുവാൻ എന്നെ വിളിച്ച  
എന്റെ ആത്മനാഥൻ കൂടെ നടന്ന് ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ  
ഉയർച്ച - താഴ്ചകളിൽ പതറാതെ, തളരാതെ  
മുന്നേറുവാൻ എന്നും എന്നോടൊപ്പം  
ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. നല്ല തമ്പുരാൻ നൽകിയ  
സ്നേഹസാന്നിധ്യം അനുഭവിക്കുവാൻ,  
അവിടുത്തോട് സഹകരിക്കുവാൻ, അവിടുന്ന്  
നൽകിയ കൃപകൾ ആണ് എന്റെ മനസ്സിൽ  
തെളിയുന്നത്. ഇക്കാലമത്രയും ദൈവീക നിറവായി  
എനിക്ക് ലഭിച്ച ആരോഗ്യം, അറിവ്, ബുദ്ധിശക്തി -  
ഈ കഴിവുകളൊക്കെ ദൈവമക്കൾക്കായി വ്യയം  
ചെയ്ത്, അവിടുത്തേക്ക് മഹത്വമേകാനും, എന്റെ  
എളിയ ജീവിതത്തിലൂടെ അനേകരെ  
ഈശോയിലേക്ക് അടുപ്പിക്കുവാനും, എനിക്ക്  
കൃപ ലഭിച്ചു. നീ എനിക്ക് വിലപ്പെട്ട അലവും  
ബഹുമാന്യയും പ്രിയങ്കരയുമാണ് എന്ന്  
പുകഴ്ത്തി, കഴിഞ്ഞ 50 വർഷം എന്നെ ചേർത്ത്  
പിടിച്ച ത്രിയേക ദൈവത്തിന് എന്നേക്കും  
സ്തുതിയും സ്തോത്രവും ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കട്ടെ.  
ദൈവത്തിന്റെ വിളി സ്വീകരിച്ച്, സമർപ്പിത  
ജീവിതത്തിലേക്ക് കടന്നു വന്ന എനിക്ക്



ഒത്തിരിയേറെ അഗതിമക്കൾക്ക് അമ്മയും  
സഹോദരിയും സ്നേഹിതയും ആയിത്തീരുവാൻ  
കഴിഞ്ഞതിൽ ആനന്ദവും ആത്മീയ  
മാതൃത്വത്തിന്റെ നിറവും ഉണ്ട്. സന്യാസ  
ദൈവവിളി എന്ന മഹനീയ ദാനം നൽകി, എന്നെ  
തെരഞ്ഞെടുത്ത് സ്വന്തമാക്കി, ഈ നാൾ വരെ  
പൊതിഞ്ഞു സംരക്ഷിച്ച്, വിളിക്കുള്ളിലെ വിളി  
നൽകി. ഒരു മിഷണറിയായി ഉത്തരേന്ത്യയിലെ  
വിവിധ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ തുടർന്ന് ഇന്ന് ഇവിടെ  
ദൈവകരൂണ പകരുവാൻ എന്നെ കൈ പിടിച്ചു  
നടത്തുന്ന നല്ല തമ്പുരാൻ ഹൃദയം നിറഞ്ഞ നന്ദി!  
ദൈവസ്നേഹത്തിലും സഹോദര സ്നേഹത്തിലും  
വളരുവാൻ എന്നിൽ വിത്തുപാകിയ എന്റെ  
പ്രിയപ്പെട്ട മാതാപിതാക്കളെയും  
സഹോദരങ്ങളെയും ഏറെ സ്നേഹത്തോടെ  
അഭിമാനത്തോടെ ഞാനോർക്കുന്നു. സമയത്തിന്റെ  
പൂർണ്ണതയിൽ എന്നെ അഗതി മക്കൾക്ക്  
അമ്മയാകുവാൻ നല്ല ദൈവം ഉപകരണമാക്കിയ  
എന്റെ സന്യാസസമൂഹം “കോൺഗ്രിഗേഷൻ ഓഫ്  
ദി സിസ്റ്റേഴ്സ് ഓഫ് ദി ഡസ്റ്റിറ്റൂട്ട്സ്” എനിക്ക്  
എന്നും വളവും ജലവും നൽകി കരുതലോടെ  
എന്നെ വളർത്തി ഞാനാക്കി തീർത്ത -  
സന്യാസസമൂഹം എന്നും എനിക്ക് ശക്തി  
സ്രോതസ്സാണ്.

“ചെറിയ അജഗണമേ ഭയപ്പെടേണ്ട എന്നെന്നാൽ  
നിങ്ങൾക്ക് രാജ്യം നൽകാൻ പിതാവ്  
പ്രസാദിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.” Lk. 12 : 32





# വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിച്ച കൈകൾ



**മാർ തോമസ് ഇലമ്പാൽ**  
കല്യാൺ രൂപതയുടെ മുദ്രാൻ

## ദൈവസ്നേഹം സ്വീകരിക്കാം

‘തന്റെ ഏകജാതനെ നൽകുവാൻ തക്കവിധം ദൈവം നമ്മെ അത്രമാത്രം സ്നേഹിച്ചു’ (യോഹ. 3:16). ഏകജാതനായ ഈശോയാകട്ടെ നമുക്കുവേണ്ടി മരിക്കാനും (1 യോഹ. 3:16) തന്നെത്തന്നെ നമുക്കായി വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിലൂടെ നൽകാനുംമാത്രം നമ്മെ സ്നേഹിച്ചു. ഈ സ്നേഹത്തെ അവസാനം വരെയുള്ള സ്നേഹമെന്നാണ് വിശേഷിപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത് (യോഹ. 13 : 1). നിത്യജീവന്റെ അച്ചാരമായി അവിടുന്ന് തന്നെത്തന്നെ വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിലൂടെ നമ്മുടെ കരങ്ങളിലേക്കു നൽകുന്നത് ദൈവസ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ ഏറ്റവുംവലിയ പ്രകാശനവും നിദർശനവുമാണ്. വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിലൂടെ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ഈ സ്നേഹം നമുക്ക് എന്നും സ്വീകരിക്കാം.

വി. കുർബ്ബാന കരങ്ങളിൽ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്ന പതിവ് നമ്മുടെ സഭാപാരമ്പര്യത്തിലുള്ളതാണ്. പ്രധാന തിരുനാളുകളിൽ സമൂഹം ചൊല്ലുന്ന കൃത്യത്തോടനുസരിച്ചായിട്ട് ‘വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിച്ച ഞങ്ങളുടെ കൈകളെ’ എന്ന് ചൊല്ലുന്നുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ഏറ്റവും ഭക്തി ദ്രോതകമായ വിധത്തിലായിരുന്ന കരങ്ങൾ നീട്ടിയിരുന്നത്. ഇടതുകയ്യുടെ മുകളിൽ വലതുകരം കുരിശാകൃതിയിൽ വച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഇരു കൈകളും നീട്ടുന്നതിലൂടെ വി. കുർബ്ബാനയോടുള്ള വലിയ ആദരവ് പ്രകടമാക്കപ്പെടുന്നു. കുരിശാകൃതിയിൽ പിടിക്കുന്നത് വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരണത്തിലൂടെ നമ്മൾ കർത്താവിന്റെ കുരിശിലെ ബലിയിലും മരണത്തിലും പങ്കാളികളായിത്തീരുന്നു എന്ന് ദ്രോതിപ്പിക്കാനാണ്.

## പെസഹാരഹസ്യം ജീവിക്കാൻ

വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരണത്തിലൂടെ കർത്താവ് നമ്മെ അവിടുത്തെ പീഡാനുഭവത്തിലും മരണത്തിലുമുത്ഥാനത്തിലും പങ്കാളികളാക്കുന്നു. അതിന്റെ ഫലമായി കർത്താവിന്റെ പെസഹാരഹസ്യം ജീവിക്കാനുള്ള ശക്തിയാണ് വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിലൂടെ നമ്മൾ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നത്. “ഞാൻ കുടിക്കുവാൻ പോകുന്ന പാനപാത്രം

കുടിക്കാൻ നിങ്ങൾക്കു കഴിയുമോ”? (മത്താ. 20 : 22) എന്ന കർത്താവിന്റെ ചോദ്യവും അവിടുത്തെ മരണത്തിലുള്ള പങ്കാളിത്തത്തെയാണല്ലോ ദ്രോതിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. അതുകൊണ്ട് രണ്ടു കൈകൾ കുരിശാകൃതിയിൽ നീട്ടുന്നത് വളരെ അർത്ഥവത്താണ്. ഒരു കൈ മാത്രം നീട്ടുന്നത് ഭക്തിദ്രോതകമായും അർത്ഥവത്തായും തീരുന്നില്ല. രണ്ടു വിരലുകൾ മാത്രം നീട്ടി ഒരിക്കലും വി. കുർബ്ബാന വാങ്ങി സ്വീകരിക്കരുത്. കാരണം അത് അനാദരവായിട്ടേ തോന്നുകയുള്ളൂ. ഇരുസാദൃശ്യങ്ങളിലുമായി, വി. കുർബ്ബാന തിരുരക്തത്തിൽ മുക്കി നീൽകുമ്പോൾ നാവിൽ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നതാണ് ഏറ്റവും ഉചിതം. അഥവാ, തിരുരക്തം കൈകളിൽപ്പറ്റുകയും അനാദരവിനു കാരണമാവുകയും ചെയ്യും. ഭക്ത്യാദരങ്ങളോടെ വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരിക്കാൻ പരിശ്രമിക്കണം.

## വി. കുർബ്ബാനയ്ക്ക് കൊടുക്കുക

നമ്മുടെ പാരമ്പര്യത്തിൽ വി. കുർബ്ബാന സ്വീകരണത്തിന് ‘കുർബ്ബാനക്കു കൊടുക്കുക’ എന്ന വാക്ക് ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നു. ഇത് വളരെ അർത്ഥവത്താണ്. വി. കുർബ്ബാനയിൽ ഈശോ തന്നെത്തന്നെ നമുക്ക് തരുന്നതോടൊപ്പം നമ്മെ ദൈവത്തിനു കൊടുക്കുക കുടിയാണ് ചെയ്യുന്നത്. അങ്ങിനെ ഈശോയെ നമ്മുടെ ഹൃദയത്തിൽ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നതോടൊപ്പം നമ്മൾ അവിടുത്തെ ഹൃദയത്തിലേക്കും സ്നേഹത്തിലേക്കും സ്വീകരിക്കപ്പെടുകയാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ടാണ്, ‘എന്റെ ശരീരം ഭക്ഷിക്കുന്നവൻ എന്നിൽ വസിക്കുന്നു’ എന്ന് ഈശോ പറഞ്ഞത് (യോഹ. 6 : 56). ഈശോ നമ്മിൽ വസിക്കുകയും ഈശോയിൽ നമ്മൾ ആയിരിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുക ഒരേ സമയം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമാവുകയാണ്. ഇങ്ങനെ മനുഷ്യനുവേണ്ടിയുള്ള ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സ്നേഹസമർപ്പണത്തിന് പ്രത്യുത്തരമായി മനുഷ്യന്റെ ഭാഗത്തുനിന്നും ദൈവത്തിനായുള്ള സമർപ്പണവും ഉണ്ടാകണം. ഇതിനെയാണ് ‘കുർബ്ബാനക്കു കൊടുക്കുക’ എന്നതുകൊണ്ടർത്ഥമാക്കുന്നത് എന്നു പറയാം.

# Hands that received the Holy Qurbana

| Mar Thomas Elavanal  
Bishop, Diocese of Kalyan

Let us Receive God's Love

"God loved the world so much that He gave His only son" (Jn. 3:16). Jesus the only begotten Son of the Father loved us so much 'that He gave up His life for us' (1 Jn. 3:16) and continues to give Himself for us through the Eucharist. This love is qualified as His love 'to the very end' (Jn. 13:1). Jesus giving Himself to us in the sacrament of Eucharist is the greatest expression and realization of love. Everyday let us receive God's love in this sacrament of Eucharist.

According our Church tradition there was the practice of receiving Holy Communion in the hands. In the thanksgiving prayer of the community on the feast of Our Lord we have this prayer 'Lord, Our God, strengthen our hands, which have received the Holy Qurbana'. One's hands were stretched out in proper devotional way to receive Holy Communion. Usually one had to place the right hand over the left hand in the form of the cross. Receiving Holy Communion in both hands was a sign of respect. Hands were placed in the form of the cross to signify that through Holy Communion one participates in the sacrificial death of Christ.

Live the Paschal Mystery

Through the Holy Communion the Lord makes us participants in the death and resurrection of Christ and thus empowers us to live of the paschal mystery of Christ. The question of Jesus 'Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink' (Mt. 20:22) signify that drinking from the cup of Jesus means participation in the paschal mystery of

Christ. Hence extending both hands in the form of the cross is very significant. Extending only one hand to receive Holy Communion is not meaningful and devotional. One should never receive Holy Communion only with two fingers because it is not at all devotional. When Holy Communion is distributed in double species it is proper that one receive only on the tongue. Otherwise sacred blood can be on one's hand and can lead to irreverence towards the body of Christ. Let us try to receive Holy Communion with proper devotion.

Let us give ourselves to the Eucharist

According our tradition and in our mother tongue the action of receiving the Holy Eucharist was expressed as giving ourselves to the Holy Eucharist. This expression also is very meaningful. In the Eucharist Jesus not only gives Himself to us but we are giving ourselves to the Lord in response to God's love. In the Eucharist we not only receive Jesus in our heart but we are also received into the loving heart of Jesus. Hence Jesus reminded us "He who eats my flesh and drink my blood lives in me" (Jn. 6:56). Jesus living in us and we living in Jesus is realized simultaneously as the effect of one action. As a response to God's self giving there should be a self surrender to God from the part of everyone. So every time we receive Holy Communion we allow ourselves to be totally possessed by our Lord Jesus because we are also giving ourselves to Him.



## Quiz

1. Name the Franciscan sister from Kerala who became the first women saint of India.
2. Name of the congregation which St. Mariam Thresia belongs to.
3. Name the Franciscan sister from Indore who was stabbed to death.
4. What is the full form of MST?
5. What is the full form of SABS?
6. Name the Congregation which runs Tabore Retreat Centre in Kalyan Diocese.
7. Name the saint whose incorruptible body is kept in Goa.
8. Which congregation does Bishop Mar Thomas Eleanal belong to?
9. Name the saint who is called the Apostle of Mercy.
10. Name the Pope who belongs to the Jesuits (Society of Jesus).

## Fill in the blanks

1. Obedience, Chastity, and \_\_\_\_\_
2. St. \_\_\_\_\_ became the most famous nun, won the Nobel Prize in 1979 for her humanitarian work.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was an actress, but she left Hollywood to become a nun.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is a solemn promise made freely as an individual gives his or her life to God.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ and Rosary are the two religious objects seen in the hand of St. Euphrasia's depiction.

Mail your answers along with your name, catechism section and parish to [lanternkidsroom@gmail.com](mailto:lanternkidsroom@gmail.com) before 20th October, 2022. Names of selected winners will be published in the next issue of Kalyan Lantern.

Compiled by:  
Sr. Shimi MSMI, Panvel

## Match the following

St. Mother Teresa	CMI
St. Alphonsa	CMC
St. Chavara	Bharananganam
St. Euphrasia	Holy Family
St. Mariam Thresia	Kolkata

## WINNERS OF THE LAST ISSUE'S PICTORIAL QUIZ

- Alina David, Kalewadi
- Alwin Sabu, Kamothe
- Andrew Anand, Tikujiniwadi
- Angelina Sujesh, Kalyan East
- Davina & Devona Sabu, Kalyan East
- Ediline Davis, Bhayandar
- Emmanuel Anthony, Kalyan West
- Joanna Varghese, Vartak Nagar
- Rosina Jossey, Kalyan East
- Ryana Lijin, Kalewadi



# KNOW YOUR FAITH

Fr Joseph Kollamkalam OSB  
St Joseph's Monastery, Makkiyadu

## 1) What is the difference between Diocesan Priests and Religious Priests?

Diocesan Priests are ordained to do their ministerial service in the respective diocese of the priest by taking care of the pastoral needs of the parish entrusted to him (mainly administering the sacraments and taking care of the parishioners). He has allegiance (make his oath of obedience) to the Bishop of his Diocese, and of course, to the Roman Catholic Pontiff. He has been chosen from His people for serving His people, completely dedicated to the Church (the Body of Christ) and try to become like Christ (the Head). Thus he becomes the leader of the people, like Christ, leading them to the Promised Land, Heaven, where Christ is seated at the Right Hand of the Father.

The Religious Priests belong to different religious congregations. They make their religious vows (mainly: poverty, chastity and obedience) in their respective congregations promising their allegiance to it through their legitimate authorities, by making oath according to their rules and constitutions. They are bound to the congregation all through their life, as they make their religious profession. The congregation is bound to take care and look after the religious priests until their death. As a priest, and also as part of the Church, each religious priest is ordained to serve the needs of the Church as and when it is required and designed by each congregation.

Whether one is a Diocesan Priest or a Religious Priest, priesthood is a precious gift given by God to the Holy Work of God with holiness, journeying towards Heaven, leading his flock, thus to make known to the world that he is another Christ. Priesthood is gifted to the Church to make it feel that Christ is alive and active always in the world. Priests all over the world do a marvelous and gracious work in the Church. Thanks be to God for the Gift of Priesthood.

## 2) What is the purpose of having different congregations in the Church?

Different congregations of the Church originated as and when there arose some spiritual needs in the Church other than its pastoral ones. Thus, as the Holy Spirit inspired some holy people, to do something special to meet those spiritual needs of the Church, they began to pray and think with the Holy Spirit and came out with different apostolate. Each congregation is to be approved canonically by the Church. Members of the congregations (which may have one or more religious houses in different parts of the Catholic Church) are to live together as a praying community, under a legitimate authority, rule, constitution, etc. Religious have to live a vowed life (living the life of evangelical counsels) prescribed by the Canon Law.

The different congregations are given permission to regularize their life style, dress codes and other external differences depending on their apostolate. However, all are obliged to follow the norms of the Church to enhance and make smooth the life of the Church by collaborating 'the parish activities and life' wherever they are established (as the Bishop of the diocese demands). The differences are only in apostolate and appearances; the basic call is common for all, 'to live a sanctified life and gain salvation, and help others to achieve the same'.

## 3) Why there is a difference in the dress code of various religious congregations in the Church?

Different dress codes are selected by different congregations, precisely because they will indicate the identity of each congregation. The congregations select their dress code (in their community gatherings, known as Chapter) according to the apostolate each one has. Though there is difference in dress code, basically they all have the same goal.

4) **Is there a provision to leave this particular way of life (vocation) at any time?**

Once a Religious makes his/her profession in the congregation, by following the strict and free-willed formation, there is no provision for turning back and leaving it (Lk 9:62). There are certain conditions to be fulfilled in order that a profession be valid: a) It should be done with full knowledge of the person; b) It should be done without any external force or fear; and c) it should be done with full freedom and conviction. That is why there should be proper formation and information given to the candidate (in the novitiate) about the seriousness and preciousness of this way of life. Though it is so demanding to achieve this goal, as God is the one who calls, He will also provide the means to achieve it with sufficient grace to endure.

5) **What is the significance of Cloistered life and Solitary life in the Church? How do they meet their daily living?**

The cloistered life is very much significant and appreciated by the Church, precisely because it is the powerhouse of the Church's spiritual life. It is from the cloisters that the enormous power of the Spirit flows to the Church and to the world. The life in cloister is arranged in such way that each Religious will get lot of time and energy (both personally and in common) to pray unceasingly for the Church (and the world). This is the vital and life-giving energy that the Church and its members receive from them. One of the main livelihoods for the cloistered Religious is the earning they get from their manual labour that they do other times than stipulated prayer time. More than this, as they totally depend on God (Providence of God); He will provide them enough and more through human agencies (mainly their food). As they follow a very poor life-style they live with the minimum necessary things.

6) **How can one proclaim Gospel in the midst of non-Christians and strictly prohibited areas?**

The first and the best means to proclaim the Gospel is to know, love and live the Gospel. It was easy for Jesus to preach the Gospel to all because He knew very well what He has to Preach – about the love of the Father (God), He loved the Gospel, even more than food (Jn 4:34) and He really lived the Gospel in all that He was and in all that He did. We should have this way of life as Jesus lived, and then it is easy to preach the Gospel to all (non-Christians too). We should also be prudent like

snake and innocent like dove even in preaching the Gospel, especially to non-Christians. We should make them understand that the Good News is the response to the bad news.

7) **Can any Religious earn money for himself/herself and for his/her family?**

By no means or reasons a Religious (priest/nun) who, has taken the vow of poverty canonically can earn money for himself/herself or share anything with his/her family, whatever he/she may get as remuneration for his/her ministry or whatsoever way. A Religious may earn anything (even material thing) as a member of the congregation not as a person or individual like any laity. As one makes religious profession, one totally belongs to the congregation (Church) along with whatever one has or gets. At the time of Profession (final commitment) a Religious has to surrender and hand-over all the material possessions (including landed property, bank balances and other secular possessions) either to the family or to the congregation. Thereafter no more personal dealings with such things (it includes even a gift the Religious may get from others).

8) **What is the significance of the Vow of Chastity in Religious life?**

It is not only the Vow of Chastity but also all the vows are very much significant and relevant all throughout the life of a Religious, precisely because they are the fundamental features of religious life. When we take into account the Vow of Chastity it is all the more essential for a Religious because it makes the life of a Religious more meaningful and fruitful. It is through the Vow of Chastity the dedication and the total surrender of a Religious become fulfilled. The Vow of Chastity helps a Religious to follow the Lord without an undivided heart (Lk 14:25). One will become free to dedicate oneself to God and His people when one is not attached or bound to anything or anybody (1Cor 7:32,33). The Vow of Chastity does not consist in not engaged in marriage or not having sexual-life alone but it is all the more demanding from a Religious to lead a very chaste life for the sake of the Kingdom of God (Mt 19:11,12). Though it is bit difficult, once one starts living, it becomes a thrill and finds fulfillment of life. Let us thank the Lord for the Gift of the Vow of Chastity in Religious life.

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**1<sup>st</sup> DEATH ANNIVERSARY**  
24-10-2022

*In Loving Memory of*

**SHERLY BAIJU VARGHESE**

A star that shines so bright  
Has left behind a ray of light  
Its been a year since you have gone  
But so many memories to look upon

**WE MISS YOU EVERY SINGLE DAY**

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die."  
John 11 : 25 - 26

**A tribute of love from your loving**  
Husband - Baiju Varghese  
Sons - Bidhul & Bimil Varghese  
Daughter-in-law - Liyanta Bidhul

Gifted by the LORD : 16-08-1968  
Taken by the LORD : 24-10-2021

*In loving memory of*

**Late Mr. M.R. Varghese**  
**20.11.2013**

*You had touched countless lives in  
your lifetime. Even after your life on  
this earth, you live through your  
good deeds.*

*We miss you Daddy!*

*Fondly remembered by*  
**Wife: Daisy Varghese**  
**Children and Grandchildren**





# 3rd Death Anniversary

11-10-2022

If we live, we live for the Lord;  
and if we die, we die for the Lord.  
So, whether we live or die,  
we belong to the Lord.  
Romans 14:8

*Fondly remembered by:*

**Wife:** Annie Joseph

**Sons:** Jaimon Joseph, Ajay Joseph

**Daughters-in-law:** Julie Jaimon, Linda Ajay

**Grand Children:** Joanna, Jerlyn, Alrina

*St. Alphonsa Church, Vasai (W)*

**KARAYAMPARAMBIL OUSEPH JOSEPH**

**Born: 01-10-1951 - Death: 11-10-2019**



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DIOCESE OF KALYAN



### UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

KCCRS Half Day Retreat (English)

06.30 pm to 09.30 pm

St. Sebastian's Church, Goregaon East.

Music Ministry: Elohim Gospel Band, Mumbai.

2022

Oct. 01  
Saturday

KCCRS Half Day Retreat (Malayalam)

06.00 pm to 09.00 pm

St. Joseph's Church, Airoli.

Music Ministry: Jesus Youth, Mumbai.

2022

Oct. 08  
Saturday

KCCRS Half Day Retreat (Malayalam)

06.00 pm to 09.00 pm

Nirmala Matha Qurbana Centre, Sion.

Music Ministry: Elohim Gospel Band, Mumbai.

2022

Oct. 05  
Wednesday

"ഗാർഗാലാ" (Night Vigil) malayalam

14 Fri. 09.00 pm to 15 Sat. 05.00 am

St. Joseph's Forane Church, Powai

Music Ministry: Jesus Youth, Mumbai.

2022

Oct. 14-15  
Fri. & Sat.

KCCRS Friday Retreat (Malayalam)

06.30 pm to 09.30 pm

St. Sebastian's Forane Church, Mahim East.

Music Ministry: Elohim Angelic Band, Mumbai.

2022

Oct. 07  
Friday

KCCRS Leaders' Training

Programme (Diocesan)

09.00 am to 04.00 pm

St. Joseph's Forane Church, Powai.

2022

Oct. 22  
Saturday

KCCRS Regional Leaders' Meet  
(Harbour Region)

04.30 pm to 05.30 pm

St. Joseph's Church, Airoli.

2022  
Oct. 08  
Saturday

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ARC Panvel - Led by

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2022  
Oct. 29  
Saturday





# Fr. Sunny Memorial Church Choir Competition Winners

1st



St. Alphonsa Parish,  
Mankhurd

2nd



St. Thomas Forane Parish,  
Borivali

3rd



Carmel Parish,  
Vadagaoshi

4th



St. Alphonsa Forane Parish,  
Kalewadi

5th



Infant Jesus Parish,  
Kharghar



# Fr. Sunny Memorial Church Choir Competition at a Glance





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<b>Particulers</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Priests from Diocese of Kalyan	7,48,408.00		
Joy Varghese	5,00,000.00		
Parishes from Diocese of Kalyan	1,00,000.00		
Sacred Heart Education Society - Kalyan	1,00,000.00		
Aprain Puthenparayil Joseph - Powai	1,00,000.00		
Thomas Mathew - South Mumbai	1,00,000.00		
Ancillae Institute Director / Asst. Director - Ulhasnagar	25,000.00		
Roby Joseph - Thakurli (E)	15,000.00		
Thomas Mathew - Mankhurd	15,000.00		
Bishop's House Staff	11,111.00		
Mathew Jose	6,250.00		
Sr. Leema & Sr. Superior & Community - Cherpunkal	5,000.00		
Zachariah Joseph	3,000.00		
Marykutty George	2,000.00		
Leelamma Antony M	2,000.00		
Educational, Medical and other Financial Helps		6,82,330.00	
Balance of Bishop's Charity Fund			10,50,439.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17,32,769.00</b>	<b>6,82,330.00</b>	



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