



CARMELITES OF MARY IMMACULATE

CMI PRIOR GENERAL'S HOUSE

Chavara Hills, P.B. No. 3105, Kakkanad P.O.
Kochi 682 030, Kerala, India



ST. KURIAKOSE ELIAS CHAVARA
1805-1871

Fr. Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General

REF: PG/162/2022

01 May 2022

Circular No. 08

Prior General's Circular

Dear Members of CMI Fraternity,

Prayerful Greetings from CMI Prior General's House, Chavara Hills!

We are at the threshold of entering into the 200th year of the foundation of our Congregation. The 38 General Synaxis has initiated the decennial preparation for this great event.

Called to be a spiritual movement, members of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate have been guided and animated from its very inception to the present times with a clear mandate for the "salvation of others" through our "own sanctification." For the founding fathers who desired and envisaged a communitarian life for "living encounter with the Lord" who could make themselves readily available dynamically for the renewal and empowerment of the people of that time. Therefore, our historical roots anchor us in the "intense God-experience in Christ of our founding fathers, Thomas Palackal, Thomas Porukara and Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara" along with Brother Jacob Kaniyanthara impel us to keep alive and growing the spiritual movement that they had initiated in our Church.

1. *Kairotic* Time for Renewal

As our congregation is preparing to celebrate the Bicentennial of our Congregation in 2031 (1831-2031), we consider it as a *kairotic* time, which God has arranged in his providential care, for the renewal of our life in our personal and communitarian life and various apostolates we undertake as a community. Our congregation being the first and largest indigenous congregation in an apostolic tradition, has responded every time proactively to the ecclesial call from different parts of the world. This has provided our Congregation with immense missionary openness and the scope to evolve ourselves as true catholic and global community of consecrated life.

The Decennial preparation is a time to see whether we are still motivated and inspired by the same Spirit of our founding fathers, especially their faith in the divine providence and the love for the Church as well as their openness and sagacity, making us still relevant and sought-after people in the society. Speaking to a group of religious gathered in Rome Pope Francis remarked in the following words regarding the relevance of religious life today. "Everything we do is at 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,"

Aiming at a personal as well as communitarian renewal in our life of consecration and mission, we are proposing an intense preparation for the coming years till 2031 so that like



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our founders we can “rekindle the gift within us” (cf. 2 Tim 1:6) and propose anew the resourceful initiatives, creativity and holiness of our saintly founding fathers, who appropriately responded to the signs of the times.

2. Decennial Preparation

Although we have launched the preparation for the Bicentennial (1831-2031) with the 38 General Synaxis, we could not accelerate the preparation due to the pandemic spread and the restrictions of it. But now we need to intensify our preparation and a committee constituted by the General Council consisting of Rev. Fr. Provincials and our Vicar General has suggested a theme and a plan for the coming years for the Decennial preparation.

2.1 Theme and Logo of the Decennial Preparation

Grace-filled Presence for a Transformed world has been identified as the theme for the decennial preparation. This theme is an implication of how CMI presence can be grace-filled presence in the new century which shall become the normative factor in our decennial plan of preparation. Religious life by itself is a call to be a grace-filled presence in the world after the model of Jesus Christ from whose “fullness we have all received grace upon grace” (Jn 1:16). Every consecrated person represents Jesus, who had “the Spirit of the Lord upon him” and who “was anointed to proclaim the Good News” (Lk 4:16). The act of sending of the Holy Spirit was the culmination of making the disciples “grace-filled” people who will be transforming the world.

The CMI religious fraternity has been a community of grace-filled people who were always guided and moved by the Spirit. With the motto “sancitification of self and salvation of all,” they made themselves available totally to the service and transformation of the world according to the signs of the times. Their grace-filled presence transformed the world and society. As we, the heirs of the great CMI legacy, prepare ourselves to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the foundation of our congregation, have to be rekindled with the spirit of communion with Christ and his Spirit. We are to become a grace-filled presence to transform the world in order to bring in the loving reign of God.

Fr Sebeesh Vettiyadan CMI has beautifully designed a logo for the decennial preparation which is to find in the booklet which explains the decennial plan for the bicentennial. It unveils the entire dynamics of the preparation.

2.2 Six Faces of the Congregation

Six faces of the congregation are basically six themes which should guide us all through these years of preparation to define our CMIness. These six faces are spiritual, pastoral, educational, social, digital and public faces which are normative factors in formulating our



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action plan for every year. In the coming years of preparation, these six faces must be reflected in all our undertakings so that we can redefine the face of our congregation by 2031.

2.3 Special focuses on each coming year

As the coming years are to be years of preparation for the bicentennial, we are assigning each year with a particular focus. These years are:

1. 2022-23: Year of Call and Commitment
2. 2023-24: Year of Communitarian Living
3. 2024-25: Year of Family, Youth and Children
4. 2025-26: Year of Education
5. 2026-27: Year of Media
6. 2027-28: Year of Justice, Peace & Compassionate Love
7. 2028-29: Year of Sustainable Living
8. 2029-30: Year of Mission
9. 2020-31: Year of Rededication

3. Declaration of the CMI Year of Call and Commitment: 2022-23

The year 2022-2023 shall be dedicated to the year of Call and Commitment. The official beginning of this year shall be on 11 May 2022. On this day, Fr Prior General and the General Council will celebrate the Holy Mass at Mannanam and will officially inaugurate the CMI year of Call and Commitment at the General level.

In each Province there shall be likewise a solemn inauguration which shall be conducted either in our provincial house or at a place that is convenient for the coming together of the members of the province. Candles and Flags are prepared at the Generalate for this purpose.

The entire year shall be dedicated to reflect over this theme in the general, provincial and local level. During our monthly recollections in this year various aspects of our call and commitment shall be made use for our personnel as well as communitarian reflection and action plans shall be formulated and executed in our communitarian and personal lives touching all the six faces of our congregation. A book with 12 different themes on Call and Commitment is under preparation, which will be published for the use of our reflections. The year of Call and Commitment will be concluded on 10th May 2023.

4. General Plenary Assembly 2022

The General Plenary Assembly 2022, which was concluded recently at Dharmaram College Bangalore was an occasion to think collectively on the mode of having this decennial preparation in our congregation. We were fortunate to have the Apostolic Nuncio- Arch



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Bishop Leopoldo Girelli celebrating the Holy Mass and addressing the assembly on the third day. The details of it will be sent to the communities in another circular highlighting the significant recommendations and suggestions of the assembly for the decennial preparation. I take this opportunity to thank all for the continued prayers which we could experience all through the sessions.

Let us commend ourselves and each of our members in the congregation and all our apostolates to the heavenly patronage of our Blessed Mother of Carmel. Let our founding fathers, especially St Kuriakose Elias Chavara along with the Servants of God Fr Canisius and Fr Bruno and other holy fathers in our Congregation intercede for us to renew and reform our congregation in view of making our CMI presence more relevant and enabling us to read the signs of the times.

Fraternally yours in our Lord,

Fr Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General



N B: Please see that this circular is read in all our communities in a convenient time during the first week of May 2022