

MISSION²⁴

MAGAZINE


JAN - APR

Encounter, Experience, Evangelize

**Go into all the
world and
proclaim
the good news
to the whole Creation.**

Mk 16: 15

Reaching out Peripheries



Don't go from door to door
seeking news about
others. For, if you were to
discharge your own duties
well, you would not have
time to peep unnecessarily
into the affairs of others.

St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara (1805-1871)
Founder of CMI-CMC Congregations

“Remembrance looks to the past in order
to discover the sap that nourished the hearts
of disciples for centuries, and thus comes
to recognize God’s presence in the life
of his people,”

Pope Francis to Peru’s religious men and women



CMission '24

Featuring CMI Missions

Jan-Apr

Vol - XVII

Issue - 1

Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry

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Mission of God is ever moving, transforming and converting the hearts of many. It is an opportune time to think about our mission dynamically and creatively for the kingdom of God and His works. CMission is a publication from the Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry engaging in transmitting the views and the visions of CMI missions across the globe.

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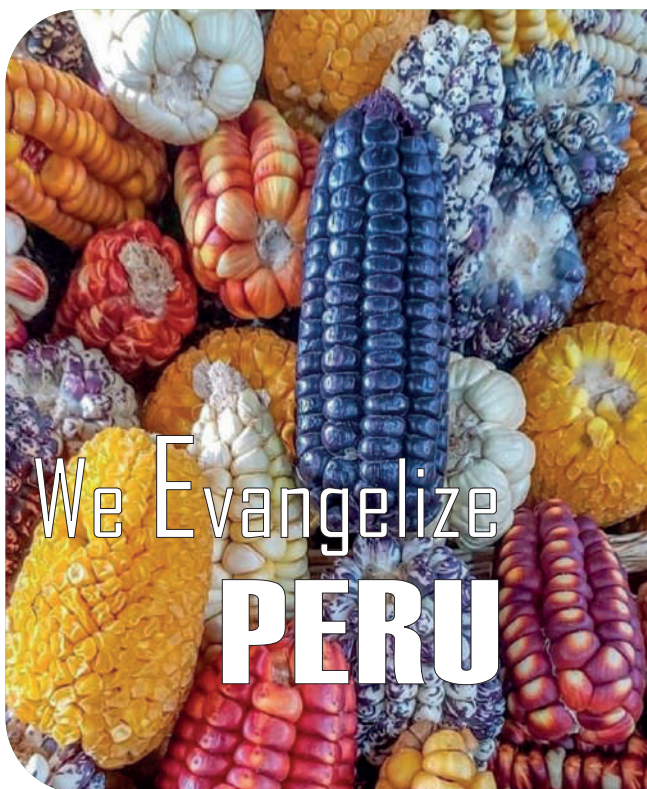
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E d i t o r i a l

Josey Thamarassery CMI

Vicar General, Chief Editor

The new Issue of CMISSION comes out with inspiring historical accounts and descriptions of 'going forth' doing good to the people across the globe. When we turn the pages of the CMISSION, whatever we find in those pages are in tune with what Pope Francis says: "Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the 'peripheries' in need of the light of the Gospel" (EG, 20). The incidents and events we come across in this magazine tell of the efforts to 'reach out' to the people in the periphery to tell them about the message of the love of God revealed in the Gospel. The Gospel Joy enlivens the life of all who encounter the love of God revealed through the various apostolates that the missionaries undertake in different corners of the world. The joy of the Gospel is a drive to go forth to share that joy with others. For the Church, it is also a communitarian undertaking, a common journey and therefore 'communion and mission are profoundly interconnected' (EG 20).

CMI congregation has at present the communitarian witnessing as its focus or thrust as she is preparing for the Bicentennial (1831-2031) of the congregation. Therefore, every missionary endeavour needs to be invariably an exercise of communitarian living. The articles that appear in **Encounter** explain the significance of communitarian witnessing. The articles in this section tell of the ways and means to make our community life more dynamic and vibrant reminding us of our call "to a community of love in the Church." Communitarian living calls us for a 'walking together which becomes the essence of religious life. The article on the Missionary Journey of the CMI Congregation by the renowned Church historian Fr Francis Thonippara attempts to make an overview of the missionary interventions of CMI Congregation from its very inception of existence. The timely interventions of the members of the Congregation from time to time in the history of the Church led to the growth of the Syro-Malabar

Church as well as the Universal Church. In this section of encounter, we have the newly appointed Bp John Panamthottam CMI, the second Bishop of the Syro-Malabar Diocese of Melbourne, shares his experience and vision of his mission newly entrusted to him.

Experience is an enriching section which unfold to us the fifty years of success stories of many CMI missionaries in Peru. As the mission is going through the golden years, the articles by the members working in this mission shares about the history of the origin, growth and activities of the mission contributing to the expansion of the churches there. The beginning years for the members of a congregation with limited overseas experience, it was like treading into new waters. But learning a new language and adjusting to the new culture and life style, they contribute to make the church in Peru more active and vibrant.

In the section **Evangelize** we have beautiful sharing of the experience from Arunachal mission and from a tribal region of Chhattisgarh which illustrates beautifully rich cultural diversities of tribal life displaying the tribal ethos and life pattern which has to contribute a lot to the modern world of consumerism and individualism. The section also introduces ACC (Association of Christian Christities) as mission collaborators whose intention is to be at the service of the fellow students contributing the building up of a society based on the gospel values.

I am sure that going through present issue of CMISSION will surely be an enriching experience of getting inspired by the life in the mission, various experiences of sharing the gospel values and so on which will surely inspire us to 'reach out' to the ends of the earth as the joy of the Gospel is for all people without excluding any one to hear the good news which is the same as that of the shepherds in Bethlehem: "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people (Lk 2:10).



M e s s a g e

Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General

Pope Francis, as celebrated the tenth year of his Pontificate started a new catechesis from January 2023 onwards focusing on apostolic zeal as an urgent and decisive theme for Christian life. Pope Francis insists that proclaiming the Gospel is not- and must not be – ‘proselytism’ as it is impossible to start walking on the path of Jesus because of pounding propaganda, or simply by our own hard work and effort. The mission of the Church is further explained by him in his mission Sunday message through the following words: “Today, in a world torn apart by divisions and conflicts, Christ’s Gospel remains the gentle yet firm voice that calls individuals to encounter one another, to recognize that they are brothers and sisters, and to rejoice in harmony amid diversity.”

When mission of the Church is very much misinterpreted and misunderstood and the Christians are persecuted in India today for this, what the Church strives to do in India is not proselytism, but sharing the message of human dignity, equality and joy that the Gospel ensure to this world. This has been the position of the Catholic church the Declaration on Religious Liberty (*Dignitatis Humanae*) affirms that people in good conscience should be allowed to seek God freely, without force (No 2). The message of the Gospel that the Church wishes to give to the people of every class, race and caste is that the love of God comes out to purify us, to remind us that we are a people. “Once we were a not a people; but now we are God’s people (I Peter 2:10).” This concept- people -is a thought category, a mythical concept that stands for the dignity and freedom connected to that people. The dignity of the people-even the poorest, most wretched, enslaved people- comes from God’s closeness. It is God’s love and closeness

that confer dignity, and always raise up a people, offering it a horizon of hope.

The Bible tells this story over and over. In calling Moses, God saves a people by manifesting his closeness, pledging Himself to them in an eternal covenant of love. Summoning Abraham God promises to walk with His people, to be near to them. Jesus comes to restore Israel to the remembrance of God’s closeness, to return to the people the dignity of the promise. Church is understood as a community of the people of God within a broader community, helping to shape a better future, strengthening and deepening the bond of belonging as a people to God and to each other. The mission of the church, thus, is to remind every society that there a common good of humanity which supersedes that of any particular people. A christian while faithful to his mission will love and serve his country with patriotic feeling, but cannot be merely a nationalistic. Prime Minister Modi acknowledged this when he met Christian representatives on Christmas day: “He (Jesus)lived the ideals of kindness and service. He worked on making an inclusive society that had justice for everyone. These ideals work as a guiding light for the development journey of our country.”

If so, there is no need of any fear or sense hostility to what the Church is doing to the society. It is aimed at restoring an ethics of fraternity and solidarity, regenerating the bonds of trust and belonging through various services she is rendering to the society irrespective of all cast, creed and religion. The Church’s role is and always will be in the service of the Lord and of the people of the earth where she is sent, not by imposing or dominating but as Christ does, in the washing of the feet.



Syro Malabar Church
is NOT a Malayalam Church

Mar Raphael Thattil
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Let's face God in context and text

Encounter

An illustration featuring a central white circle containing the text 'communitarian witnessing'. This circle is surrounded by several hands of different skin tones (light brown, tan, and dark brown) reaching in from the edges, as if holding or supporting the central circle. The background is white.

communitarian witnessing



**Santhosh Kotheril CMI
Jagdalpur**

From time immemorial it is understood that we are social beings. We have our existence in communities and societies. This is the essence of our life which is reflected in the African term 'Ubuntu' which means 'I am because we are'. One of the strong elements flowing through the Teachings of the Catholic Church as well as in the Constitution of CMI Congregation is the sense of communitarian relationships in the Christian communities and in a special way in the religious communities. The foundational and fundamental understanding of our discipleship is centered in our relationship to God. We are created in his image. Our God is a God of love, three persons in one divine nature. Our imaging of God, our modeling of God in our lives requires us to relate to others in mutual love and concern, respect and care. This communitarian understanding of life is one of the bases of the social requisites of the Christian life as well as religious life which makes it meaningful. "We are called to a Community of Love in the Church." is the first sentence in the CMI Constitution which emphasizes the importance of community life and communitarian witnessing in our religious, priestly, and missionary vocation in our attitude and behaviours towards others. Our community life should be positive, creative and vibrant in all the aspects – in our thoughts, in our words, and in our deeds. We should always have a proper place and genuine space for the other. In our life. This should be reflected in great love for the other as we have a deep love for

God. Because we cannot love God without loving our brethren first. I would suggest a few practical tips to enhance our community living which should become a communitarian witnessing at the maximum level. If we could practice some of these suggestions, we could build a better community and lead an enriching community life after the image of the Kingdom of God as reflected in the Gospels.

Know your community members dearly and closely

I wonder how many of us know our community members so dearly, nearly, clearly, intimately, and closely. There is a great need of knowing the family members of our community members, their whereabouts, living situations, background, etc. We should have the readiness to visit the houses of our members at times. It would lead to proper interaction with our community members which would make them feel wanted and cared. "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10 : 24 – 25)

Create an ambiance of positive vibes

It is said that 'After lunch, sleep a while; and after dinner, walk a mile.' I would like to add to this statement, "During and after breakfast, have a smile". We should set a tone for the day with positive energy and creative vibes. There should be a certain space and time for the community members to crack some jokes, and to have some fun and humor in our everyday life. There should be a common joyful time and a private worry time in our everyday timetable. In the common joyful time, we should share our joys because shared joys get doubled. In the private worry time, we should fix some time to take up our worries in 15 minutes

and any worry has to be brought to our minds deliberately only in the private worry time. It would make wonders. "Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind." (1 Peter 3 : 8)

Have a compassionate empathy

There could be members in our communities with some or other issues, difficulties, problems, pains, sufferings, hopelessness as well as meaninglessness. If we could sense it, recognize it, feel it, and also even without asking; if we could go and help them, and be with them; if we could ask them 'How are you?', 'Is everything ok with you?', and 'What could I do for you?'; if we could suggest 'Everything will be all right', 'Don't worry', and 'Don't get tensed.' It would make a holding atmosphere like a hen gathering its chicks in times of danger. This was the attitude of Jesus Christ. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4 : 11)

Policy of minimum complaints and maximum compliments

No one is perfect. All have some or other defects, limitations, shortcomings, imperfections, etc. Let us reflect : "How do we look at them? How do we address them? How do we solve them? Is it with an attitude of arrogance and anger seeing only the negative side and complaining everytime or with an attitude of complimenting their positive sides? Are we deposit-based or deficit-focused in our attitude towards others in the community? "We should compulsorily look into the positive side of people as well as happenings rather than looking into the negative side always. "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12 : 4 – 5)

Travel from confusion to communication

Even though the communication system in the present world is so powerful, do we communicate with our fellow beings properly and effectively with feelings of love, care, and respect. If we can communicate clearly and regularly, many of the issues in our communities will disappear. We should practice the 3-Table system for a better experience of our community life: Divine Table, Dining Table, and Dialogue Table. We should listen to others. Listening could solve many of the problems we feel or face. "And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all." (1 Thessalonians 5 : 14)

Serve the sick, the suffering, and the elderly in the communities

We should show great concern and affection towards the sick, the suffering, and the elderly members of our communities. This is the best chance to serve the Lord who has called us to continue His mission on this earth. I wish to appeal with simplicity and humility to everyone, to all CMI brotheren. I wish to ask them to be convinced of the seriousness of the present moment and of each one's responsibility inspired by solidarity and love of preference for the sick members of the communities. This is what is demanded by the present moment and above all by the very dignity of the human person, the indestructible image of God and the creator, which is identical in each of us. In this commitment, we must serve as examples, for they are called upon, in conformity with the programme announced by Jesus himself in the synagogue at Nazareth, to "preach good news to the poor . . . to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," (Lk 4:18-19).

Love, accept, and respect the members of our communities

The members are the strength of our communities. We should show great concern towards them after the example of Jesus Christ. We should find out time to express our love for them. We should be ready to accept them as they are, with their strengths and weaknesses. We should respect them with our whole heart and soul. Only then do we become the children of God on this earth. This is the beauty and essence of religious communities. "May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Romans 15 : 5 – 7)

God has called us to be in fellowship with one another on earth because it reflects the fellowship we will have with one another in heaven. The mission of the Gospel is too big a task for us to do on our own; that is why he collectively calls us to a sharpening standard of unity. How we serve God is how we serve those around us—the hurt, the broken, the weeping, the neglected, the voiceless, and frankly, that defines all of us. The more we open our eyes to see each other as children of the Most High, the clearer we will be able to see the common cord that binds us together: the hope and glory of Christ. Our religious communities should be guided by the spiritual and moral values of the kingdom of God. Only then the communitarian witnessing of our religious life would be completed in its fullness. The communitarian witnessing of our community life would give a chance to all to feel and experience the joy and peace of the community life which was designed by our founding fathers, especially by St Kuriakose Elias Chavara.

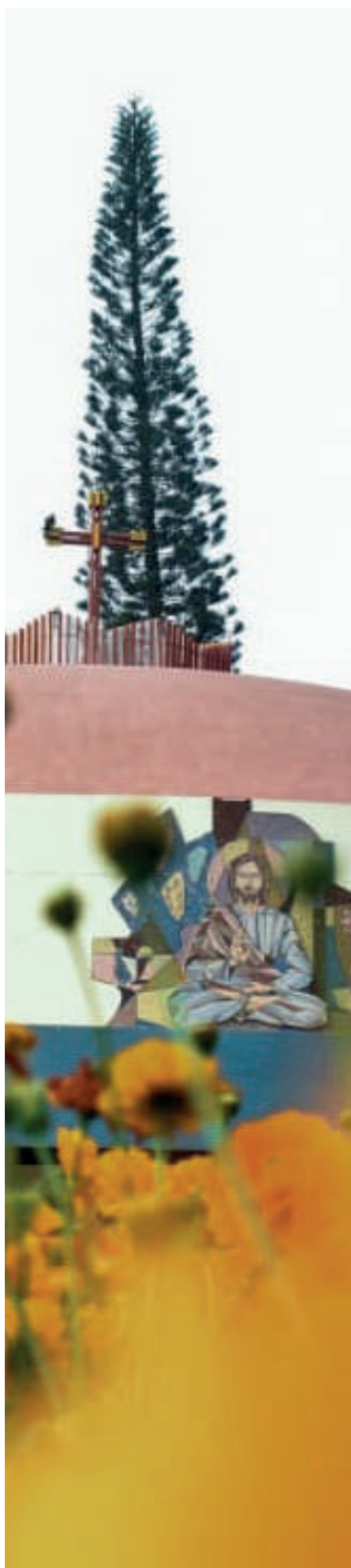




Community Life



A CALL TO SERVE
AS AN INTEGRAL
PILLAR IN BUILDING
A STRONG FOUNDATION



Jeeson Thomas CMI
Bangalore

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make a helper suitable for him.' (Genesis 2:18). When God created humankind He acknowledged that it is not good for Adam, the first man, to be alone. He decided to create a suitable helper for him, which ultimately led to the creation of Eve. The very beginning of the Holy Bible explicitly highlights the importance of companionship, union and the need for humans to have someone to share their lives with.

Throughout the Holy Scripture, both in the Old Testament and New Testament we can encounter the rich narratives and teachings that can be explored in the context of communitarian witnessing. In the Old Testament, instances of communitarian witnessing abound, illustrating the collective response to adversity and injustice. The Exodus narrative encapsulates the Israelites' journey from slavery to freedom, a communal endeavor guided by God. This collective experience not only strengthened their bond but also serves as a powerful example of resilience and shared witnessing against oppression. The Prophets, including Amos, Micah, and Isaiah, individually confronted social injustices, yet their messages resonated within their communities, sparking collective movements towards justice. Nehemiah's leadership in rebuilding Jerusalem after exile exemplifies the transformative

power of community collaboration, emphasizing the communal effort needed to create a just society.

In the New Testament, the Early Church in Acts of Apostles stands out as a paradigm of communitarian witnessing. The early Christians, united in solidarity, shared resources and supported each other, collectively embodying the teachings of Jesus despite facing persecution. The Parable of the Good Samaritan emphasizes the communal aspect of witnessing, urging active engagement and compassionate collective responsibility for the welfare of others. The Book of Revelation envisions a new heaven and new earth, underscoring the ultimate goal of communitarian witnessing – the establishment of a just and peaceful community. These biblical examples collectively underscore the importance of shared experiences, collective action, and communal responsibility in the pursuit of justice and ethical witnessing.

Also, the concept of "covenant" found throughout the Bible reinforces the idea of a shared bond and responsibility within a community. The emphasis on "loving your neighbor" extends beyond individual acts of kindness to encompass collective action for the betterment of society. The stories of collective resistance against oppression, such as the Maccabees, further illustrate the power of communitarian witnessing.

The English metaphysical poet John Donne wrote in his poem "Meditation XVII," "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main," which also reflects the inherent nature of human beings to be connected with one another. Emmanuel Levinas, a prominent 20th-century philosopher, emphasizes the profound importance of the "Other" in shaping our lives and understanding ethical responsibility. Central to Levinas's philosophy is the idea that encounters with the Other, or other people, fundamentally alter our existence. Rather than viewing the Other as a mere object of perception, Levinas argues that the encounter with the Other disrupts our self-contained world, challenging us to recognize their humanity and uniqueness. The ethical significance of the Other lies in the responsibility that arises from this encounter. Levinas contends that we have an ethical obligation to respond to the vulnerability and needs of the Other. This emphasis on the ethical relation to the Other is especially pertinent in the context of communitarian witnessing. In communitarian witnessing, individuals collectively engage in recognizing and responding to the experiences and needs of others within the community. Levinas's concepts, such as the face-to-face encounter and the ethical demand of the Other, provide a philosophical foundation for understanding the interconnectedness, empathy, and ethical responsibility that underlie meaningful communal interactions. Communitarian witnessing, rooted in Levinasian thought, encourages a shared commitment to recognizing and responding to the unique humanity of each member within the community, fostering a collective responsibility and ethical engagement with the Other.

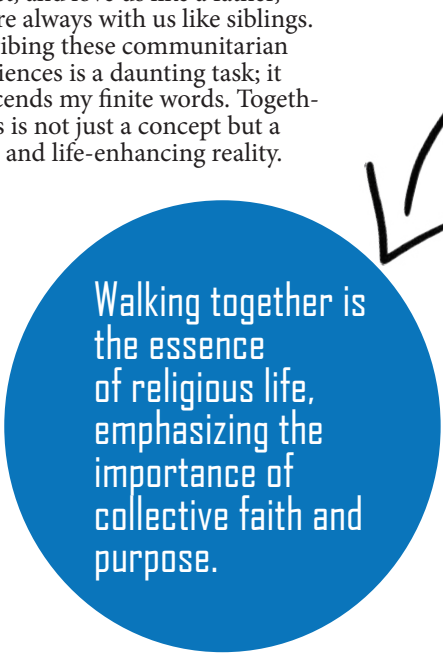
The rich narratives and teachings of the Holy Scripture, along with insights from philosophers like John Donne and Emmanuel Levinas, underscores the profound significance of communitarian witnessing. The biblical stories, from the Old Testament's collective journey of the Israelites to the Early

Church's solidarity in the New Testament, exemplify the transformative power of communal bonds and shared responsibility. Concepts like "covenant" and the imperative to "love your neighbor" resonate as guiding principles for building just communities. The wisdom of John Donne and Emmanuel Levinas further reinforces the innate interconnectedness of humanity.

My Personal Voyage within Communitarian Witnessing

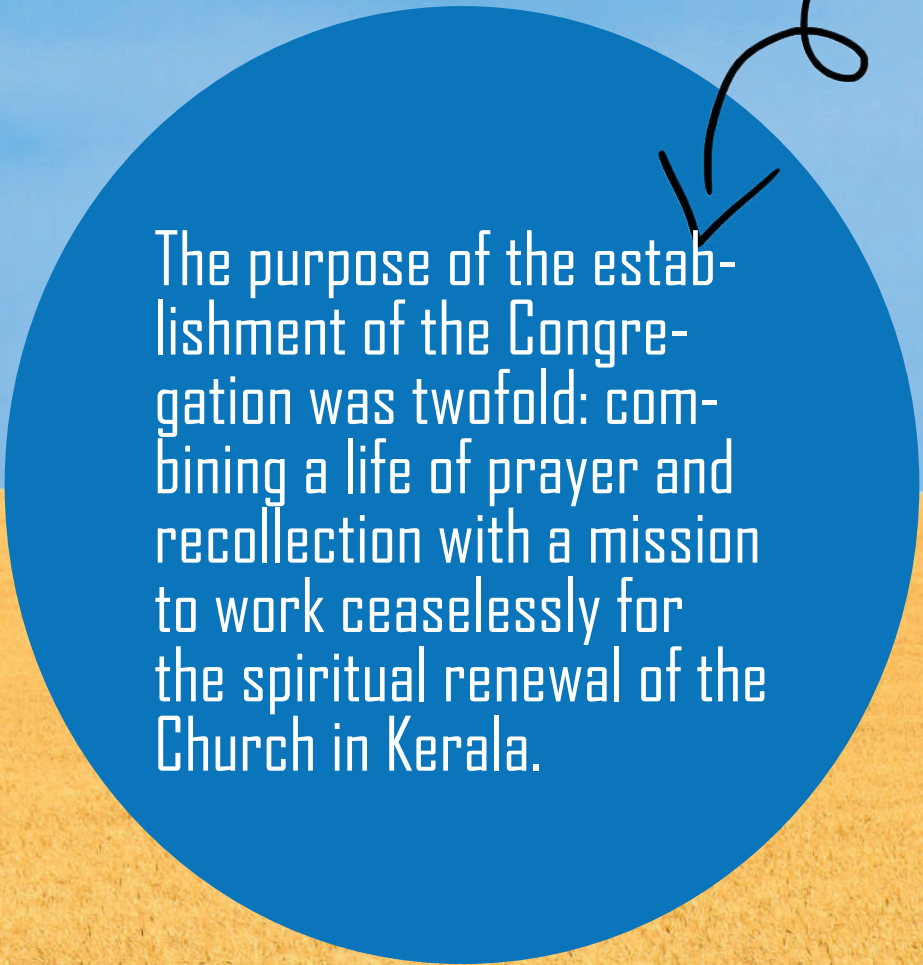
As I reflect on the above principles, I am reminded of my own experiences within my community, Dharmaram life experiences. From moments of collective resilience in times of adversity to the shared joys of supporting one another, my community has been a source of strength and inspiration. Dharmaram is a garden of virtues in which all planted seedlings are nurtured well with care offering ample possibilities and 'koode pirappu sneham'—an encompassing sense of familial love. Fathers and brothers within our community provide unwavering support across spiritual, mental, and physical dimensions. It can also be explained as an ocean of love surrounded by people who care for us like a mother, guide, correct, and love us like a father, and are always with us like siblings. Describing these communitarian experiences is a daunting task; it transcends my finite words. Togetherness is not just a concept but a joyful and life-enhancing reality.

As Pope Francis asserts, "Walking together is the essence of religious life," emphasizing the importance of collective faith and purpose. All the activities foster the unity and the communitarian bond of our life here, starting with the morning's meditation and ending with the Lelya and personal prayers. While conflicts and misunderstandings may arise, they swiftly dissipate, revealing the magic of community life. Each member plays a vital role, offering help and support selflessly, nurturing the roots of our communal life and this shared mentality propels our communitarian witnessing beyond borders. Dharmaram solidifies my belief in the transformative power of communal bonds, the ethical imperative to recognize and respond to one another's needs. It is a testament to the human spirit, a vibrant example of Pope Francis' words brought to life.



Walking together is
the essence
of religious life,
emphasizing the
importance of
collective faith and
purpose.

CMI Missions An Overview



The purpose of the establishment of the Congregation was twofold: combining a life of prayer and recollection with a mission to work ceaselessly for the spiritual renewal of the Church in Kerala.

The primary purpose of founding of the CMI Congregation was the self-sanctification, sanctification of others, salvation of all and the promotion of the cause of the Catholic Church. The founding fathers earnestly desired to empower and to renew the spiritual and ecclesial life of the Syro-Malabar Church which was barren, non-fertile, in those days. The pioneering members also aimed at the enlightenment of the society through education and print media. The present paper is an attempt to evaluate the CMI missionary initiatives undertaken by the members from 1831 till 1962 mainly in the limited geographical boundaries of Kerala and how they could make use of this missionary energy and experience in the mission fields when new possibilities and challenges were opened to them. With the erection of the Exarchate of Chanda in Maharashtra in 1962, new avenues were opened to the CMIs and the members of the Syro-Malabar Church for mission work in North India. There are twelve points around which the theme is being developed, besides the introduction and the conclusion.

The Inspiration behind the Founding of the CMI Congregation

The founding fathers, Thomas Palackal, Thomas Porukkara and Kuriakose Elias Chavara, were well-trained Malpans (model learned teachers) of the Syro-Malabar Church in their times, so much so that the Bishop Maurilius Stabilini, Vicar Apostolic of Varapuzha, was reluctant to allow them to lead a life of seclusion and solitude, as they desired in the beginning; he feared that there would be less leaders to teach and guide the people. Bishop Maurilius Stabilini responded to their desire in the following way: "If you two (Palackal and Porukkara) who are sufficiently learned enter into silence in a secluded place, who else would teach the people. But, however, if you so desire, then establish a convent (monastery) that would be beneficial for all."

They agreed with the proposal. The inspiration behind the founding of the Congregation was described by Fr. Kuriakose Elias thus: "Fr. Palackal and his intimate friend Fr. Thomas Porukkara craved to start a monastery for priests at least because they were well aware of the fact that many a good thing was not done owing to the want of a religious house." "Inspired by the Holy Spirit, they (the founding fathers, Thomas Palackal, Thomas Porukkara, Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Brother Jacob Kanianthara), committed their life to intense prayer and deep recollection and the building up and renewal of the Church." The original ecclesial mandate that was given to the founding fathers in 1829 by Bishop Maurilius Stabilini is the following: "To teach the people by life and example, to receive those who believe in Jesus Christ into the Church as well as to bring back the separated brethren into the ecclesial communion, to enlighten the Church and to facilitate the progress of the nations and the whole world by realizing all the good that is being shown to us by the Spirit." The purpose of the establishment of the Congregation was twofold: combining a life of prayer and recollection with a mission to work ceaselessly for the spiritual renewal of the Church in Kerala. The Syrian Catholic Church of Kerala was in desperate need of reformation and rejuvenation and the Community as a whole needed development. Hence the founders wanted to do all good things possible by the founding of a monastery which is a Thapasu Bhavanam (a house of asceticism), a Punya Snaketham (an abode of sanctity) and a Darsana Veedu (a house of vision), a beacon light on the hill top, a Beth Rauma, which as the later history shows, proved to be correct. The foundation stone for Mannanam Monastery was laid on May 11, 1831. As the later history shows, Mannanam became the centre of ecclesiastical activities and all turned to Mannanam for guidance, leadership and direction. The exemplary life of the founders left to the next generation their most precious heritage. Their prayer life leading to apostolate

is indeed very stimulating. Filial devotion to Blessed Virgin Mary and loyal dedication to the Church are worth mentioning.

Mission in the Earlier Days

The members of the Mannanam Community under the leadership of St Kuriakose Elias Chavara beautifully combined active life and contemplative life and they found time in preaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments for the sanctification of the faithful and for the self-sanctification. Retreat preaching, conducting penitential services and efforts made to achieve reconciliation among the members of the Christian Community of the faithful and the seminary formation were the main apostolates of the Mannanam Community in the early years of their existence. The diocesan clergy from near and far away places used to approach the members of the Mannanam Community for equipping themselves for pastoral ministry or improving their working knowledge of moral theology and Sacred Scriptures and usually these priests were sent by the local bishop.

Religious instruction was one of the areas where St Kuriakose Elias Chavara paid special attention for the renewal of the members of the Syro-Malabar Community. St Kuriakose Elias personally visited all the parishes and instructed the parish priests and the local people to start catechism schools attached to the parishes as a means to deepen the Christian faith. Added to that, he divided the parishes of the Varapuzha Vicariate into four districts and the religious instruction and catechism was entrusted to the members of the CMI Congregation. The system really enhanced the knowledge of the faithful on religious matters and a new religious enthusiasm could be generated with this system. The first members of the Congregation were accomplished preachers. This, combined with the odour of their sanctity, gave unfailing efficacy to their words. People gathered at the ringing of the bells and listened with rapt attention the inspiring sermons of the fathers.

The faithful sought the services of the fathers especially on their death-bed and in their agony. The fathers were successful in pacifying quarrels and settling family disputes.

The timely interventions of the members of the Congregation helped to settle the disputes and bring renewal in the parishes. It was achieved mainly through dialogue, penitential services, retreats, etc. The spiritual leadership the Founding Fathers exercised from the very beginning of the Mannanam Community is clear in the following instance where Fr.Kuriakose Elias was asked by the ecclesiastical authorities to remove the ecclesial censure of two priests from the Varapuzha Vicariate, fathers Lawrence and Joachim.

Seminary Formation

Experiencing the urgent need of enlightened priests in Kerala, the founding fathers of the Congregation started a seminary at Mannanam in 1833 even before an organized religious community life was begun. Later seminaries were started at Vazhakulam in 1866, at Elthuruth in 1868, and at Pulinkunnu in 1872. The whole credit goes to St Chavara and the priests trained in these centres, for the eradication of the schisms of Rocos and Mellus. In 1844 Bishop Francis Xavier recognised the sanctity and wisdom of Fr Thomas Porukkara and St EKuriakose Chavara and made them Malpans. This mission of training the religious and priests is being continued with full vigour in India and abroad.

Evangelisation and Catechumenates

In the caste-ridden society of Kerala no proper attention was given to the mission work among the low castes till the nineteenth century. The Syrian Christians in general were not very much in undertaking mission work among the low castes, dalits, etc. The keen interest of the founding fathers in the conversion of the low castes is evident from the Mannanam Chronicle as recorded

by St Kuriakose Elias: “To learn the basic Christian doctrines Pulayas and Paravas come from Punnathara and they stayed there till 5 pm. Arrangements were made to provide them meals for two times. To raise funds and resources, letters were sent to the churches in Vechoor, Muttom, Pallippuram, etc. and sufficient rice and cash could be collected.” In that socio-religious context one has to understand and appreciate the evangelization initiatives of Fr.Kuriakose Elias Chavara and the members of the CMI Congregation.



Francis Thonipara CMI Namibia

Fr.Kuriakose Elias Chavara opened catechumenates in Athirampuzha, Arppookkara and Edathuva. The catechumenate at Mannanam in 1853 was a breakthrough for the missionary apostolate of the Syro-Malabar Church among the low castes. Even before establishing a monastery in Chethippuzha, efforts have been made to accommodate the new converts in the same premises. There were oppositions from high caste Hindus and traditional

Nazranee Christians. Following the example of the founder, the members started catechumenates attached to the monasteries for the evangelisation among the low castes like, Pulayas, Parayars, etc. Special mention should be made about Frs. Clement Thachil, Kuriakose Porukkara, Bro. Rocky, etc. who concentrated their mission work in Thellakam, Vijayapuram, etc. One should acknowledge the meritorious services of Frs. Joseph Thayyil, Alexander Kattakayam (Valiya Chandiyachan), Eprem Kalathil, Jacob Palakunnel, etc. among the dalits. Recognising the missionary work of Kattakayam Valiya Chandiyachan, Pope Pius X honoured him with the title Missionary Apostolic. Fr. Mathias Eravelil was committed to the ongoing faith formation of the new converts in Pulincunnu and the surrounding areas and on his death in 1933 Mr. I.C. Chacko wrote an article in Nazranee Deepika daily newspaper praising the missionary zeal of Fr Mathias. Fr. Romuald Chothirakunnel (1856-1898), a zealous missionary, was actively involved in the conversion of Pulayas and Paravars in and around Changanacherry and Thuruthy, staying in the Chethipuzha monastery. In a reply to his letter to the Propaganda Congregation, the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda Congregation appreciated his work in a letter dated 1893 February 14. On the way to Poonjar to engage in the work of the conversion of the Pulayas he got sick and died there, although he was discouraged by many not to go to Poonjar for fear of the fever that was very common in those days. In 1924 Apostolic Visitor Laepizi visited the CMI monasteries and met the Prior General and his team in Mannanam. He expressed his happiness over the mission work carried out by the members of the CMI Congregation and as per his recommendation the members used to get regular financial support from Rome for the promotion of the mission work. On the occasion of the Mission Exhibition in Rome in 1925, the members sent a few articles which depicted the mission engagement of the CMI Congregation.

Some developments in the Church and society like Roccos, Mellus schisms, the Temple Entry Declaration of Travancore on November 13, 1936, the hardcore policy of Sir C.P. Rama Swamy Ayyar, the Diwan of Travancore against the Christians and the financial support and privileges extended to the low castes, etc. all adversely affected the mission work undertaken by the members of the Congregation. Even some left the Catholic faith and re-joined the Hindu religion, who were wholeheartedly welcomed by the Hindus with financial support, etc. Based on the documents available at Mannanam and other monasteries baptisms between the years 1853 to 1960 was about 48700.

In 1938 as requested by Archbishop Louis Mathias SDB, the Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore, efforts were made and preliminary enquiries were held to establish a monastery at Madavaram, in Chennai. The Propaganda Congregation was not in favour of this move and the project was dropped. This may be considered as a lost chance of the missionary growth of the Congregation transcending geographical boundaries, ritual restrictions and cultural barriers. Another lost opportunity was the offer to render missionary service in Abadan, near Persian Gulf, where French Carmelites were rendering their service. The request was from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Two priests were selected. But because of the insistence of the British employees to have chaplains from their own nation, the project was cancelled. However, the Congregation for the Oriental Churches appreciated the missionary commitment of the members of the CMI Congregation and expressed sorry for the inconvenience.

Bishop Oscar Severin S.J., of Raigarh-Ambikapur, invited the members of the CMI Congregation to work in his diocese in 1952. In response to his mission call Frs. Diego Thannickal, Cassius Chamakkala and John Vianney Kadankavil reached Ambikapur in January 1955. In 1956 Frs. Romuald

Chakkunkal and Christian Plakkatt joined the pioneer group and they stayed in a shed and started rendering their services to the poor people of the Diocese of Raigarh-Ambikapur. A big landed property was purchased at Ambikapur and a CMI Ashram was blessed on May 1, 1960. An apostolic school was started and the candidates went to St Xavier's High School for their schooling. 13 CMI priests worked in the mission territories of the diocese. The committed services of the CMI missionaries inspired the Latin bishops in North India to entrust mission territories to the CMI Congregation and thus the Chanda Mission was entrusted to the CMIs as the first Syro-Malabar Church mission territory. By evaluating the success story of the Chanda mission many more mission territories were entrusted to the Syro-Malabar Church in course of time.

Another glorious chapter in the mission history of the CMI Congregation was the mission in Iran-Iraq. In response to the request of the Chaldean Patriarch, CMI Frs. Fabian Kalathil, Marcel Pulpambil and Kaliyadan Virgil reached Bhagdad in February 1960 by ship. From there Fr. Virgil was sent to Basra. The other two stayed in the Patriarchal palace and Fr. Marcel was made the Rector of the Patriarchal Seminary and Fr. Fabian was a professor in the same seminary. With 16 major seminarians and 22 minor seminarians the Seminary started functioning from October 14, 1960. With the CMI presence the seminarians could better be motivated and in 1968 ten priests were ordained, which was a record number in the 103 years history of the Seminary. Fr. Fabian was transferred to Mannanam in 1963 January and Fr. Emmanuel Thelly after serving more than two years left for India in 1965 December and Frs. Virgil and Marcel left for India in 1968 after serving the Persian Church for more than five years. At a time when global mission was not thought of, the Iran-Iraq mission was indeed a foretaste for the future global mission.

Bishop Perini of the newly erected diocese of Calicut in 1923 sent a formal invitation to the CMI prior General to come and work in the diocese of Calicut. In the initial stage the CMIs worked in the Latin parishes and established schools attached to the parishes. In response to the repeated requests of the migrant Syro-Malabarians, Fr. Kerubin was appointed as the parish priest of Thariyode in 1949 and thus he became the first parish priest of the Syro-Malabar Rite in Malabar. Other main centres were Thiruvampady, Koodaranji, Koodathai, Kodancherry and Kannothe. The all-time most eminent Malabar CMI missionary was Fr. Athanasius. Even after the establishment of the diocese of Thalassery the services continued. Besides, CMI fathers rendered commendable services in the dioceses of Kothamangalam, Idukki, Knjirappally, etc. especially in the initial stages. Today their services are rendered in a global way.

CMI members followed the migrants in High Ranges Frs. Xavier Pulpambil and Honorius Vaniapura were sent to Peerumedu in 1950. Fr. Xavier is known as the Francis Xavier of High Ranges because of his committed service. It is worth mentioning the pioneering pastoral services of the CMI priests to cater the pastoral needs of the migrants outside Kerala, especially in Pune, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi, Kolkata and eventually paved the way for the establishment of the eparchies of Kalyan, Mandya, Hosur, and Faridabad. As per the request of the Administrator of the diocese of Kochi, two priests were sent to Alappuzha to resist the Communist encroachments.

Getting inspired by the community life in the monasteries, there were Catholics who settled down near the monasteries and followed their spiritual life very rigorously. They also extended their helping hands in the running of the monastery. One typical example is the Aranattukara Ayinickal Poothokkaran Mathoo and his wife.

One critical remark about the mission work of Fr. Kuriakose Elias and his companions may be that they failed to some extent in integrating the new converts to the traditional Christian Community. Instead, by establishing separate churches for the new converts, indirectly encouraged the class distinction among the Syro-Malabar Catholics too.

Holistic Education

The founding fathers understood the importance of education in transforming the society and they were well aware of the consequences of the lack of English education for the members of the Syro-Malabar Catholics. Fr. Kuriakose Elias had a great desire to establish a college for promoting English education. The prevailing atmosphere in the Church was not favourable and he could be satisfied with starting a Sanskrit school in Mannanam in 1846. It was only in 1944 the CMI's could start their first college, Sacred Heart College, Thevara. An English medium school was established in 1885 in the Mannanam campus. Fr. Bernard who was in the Mutholy monastery, was responsible for starting a middle school for girls in the premises of the CMC Convent in Mutholy as per the directives of the Vicar Apostolic. Religion and moral instructions were integral part of the school curriculum and thus catechism schools were established attached to the monasteries. Number of Arts and Science Colleges, BED Colleges, Malayalam and English Medium Schools, ITI and Polytechnic, Engineering Colleges, etc are established and contribute much in the field of education and youths are trained to obtain employment.

(Will be continued...)

The timely interventions of the members of the Congregation helped to settle the disputes and bring renewal in the parishes. It was achieved mainly through dialogue, penitential services, retreats, etc.





A PROPHET FOR MELBOURNE

Interview
Prepared by
Jamin Kaipanaplackal CMI



As a role model to many can you share a pivotal moment in your life that inspired you to respond to the Divine call?

Yes, definitely! One pivotal moment in my life that truly inspired me to respond to the Divine call was after receiving my first Holy Communion.

After my first Holy Communion, I started attending the Holy Mass regularly with some of my friends. This regular attendance became a significant part of my daily routine and helped me cultivate a sense of discipline and habit in my school days. The Holy Mass itself became a source of inspiration and nourishment for my spiritual growth.

Was there someone in your life who inspired you to become a religious priest?

Yes, there was someone in my life who inspired me to become a religious priest. Sr. Leena SH, a member of the Sacred Heart religious community, was a great influence and source of inspiration for me. She was my class teacher and mentor in my high school. Fr. Jose Kappukattu CMI is her brother. Her dedication to serving God and her selfless devotion to others inspired me to join the religious life. Through her kindness, wisdom, and unwavering faith, Sr. Leena SH showed me the fulfillment and purpose that can be found in serving as a religious priest. Her example continues to guide and motivate me on my own spiritual journey.

How the CMI Congregation has moulded your life and What advice do you have for the future CMI's?

The CMI Congregation is my second home and its members played a pivotal role in shaping me into the person I am today. The Congregation provided a nurturing and supportive environment that allowed me to grow both personally

and spiritually.

The members of the CMI Congregation (Koodapirappukal) acted as mentors and guides, offering wisdom and knowledge that I will forever be grateful for. Their dedication and their commitment to serving others has had a profound impact on my own values and principles. Through the CMI educational institutions and initiatives, our community instilled in me a love for knowledge, a thirst for learning, and a desire to continually improve and grow.

My advice to future CMI members is to always remain thankful for the opportunities that the Congregation provides. Embrace the legacy and community spirit passed on by senior members and never take for granted the guidance and mentorship offered by those who have walked the path before you. Additionally, actively seek ways to serve and contribute to the community.

Finally, remember that personal growth and development should never cease. Strive for excellence in all aspects of life and constantly seek to deepen your understanding of your faith and the world around you.

How do you integrate the CMI Charism of contemplation and action in your Personal life?

In my personal life, I firmly believe in integrating the CMI Charism of contemplation and action by incorporating prayer in all decisions I make. Prayer allows me to connect with God and seek His guidance and wisdom before taking any action. I believe that the will of God is revealed through prayer, and by surrendering to His divine plan, I am able to align my actions with His desires.

However, contemplation alone is not sufficient. It must be followed by action.

Can you discuss the challenges before the Melbourne Mission and How do you prepare to cope with them?

The Syro Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne faces a range of challenges, particularly in its efforts to spread the teachings and values of Jesus in the diverse and modern society of Australia and New Zealand. One of the main challenges of the mission is secularism. Australia like many developed countries, has a significant secular population. Many people may not have any religious beliefs or may follow different faiths. This poses a challenge in terms of engaging our faithful to understand and embrace our traditions, faith and spirituality.

Building a strong faith community requires an unwavering commitment to accompanying and guiding its members spiritually, especially the new generation. The foundation of any faith community lies in the collective belief, values, and practices that bind its members together. To build and strengthen this community, it is crucial to provide spiritual guidance and support to individuals of all ages. By offering spiritual programs, youth groups, and mentorship opportunities, we can ensure that the new generation remains engaged and connected to their faith. By empowering and inspiring the next generation, we can ensure the continuity and growth of our faith community for years to come.

How do you envision the future of the Melbourne Mission and what innovations do you wish to spearhead?

My pastoral plan aims to give a spiritual accompaniment to our community and foster a sense of unity and togetherness within our community by organizing regular family unit meetings. These meetings will provide an opportunity for families to gather, share their faith experiences, support one another, and grow together. By including mothers, fathers, youth members, teens, and children in the church activities, we aim to give everyone an equal role and voice in shaping our community.



Respecting others
is a fundamental
principle that can
foster harmoni-
ous relationships
and create a posi-
tive environment.

This inclusiveness allows for the unique gifts and talents of each individual to be recognized and utilized, creating a stronger and more vibrant church.

Additionally, we will focus on renewing the present method of catechism, ensuring that it is dynamic, engaging, and relevant to the needs and experiences of our community. By doing so, we hope to deepen faith formation and empower individuals to live out their faith in their everyday lives. Through these efforts, we seek to build a stronger, more united, and connected community that lives out the Gospel values in our world today.

Is there an instance in your life where an obstacle turned out to be a blessing in disguise?

I had to face a lot of obstacles in my life but they had a unique ability to push me beyond my comfort zones. They challenged me to think outside the box, to find creative solutions to problems I never anticipated. Without obstacles, we may never tap into our full potential or understand just how much we are truly capable of.

What is the personal Philosophy of your life and is there any instance in your life that tested your values?

Life is very short. Therefore try to be a blessing to others. The power of positive thinking helps me overcome any obstacle that comes my way. Positive thinking not only affects my mood and happiness, but it also attracts positive outcomes and opportunities. It helps me stay motivated, resilient, and focused on my goals.

Reflecting on your journey, How do you perceive the values instilled in you by the family have contributed to your life as a whole?

The values instilled in me by my family have played a significant role in shaping who I am today.

In short, the values instilled in me by my family have played a central role in shaping my character, attitudes, and behaviors. They have given me a solid foundation to navigate through life's challenges, make ethical choices, and contribute positively to the world around me. I am immensely grateful for the values my family has passed down to me, as they continue to guide and inspire me on my journey.

What is the most treasurable piece of advice you have ?

Respecting others is a fundamental principle that can foster harmonious relationships and create a positive environment. When we treat others with respect, it not only demonstrates our empathy and understanding, but also sets the tone for mutual respect. By being gentle and kind to others, we are promoting a culture of compassion and goodwill. While it may not always be possible to avoid conflict or differences, approaching others with gentleness and kindness can help diffuse tense situations and pave the way for effective communication and understanding. Ultimately, when we give respect, we are more likely to receive respect in return, fostering a sense of unity and cooperation.



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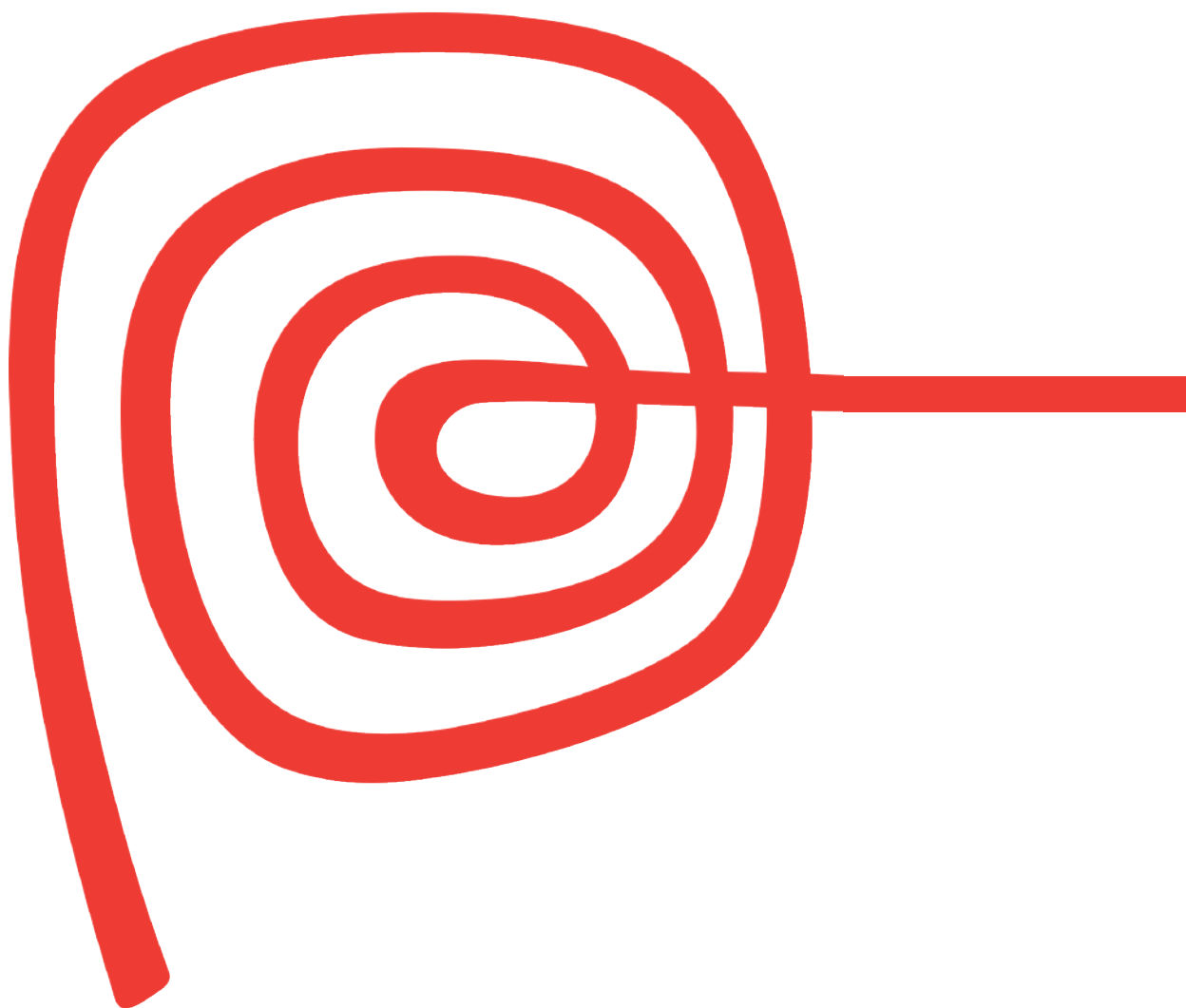
Essential to happiness is other-centred behaviour. I could acquire as many material things as possible, but if my priority is materialism, there will be no limit to my wants. Material things do not bring happiness. Love and other-centredness do.

Oswald Cardinal Gracias

Experience is shared and transmitted
to the next generation in Mission



Experience





— erú

emission



Fr. Emmanuel Gnavallil CMI
Peru

The second overseas mission of the CMI Congregation was conceived in the sacred ambience of the Second Vatican Council. Bishop Redento Gaucci O. Cam, the first Bishop of the Prefecture of Chuquibamba, was looking for missionaries to work in his young diocese. Archbishop Eugene D'Souza of Bhopal, who was instrumental in taking CMI Congregation to the North Indian Mission, introduced Fr. Maurus Valiamparambil, the Prior General of the Congregation, to Bishop Redento Gaucci O. Cam. Despite his great interest, he could not send missionaries to Peru during his period in office.

The Beginning

His successor in office, Fr. Theobald Pothanikkad, sent Fr. Justin Koipupuram, the Procurator General of the Congregation in Rome, to Peru, responding to the repeated request of Bishop Gaucci. After visiting Arequipa and Chuquibamba, he had sent a report favoring accepting the offer. Fr. Prior General, with the consent of his council decided to send a team of missionaries to Peru and it was communicated to Bishop Gaucci by letter 252/75 dated 28-02-'75. Three young priests were selected to be the pioneers. They were seen off from the generalate on 7 September 1975, and arrived in Lima, via Rome on 18 September 1975. After a three-month long language study, Fr. Joseph Mundackal was appointed parish priest at Cathedral of Chuquibamba with the other two as associates on 8th December 1975. He served there

until his return to India in 1987. Later in 1976, Fr. Mathew Alphonse moved to Arequipa Archdiocese and was appointed assistant parish priest in the parish of Our Lady of Pilar. Afterwards he was assigned to the Parish of San Pedro de Uchumayo as the parish priest and subsequently moved to San Jose de la Joya and Sigwas where he served until 1987. Meanwhile Fr. Lukose Poondikulam served as his assistant parish priest at San Jose de la Joya and Sigwas. Fr. Poondikulam was later on appointed parish priest of Nuestra Señora de Asuncion (Our lady of Assumption), Orcopampa, where he rebuilt the church. In 1986, Fr. Sebastian Puthenkandam joined Fr. Alphonse in San Jose de la Joya and Sigwas as the assistant Parish priest.

Fr. Joseph Malayampuram took the charge of the Chancellor in the Diocese of Camana (as the diocesan headquarters moved from Chuquibamba to Camana). He also had the responsibility of the parish San Jacinto for a while, he later made in charge of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Candelaria, Quilca, along with his diocesan responsibility.

A Short Break

When Fr. Vijayanad Nedumpuram (later on Bishop Vijayand Nedumpuram) was the Prior general (1984-90), there was a shift in the policies of the congregation. Owing to various factors Peruvian missionaries were asked to return to India in 1987. But the policy got reverted soon, as the congregation felt that we shall be available to the Church, wherever She needs us, and we shall break all territorial barriers as a missionary congregation.

The Return

In 1989, the CMI Peru mission was handed over to St. Josephs Province Kottayam. Fr. Mathew Alphonse returned to Arequipa in 1989. The arrival of Fr. Sebastian Puthenkandam, Fr. Emmanuel Gnavallil, and Fr. James Nedumparampil made the return grant. Upon returning

we were offered San Benito Parish of the then Lima Metropolitan Diocese, (Later on part of Chosica Diocese established in 1996) thanks to the efforts of Fr. Mathew Alphonse, and we took it over.

As the Province took the Peru Mission more seriously, a desire to dedicate more young enthusiastic missionaries became more explicit. One step in this direction was to send seminarians to this developing mission. So far nine scholastics spent part of their formation years in Peru.

San Mateo Sub-region

For a young congregation with limited overseas experience, it was like treading into new waters. The initial steps were taken rather hesitantly. The first coordinator, Fr. Sebastian Puthenkandam was appointed in 1990. On October 10, 2003, Fr. Antony Kariyil, Prior General, assigned Peru, in South America, to St. Joseph's Province, Kottayam, as its extended territory abroad. and Fr. Joseph Vadakkan, Provincial, on October 30, 2003, made the Peru Mission a Sub-Region of the province, and Fr. Joseph Areelackal was appointed as the first Sub-Regional superior with a two-member council. Apostle and Evangelist St. Mathew was selected as the patron of the mission. It was also an act of paying homage to Fr. Mathew Alphonse, who played a pivotal role in bringing CMI missionaries back home to Peru. On January 28, 2004, the San Mateo sub-region of the province acquired legal identity in Peru. This has enabled the region to purchase its first property on July 9, 2004. At present sub-region has a house at Chosica, Lima-15, and a pastoral center at Ñaña Chaclacayo, Lima, 8.

An overview of our Parishes.

Parroquia de la Santisima Trinidad (Holy Trinity Church), Tingo.

This Parish is situated in Tingo, Arequipa, in the district of Jacobo Dikson Hunter.



For a young congregation with limited overseas experience, it was like treading into new waters.

The parish was created on September 12, 1949, with the name Parroquia Nuestra Señora del Carmen (Parish of Our Lady of Carmel) and the title was changed to the present one in 1992. The Archbishop of Arequipa entrusted the Parish to the care of CMIs in 1990, appointing Fr. Mathew Alphonse Chakkamkunnel as its Pastor. On April 13, 2000, Fr. Mathew slept in the Lord. As per his wish, he was laid to rest in Arequipa. The beneficiaries of his long service keep coming back to his tomb occasionally, and the faithful take it their pious privilege to maintain his tomb well. The parish has well over 1500 families and has three station chapels with regular Sunday masses.

Santuario de la Virgen de Chapi (The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Chapi).

Peru's most renowned and most visited pilgrim center is Our Lady's Sanctuary at Chapi. It is also a religious tourist center. The veneration started around 1800 A.D. It is in Polobaya District, State of Arequipa, and 61 km. from the city of Arequipa. Archbishop Jose Paulino Rio Reynoso of the diocese appointed Fr Scaria Kumaramangalam as Rector at this shrine in November 2005 to undertake the construction of an international Basilica at a cost of Rs. 400 million, sponsored by the State Government, and the Archdiocese.

Fr. Scaria Kumaramangalam continues to be the Rector of the shrine ever since 2005, thanks to the great trust the archbishop has in him to execute the project on time and within the approved budget. Young seminarians are entrusted with him, that they may get the feel of pastoral work under his supervision, on a regular basis. The devotees of Our Lady of Chapi keep thronging to the shrine even during weekdays. On weekends the crowd swells sizably and during festivals the crowd is beyond all our expectations. The Sanctuary being under the direct supervision of the archdiocese, has special permissions to celebrate regular Sunday

masses and other sacraments. Only a few reside permanently in the vicinity of the Sanctuary.

Parroquia de San José (St. Joseph's Parish) Quequeña

The Parish of Quequeña was established around 1660. The Parish has Baptism registers dating back to 1662. The existing Church building was constructed in 1768. The Parish is situated in the Department of Arequipa, 25 km. from the city center. The Parish jurisdiction covers the Districts of Quequeña, Yerebamba and Polavaya having a total population of about 4000 inhabitants. In general, the people are underprivileged and most of them are part time or full-time farm laborers; some of them owning a small portion of land. The parish is having 19 stations. We have now handed the parish back to the archdiocese.



Parroquia Señor de los Desamparados (Parish of our Lord of the Abandoned), La Punta de Bombon.

This church traces its history back to the 17th century as per certain legends. There are confirmed evidence about its existence as early as 1845. It attained the status of a parish in 1921. Fr. James Nedumparampil was appointed its pastor

in February 2006. He served there until 2014.

Parroquia Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, (Parish of Our Lady of Assumption), Pampacolca. Prelature of Chuquibamba, Camana.

Parish of Pampacolca was erected by the Spanish Missionaries in 1658 and canonically established in the year 1687. The Parish remained without a resident Priest from 2001 to 2006 and in October 2006 Bishop entrusted the parish with the CMI congregation and appointed Fr. Tomy Vandankunnel as its Pastor. He undertook the reconstruction of the Church, which was destroyed by an earthquake in 2001, and it was completed and inaugurated on August 28, 2010. It was made possible owing to the enthusiasm of the parishioners who rendered their hard labor along with generous contributions. The Municipal authorities also supported well.

The parish, having an altitude of 3050m above the mean sea level, is vast but sparsely populated with about 6300 people. It has 13 stations, and the people are poor and lack in education and the basic facilities including roads, electricity, and decent healthcare facilities. For their livelihood they engage themselves in farming, cattle rearing and the like.

Parroquia Santa Ursula (St. Ursula's Parish), Viraco: Prelature of Chuquibamba, Camana

This parish was started in the Spanish Colonial times around 1650 and canonically established in 1878 and in October 1992 it was entrusted to the CMI congregation. This Parish is situated in the headquarters of the civil District of Viraco, having an altitude of 3100 meters above the mean sea level, in the State of Arequipa, South Peru. The Parish jurisdiction covers vast hilly areas of the districts of Viraco, Machuay, Tipan, and Uñon with an approximate population of 4000.



The people earn their livelihood by agriculture and tending flocks of sheep and llamas. As the villages are distant from the main cities, the people are in backward conditions in health, education, and other modern facilities. Donkeys and horses are used in the hilly tracks as means of transportation. There are 23 Parish Stations spread out in the 4 Districts and with only one resident Priest. Many of the Stations are visited by the priest only once a year. Fr. Devasia Karotemprel served as the assistant parish priest during 1994-1995.

Parroquia San Benito (St. Benedict's Parish), Las Flores.

St. Benedict's Parish was started in Las Flores by the Order of St. Benedict (OSB) of Worth Abbey, England in 1978, in the suburbs of the Capital city of Lima, in the District of San Juan de Lurigancho. As the Benedictines left the Parish, it was entrusted to the CMIs in 1990 with Fr. Sebastian Puthenkandam as Pastor.

San Juan de Lurigancho is the most populous District in Peru and almost all the people are immigrants from other parts of the Country. The Parish has a population of more than 150,000 inhabitants, of which the vast majority are Catholics. With the untiring efforts of our missionaries and their organization skills the number of practicing Catholics are on the rise. The Parish has 11 separate Christian communities with regular Sunday Mass. The Parish Church and some of the communities have week-day Masses. A Community Polyclinic is run by the Parish where 150 health personnel render their service. More than 300 patients are daily being treated in the clinic. San Benito is the most populous and active Parish CMIs have in Peru where three resident CMI Priests, many Catechists, Communion Ministers, Lay Church Leaders, Bible groups, catechetical and pastoral teams, movements

and fraternities, and various other church groups render their services. Most of the families have come to reside in the area in search of jobs in the city or to accompany those who have already secured jobs or looking for better and higher education. The economic, social, and educational profile of the people are very diverse.

San Benito, ever since 1990 has been serving as the nursery of newly arriving CMI missionaries. But for a few, most of the CMI priests and scholastics had their first couple of months here to learn Spanish and to get the taste of Peruvian life. The parish fraternity is always welcoming to the newly arriving missionaries and always encourage, help, and assist us in learning the language, customs, and culture. We owe it to the proximity to the airport and the large presbytery, constructed by the English Benedictine monks as a minor seminary. Our annual get togethers are usually hosted by the San Benito.

Parroquia San Luis Maria de Montfort (St. L. M. Montfort's Parish), Ñaña.

The Parish was started in 1965 by Montfort Congregation. The care of the Parish was transferred to CMIs in 1998 assigning Fr. Joseph Areepackal as Pastor. Fr. Emmanuel Njavallil was appointed Pastor in December 2003. Fr. Joseph Manjanickal was the Assistant Pastor from 2004 to 2006. Fr. Mathew Palithottam was appointed as Pastor in April 2006. Fr. George Vellaringatt became the Assistant Pastor in November 2010. This Parish, situated about 30 KM east from the Centre of Lima, is in the Civil District of Chaclacayo, in the Province and Department of Lima. Ten Religious Priests of different Congregations of men residing in the Parish jurisdiction (Monfortians, Benedictines, Capuchins, Servants of the Divine Mercy,

and Foyer of Charity) are helping in pastoral work in the Parish. There are 11 Stations having regular Sunday Mass. The Parish Church and the two convents of cloistered Nuns in the Parish area have daily Masses in which the faithful of the locality participate.

The Parish has a total population of 50,000 inhabitants, of which 75% are counted as Catholics and the remaining population belongs to Non-Catholic Christian sects. Nana is a stronghold of the Adventist Church which manages a University and Schools and other social and religious service centers within the boundaries of the Parish.

Parroquia San Nicolas de Tolentino (St. Nicolas of Tolentine's Parish), Quirio, Chosica.

The Parish situated in the district of Lurigancho-Chosica was created in June 1969 and was entrusted to the Order of St. Augustine. Dr. Norberto Strotmann Hoppe, Bishop of the Diocese of Chosica, entrusted the Parish to the CMIs on April 1, 2008, appointing Fr. Joseph Areepackal as its pastor. The population of the parish is 30,000 inhabitants, of which the majority of the people are Catholics. There are 7 chapels with Sunday Mass. Different religious congregations which have their houses in the parish area are also helping to meet the pastoral needs of the faithful.

The Union and Vice are two districts of the department of Piura. The parishes belong to Bajo Piura, near the sea with flat terrain and no hills. The San Silvestre parish - where we live - is approximately 30 Km from the center of the city of Piura and the airport. Two parishes were entrusted to us on 6 of July 2011 and both are 5 kilometers apart. San Silvestre La Unión has a population of 50,000 and 25 chapels. San Jacinto Parish Vice has a population of 20,000, and 12 chapels.

The people are very religious, welcoming, loving, understanding, helpful, and they have a lot of respect for priests and religious. Most practice their faith by participating in Sunday mass and celebrating the sacraments. The population consists of farmers, fishermen, small-scale businessmen, taxi drivers, teachers, etc.

Parroquia sagrada Familia, Nuevo Lima, Moyobamba.

After years of consideration, the province decided to venture in to a new mission territory in the diocese of Moyobamba, in San Martin Region. The region is on the other side of the Andes Mountain ranges. It is our first parish in the world-famous Amazon Forest in Peru. The land, the climate, and the cultivations remind us of Kerala. The land is blessed with lot of rain, plenty of rivers, and cultivations including paddy, corn, coconut, papaya, tapioca, mangoes, plantains, and many more.

Pedralgal

A noble family offered ten hectors (25 acres) of land owing to the goodwill they have for Fr. Siju Vakkuvallil and our CMI congregation. The formalities were completed, and the land got transferred to the congregation by early 2023. It is within the Archdiocese of Arequipa, with which we have a long-lasting relationship. It is in Majes district, one of the flourishing districts of Southern Peru.

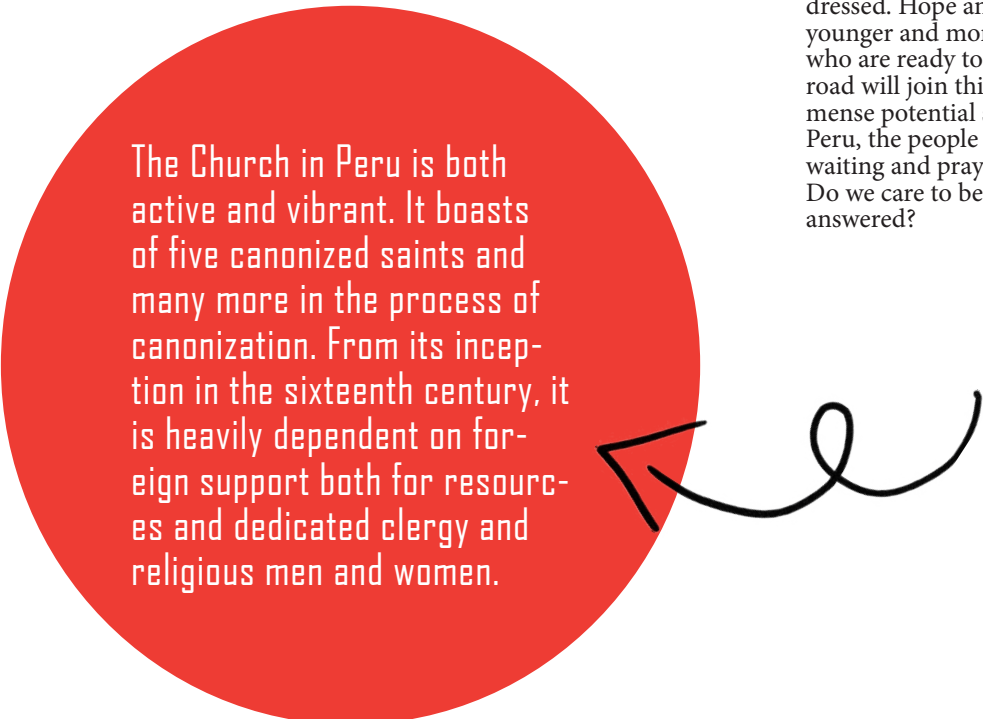
A new parish, “Santa Maria de la Colina” was officially entrusted to us by Right Rev. Javier Del Rio Alba, the Archbishop of Arch Diocese of Arequipa, the first of October 2023. Fr. Siju Vakkuvallil is the first Parish priest and Fr. Joy Kochupurackal (Mysore Province) serves as the associate parish priest.

It is an extensive parish with more than 120 stations, catering to more than 30000 people. Fr. Jino Kanjirathinkal is the first parish priest since its inception on 10th June 2022. Fr. Bobby Vadayattukunnel served as associate parish priest for a year.


Looking Forward

The Church in Peru is both active and vibrant. It boasts of five canonized saints and many more in the process of canonization. From its inception in the sixteenth century, it is heavily dependent on foreign support both for resources and dedicated clergy and religious men and women. But the trends have to change, it has to be self-reliant sooner than later. The way the Church in Kerala became self-reliant with the intervention of our congregation in the 19th and 20th century, is a lesson worth repeating here. The Church in Kerala is now an exporter of well-trained missionaries to different parts of the world. There are missionaries of different congregations working here. With our assistance, CMC nuns (26 nuns belonging to five province) have arrived here within the last four years.

There are many standing invitations from different dioceses, which we are unable to respond to with the limited personnel here. Our presence is limited to just five out of forty-four dioceses in Peru. There are more invitations left undressed. Hope and pray that much younger and more vibrant CMI's who are ready to take the tough road will join this mission of immense potential sooner. Church in Peru, the people of God, are eagerly waiting and praying for shepherds. Do we care to be part of the prayer answered?



The Church in Peru is both active and vibrant. It boasts of five canonized saints and many more in the process of canonization. From its inception in the sixteenth century, it is heavily dependent on foreign support both for resources and dedicated clergy and religious men and women.

A group of approximately ten women are seated in a row on a grassy area in front of a long, open-sided building with a thick thatched roof. They are wearing traditional Andean attire, including red and white patterned blouses, dark skirts with colorful borders, and orange-tipped hats. Several woven baskets filled with colorful wool are placed on the ground in front of them. In the background, a hillside is covered with green vegetation and several small, rustic houses with red roofs. A large red circle with a black arrow pointing to it is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

The church has a major role in training them in Sacramental Christian lives. We constantly motivate them to give their children both religious and secular education.

This parish was established on 18 June 1969 by the Augustine Fathers. In 2008 the Diocese handed over this parish to the CMI congregation and Rev. Fr. Joseph Areeplackal took over as the first CMI parish priest here. He was succeeded by Rev. Frs. Emmanuel Gnavallil and Joseph Palackal. From December 2022 Father Tommy Moozhayil is serving here as the parish priest.

The parish is situated among the mountainous region 40 kilometers away from Lima and close to the Chosica township. The 20,000 people estimated to be living in this region live under poverty and constant risk of devastating landslides during rainy seasons. In the recent past itself, houses, roads, and live stocks were destroyed due to landslides following torrential rains. The parish priest has to work in coordination with the civil authorities and voluntary organizations to organize relief works during such natural calamities.

In addition to the Parish Church there are three chapels with regular Sunday Holy Masses and a convent. The nuns do a tremendous job in helping the parish activities. The faithful flock for Sunday masses celebrated in the parish church and in the chapels. A good number of faithful turns up regularly for weekday masses.

The profile of the population that make up the parish is multicultural; they are poor migrants from different parts of Peru, who came to Lima in search of better living and good education for their children. They start living in humble conditions with structures hardly resembling decent houses. They are always happy and content as typical with most of Peruvians.

The church has a major role in training them in Sacramental Christian lives. We constantly motivate them to give their children both religious and secular education. Thanks to the efforts of the predecessors and catechists, more and more youngsters are enrolling for first communion and confirma-

tion. There are nearly 100 children preparing for the first communion and Holy confirmation this year. Many couples who were in living-together relationships for years have been motivated to celebrate their wedding in the church and start a sacramental family life. Such families influence more individuals and families to take their Christian faith seriously. Children from such families show more affinity to the Church and the Lord Jesus Christ.





Peruvian Devotion: Señor De Milagros

Devotion to Señor the Milagros (Lord of the Miracles) is special to Peru. Through migrants the devotion has spread to different parts of the world, especially to the USA. The devotion celebrates Jesus the Lord who loved and suffered a lot for the people. The feast of Señor de Milagros is celebrated with much devotion in the month of October throughout Peru and in different parts of the Latin America. The grand procession taking place in Lima, the capital of Peru, has participation of hundreds of thousands (Lakhs) of devotees. It takes nearly twenty hours to complete.

This devotion has more significance as the people are seeking for protection from natural calamities like earthquake. Peru is prone to earthquake and many devastating earthquake had happened in October. The origin of this devotion has strong connection to a couple of devastating earthquakes that hit Lima during the 17th and 18th century.

A series of earthquakes that hit Lima in the years 1655, 1687, and 1746 destroyed Lima to shambles.

Although the monastery that had the mural of Señor de Milagros was totally destroyed, the wall carrying the mural and the mural were protected intact. It was too great a miracle to escape unnoticed. What began as an Afro-Peruvian tradition was increasingly adopted by the Creole middle class in the 18th century after the third earthquake, which destroyed the city of Lima and much of the coast what is now the department of Lima and its provinces from Chancay to Canete. According to the Peruvian historian Raúl Porras Barrenechea, the image of the Lord of Miracles was painted in 1651 by an Angolan slave named Pedro Dalcón. In this image he showed all his faith for Christ. The image depicts the moment of the death of Jesus on the cross with Our Lady and others witnessing at the foot of the cross.

Angolan blacks were the largest group among black slaves, but they were not highly valued (they were the cheapest) because they were considered sickly and not very prone to Christianization. The original settlers, the slaves from Africa were relocated to Pachacamilla. As time went by, this place became a place for social outcasts.

October is the purple month of Peru. The purple habit is a symbol of penitence, Austerity and Suffering, it is the color of Lent; but it is not something that was imposed on or has anything to do directly with the image of Cristo Moreno. Used since 1677, the purple habit is the official clothing of the festival. Tradition says that the Lord appeared to Antonia Lucía del Espíritu Santo, founder of the Nazarene institute, and granted her a purple habit, a rope to wear around her neck, and a crown of thorns. The devotees adorned with the purple habit flock to churches across Peru. Large images of Señor de Milagros are part of every church in Peru. The main feast falls on the 18th of October. During the novena days and the octave after the feast, the image is taken in colorful procession through the streets, and received in town squares and institutions. The heavy and large images are carried by several scores of devotees in purple habits amidst devotional chants and musical bands. During the month of October, we witness such small and large processions in almost every village, town and city in Peru.

Ariana Valentina Salazar Álvarez and her mother Janeth.

Janeth is the single mother of two lovely teenage girls. She is an Ecuadorian woman who frequents our San Benito Parish, being present every day at our community mass with her daughters. The eldest is a regular high school girl.

Ariana, the second daughter is a special child, thirteen years old. She is pushed to the church on a wheel chair from their house two kilometers away from the church. We never see them with long faces. The mother would turn up as a lector on a regular basis.

Ariana, the girl with special needs, would quietly participate the holy mass. She would receive the holy communion with much devotion. She has a very special smile, a heavenly smile, after receiving the sacred communion.

She needs assistance for everything in her life. She can't move her limbs on her, she communicates through some sounds which only her mother and elder sister understand. Yet she visits the church almost every day, thanks to the true hero, Janeth her mother.

Janeth is a true witness to true faith in God. She has totally surrendered to the will of God. As a mother she is an example of true love, dedication and sacrifice expecting nothing in return. Her trust in the Lord is heroic to say the least. Let us support little Ariana, and her beloved family through our prayers.



This devotion has more significance as the people are seeking for protection from natural calamities like earthquake. Peru is prone to earthquake and many devastating earthquake had happened in October.

Pampacolca and CMI Missionaries



Kurian Perumpallikunnel CMI
Peru

Pampacolca is a storehouse of possibilities and potential. May be on account of its high altitude and closeness to the heavens, through out the year Pampacolquinos enjoy a natural air conditioned climate.

Pampacolca has a long story to tell, a colourful and exciting story that predates the human inhabitation in her enchanting and picturesque territory! There was a time when these mountain ranges were shaken and quivered under the heavy footsteps of massive dinosaurs that roamed around these regions. They have imprinted and left for the posterity their footprints on the molten rocks spewed out by the volcano Coropuna, which at present remains dormant under a heavy blanket of snow.

“Apu Coropuna” (in Quechua language it means “Lord Coropuna”) is a compound volcano located in the Andes mountains of south-east-central Perú, is the source of water and life in Pampacolca. The upper reaches of Coropuna consist of several perennially snowbound conical summits that reaches an altitude of 6,377 metres (20,922 ft) above sea level. Below an elevation of 5,000 metres, thrives the parish of Pampacolca comprising various vegetation belts which include grasslands, bushes, trees, pastures and agricultural areas. The Pampacolquinos are either farmers or pastors.

Farmers produce potatoes (Perú is the native place of potatoes and there are above 3000 varieties of potatoes cultivated here!), corn (Perú has a share in the domestication of corn as well. The varieties and colours of corn cultivated here in Perú would rival even the colours of rainbow!). The climate here is conducive for the growth of all sorts of fruit bearing trees and hence truckloads of fruits are carried down from here to the rest of the world all through the year.

Quite a lot of Pampacolquinos are involved in animal husbandry and milk production and products. Besides cattle, sheep, goats, horses and donkeys Perú has its national animal “Llama” (pronounced “Jama”), “Alpacas” and “Vicuas”. They are reared for carrying luggage, as well as for meat and wool.

Under the protection and support of

“Lord Coropuna” various civilizations like Wari, Tiahuanaco and Inca populated these areas. The ruins of Maucallacta are a great architectural complex of at least one hundred buildings, houses and large shelters around the main temple. Its origin pre-dates the Incas, although by looking at its walls it is clear it became an important Inca ceremonial centre. Five architectural styles are found in this complex that covers 50 hectares and was used for a span of 300 years.

The parish of Pampacolca came into existence through the evangelising efforts of the Spanish missionaries. The baptismal records of the parish dates back to the second half the sixteenth century. In fact, this parish has a special relevance in the annals of the history of South American freedom struggle.

Juan Pablo Vizcardo y Guzmán, whose clarion call against Spanish dominion initiated and triggered the freedom struggle in the entire South American continent, was born, baptised and brought up in Pampacolca! His call for independence and self-rule resonated far and wide until the whole continent was liberated from the foreign “conquistadores”.

CMI history of Pampacolca

The Pampacolca parish is dedicated to Our Lady of Assumption. Besides the main Church it has 28 chapels supported and maintained by respective communities. This parish was entrusted to the CMI Congregation in the year 2006, while Fr. George Vellaringattu was serving the nearby parish of Santa Ursula, Viraco as its parish priest. He managed both the parishes until Fr. Tomy Joseph Vandakunnel took charge as the parish priest in the same year.

An earthquake that shook the entire region on the 23rd of June 2001 severely damaged the parish church and was badly in need of restoration. The main and primary task of Fr. Tomy was to restore the “Iglesia Matriz” which was declared as a “national treasure” or “patri-

monio cultural”, back to its ancient glory. With the collaboration and strong support of the local authorities, parishioners and well-wishers he accomplished that Herculean task during his ten-year tenure. In the year 2016 Fr Jose Palackal, a good organiser and a strict disciplinarian replaced Fr Tomy. During his three-year tenure Fr Jose tried his best to bring order and decorum in the parish life. The people still remember with gratitude the bitter lessons of discipline he taught them. Fr Jino Sebastian Kanji-rathinkal couldn't do much since his three-year term from 2019 to 2022, he was severely debilitated by Covid 19, the pandemic. However, he got involved and cooperated with the municipal authorities and coordinated activities to alleviate the sufferings of his people. His service mindedness and availability are still fondly remembered by his beneficiaries.

Pampacolca History in making: It was in the month of May, 2022, that Fr Kurian Perumpallikunnel and Fr Jacob Keekarikkatt took charge of Pampacolca parish.

Pampacolca is famous for its festivities. Since every community and chapel have their feasts, which are evenly distributed all around the year, there is no time in the year without celebrations and religious festivities. The “Semana Santa” (Holy Week) celebrations of Pampacolca deems special mention. It is declared as a “Patrimonio Cultural” by the Peruvian government and it attracts thousands of pilgrims and tourists annually. It is a colourful display of the ancient traditions and customs of the native culture, readjusted to accommodate Christian beliefs and Spanish customs.

Pampacolca is a storehouse of possibilities and potential. May be on account of its high altitude and closeness to the heavens, throughout the year Pampacolquinos enjoy a natural air conditioned climate. Just like the climate, the people too are charming and welcoming. In this predominantly matriarchal society, women are quite visible and powerful.

Since fortunately nobody has told them or taught them that they are weak, frail, vulnerable and they do not deserve freedom, we can't find any traces of frailty, weakness or lack of confidence among these Peruvian women. They are strong, hardworking and bold. They are independent and courageous too.

In fact, it is the Peruvian men who are in need of emancipation and encouragement. I often found it difficult to get boys as altar servers, while girls are ever ready to assist. It is not just the case of boys, the entire male folks are the same, a bit subdued and dispirited. They often require a few pegs of alcohol to demonstrate their vigor and virility! In consuming alcohol, women are never behind men! In general, Peruvian women are very confident and assertive in their families and their communities. Without the strong support and assistance of women nothing substantial is going to happen in the parish.

The Catholic Life of Pampacolquinos:

Although the communities and the individuals claim that they are all Catholics, due to the scarcity and unavailability of priests, their religious practices are limited to the annual festal celebrations! They work hard and amass enough money to spend lavishly on food and drinks during their annual feast. The height of the heap of beer bottles decides the splendour and success of their festal celebrations!

The fireworks, band sets, bullfights, orchestra teams, whole night dancing around the bonfire, availability of hot drinks and food are the main ingredients of their celebration. Even though participation in the holy mass is considered optional and non essential, the opportunity to bear the image carrier on their shoulders is considered obligatory and essential to bring showers of blessings upon the participants.

A Way of the Cross to "Cristo Redentor" It is the wish and request of our holy father, pope Francis that

the pastors should have the smell of sheep! Peruvians are expressive people. They need to express their faith and sentiments concretely. Our pastoral prudence should enable us to search, discover and to implement activities that enhance and promote the faith life of the people. As a result we are presently involved in the process of developing a "Way of the Cross" that leads to the huge image of "Cristo Redentor" that towers above Pampacolca.

We intend to develop and incorporate this event as part of our "Semana Santa" celebration which is a "patrimonio cultural" of Perú. In fact, in January 2019, Eddy Medina ('Consejero regional' of that time) had proposed and inaugurated a "Religious Tourism" plan connecting places of interest like the Sanctuary of Yato, Iglesia Matrix, Cristo Redentor, Maucayacta, Hot water springs, Cotavasy, etc. We hope and dream that eventually Pampacolca will be a religious pilgrimage destination for the rest of the world!

Everybody is cordially invited to Pampacolca, "un pedazo del paraíso" (a piece of the paradise)!

The Peruvian men who are in need of emancipation and encouragement. I often found it difficult to get while girls are ever ready to assist.





Sanctuary of our Lady of Chapi, Arequipa - Perú



The devotion of the image of our Lady of Chapi has begun three centuries ago, the statue was sent to Perú from Spain. I was appointed as Rector on October 31st 2005, the situation was that the previous Temple was destroyed by an earthquake in 2001, and the image of our Lady was brought to Arequipa for 4 years.

After I started my ministry here, in 2006, I talked to the State Chief about the construction of the new Basilica. We made a contract between the State Government and the Archdiocese of Arequipa. The State Government has invested 12 million US dollars in the construction of the new Basilica and the Sanctuary Square. After 17 years of work it is almost complete and in the near future we will bless and inaugurate the new Temple, a Cardinal representing the Holy Father is expected to come from Rome. Along with the construction of the shrine, the rectory too is being constructed.

This is a National Sanctuary, and it is expected to be declared an international Sanctuary soon. Every day we have two holy masses and during the weekends we have three. Every week we have baptisms, blessings of vehicles, blessings of sick people and children and lots of confession. The main feast is the 30th of April and 1st of May, these days we receive around two hundred thousand pilgrims that visit the Virgin Mary of Chapi. Other feasts are the mother's day, the Nativity of the Virgin Mary (September 8th). On such festive days around 15 thousand people comes to visit the Virgin Mary. During the whole year around 5 hundred thousand people are estimated to come here in the desert, where the shrine is located, to visit the Virgin Mary.

A lot of pilgrims come here to receive words of wisdom and counseling because of their problems they have, we hear them, guide and bless so they return to their

homes relieved and consoled, these are just some of the many and many miracles that God operates in this place through the intercession of the Virgin Mary and our humble ministry.

With me I have also a Vice Rector, a young Italian priest recently ordained, two seminarians, and we live together as a religious community, we also have many youth volunteers, around 35, that help us in the administration, cleaning and religious service in the Sanctuary, they come on Weekends and also week days from the City of Arequipa that is located 60 km away. I also want to share with you two experiences amid many that I have witnessed in the Sanctuary.

The first is about the life of Fanny, she is a girl that I knew when she was two years old in my previous parish, she had a crisis when she was thirteen years old, her parents brought her to the Sanctuary for vacations, and I had the time to talk to her, help and bring hope in her life, since those days until now she never stop coming to the Sanctuary every Saturday and Sunday, and she always thanks me saying that she is happy now because she started a new life, now she is a lawyer and secretary of a judge, very devout of the Virgin Mary of Chapi.

The second is about another girl called Estefani, she is originally from the village of Chapi, but she studied in the city of Arequipa, she never came to church, and started to live a worldly life. During the Covid 19 time, in 2020, she was here in the village of Chapi, with her mother; I invited her to come to help me, she was very helpful transmitting the Holy Masses and the rosary through Facebook. Finally, she started to come every day, she is very intelligent and has learned how to participate in Holy Mass, how to be an acolyte, and help us in many other activities of the life in the Sanctuary. She is living a new life, full of hope and joy, also studying the last year to become a lawyer.



Fr. Scaria Kumaramangalam CMI
Peru

I am a mission, always;
you are a mission, always;
every baptized man
and woman is a mission.



Dear,

Every baptized
is a missionary.
We can become
a missionary in different ways,
in whatever situation you are.
St Therese of Child Jesus,
Patron of missionaries
had never been to a mission yet
was a missionary to the core of
her heart. She became a mis-
sionary
by praying for
the mission and the missionaries.
So CMission offers
the forum to become
a missionary by praying
for the missionary.
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nities,
retreat centres, and prayer cen-
tres- can adopt missionaries and
pray for them.

Those who wish to join,

One Family One Missionary Prayer Programme

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Chosen ones are
Let's always do it
ready for it.
together.

Evangelize



Mission Meditation



Paulson Muthupeedika CMI
Bhopal

Solung Gidi is one the most important festivals of the Adi Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. It is celebrated with traditional gaiety and fervor in the Adi belt of Arunachal Pradesh. Last year I joined this celebration at Tuting in the northern tip of Arunachal Pradesh just 35 kms away from the China boarder. One of the important rituals in this celebration is the sacrifice of Mitun. Mitun- bison- is a huge domestic animal which wanders freely in search of food in forests and mountains. Someone in the community either donates one Mitun or the community collectively purchases a Mitun for the Solung puja. The animal is brought to the pre-prepared puja stand with the community singing and chanting. Then it is hanged from the neck on the strong stands erected for this very purpose. It is the considered view of the Adis that by sacrificing the Mitun, their sins will be forgiven and the Gods, rather than evil spirits that keep bothering them, will be pleased with this sacrifice and they will not be bothered by these evils spirits any longer. Once the Mitun is dead, it is taken down and is cooked and served to the entire community and a small piece of meat is sent to the home of every one.

In Leviticus 16: 6 we read, "Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. ... Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall

make atonement for himself and for his house; he shall slaughter the bull as a sin offering for himself. ... He shall take some of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times.

Jn. 1:29 – "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

I think there is a lot of similarity between the sin offering described in Leviticus 16 and what the Adi tribe did during their Solung Gidi. We see in Gospel of John 1:29, John the Baptist alludes Jesus Christ to be the lamb that will be killed to take away the sins of the world.

The idea is somebody has to suffer for atoning the sins of the community. So the Israelites and here the Adi tribe think that by offering an animal, their sins will be forgiven. We the Catholics rightly think that our sins are forgiven by the salvific death of Jesus Christ.

Sin causes damage to the soul and body. To repair this damage done to the soul and body some sort of atonement has to be made. The pain and suffering of the animal sacrificed is considered to be the reparation for the damage caused to the soul and body by committing sin. When we sin against the law of love we cause damage to some persons in their soul and body. This damage can be repaired only by our undergoing some pain as atonement for the pain caused to the other.

The pain and suffering we experience from others unknowingly or intentionally, can be channelized for the reparation of our sins; pain and suffering we cause to others.

We see that Jesus did not react to the pain and sufferings caused to him during his passion and death on the cross fully knowing that it was his atonement for the sins of the world, to pay the price for pur-

chasing our salvation from all our sins and offences.

When we gladly offer the suffering and pain that come our way intentionally or unintentionally we also become the channels of grace and salvation to that extend.

When we are wrongly accused of something, is it possible for us not to plead for establishing our innocence or for our justification?

Can we offer this pain and suffering for the sake someone else, for somebody's healing or some needs that others have asked us to pray for?

Can we, in this age when we always raise our voice for justice and rights, keep quiet deciding to suffer silently for our own sins and the sins of others and for the sake of favours for others?

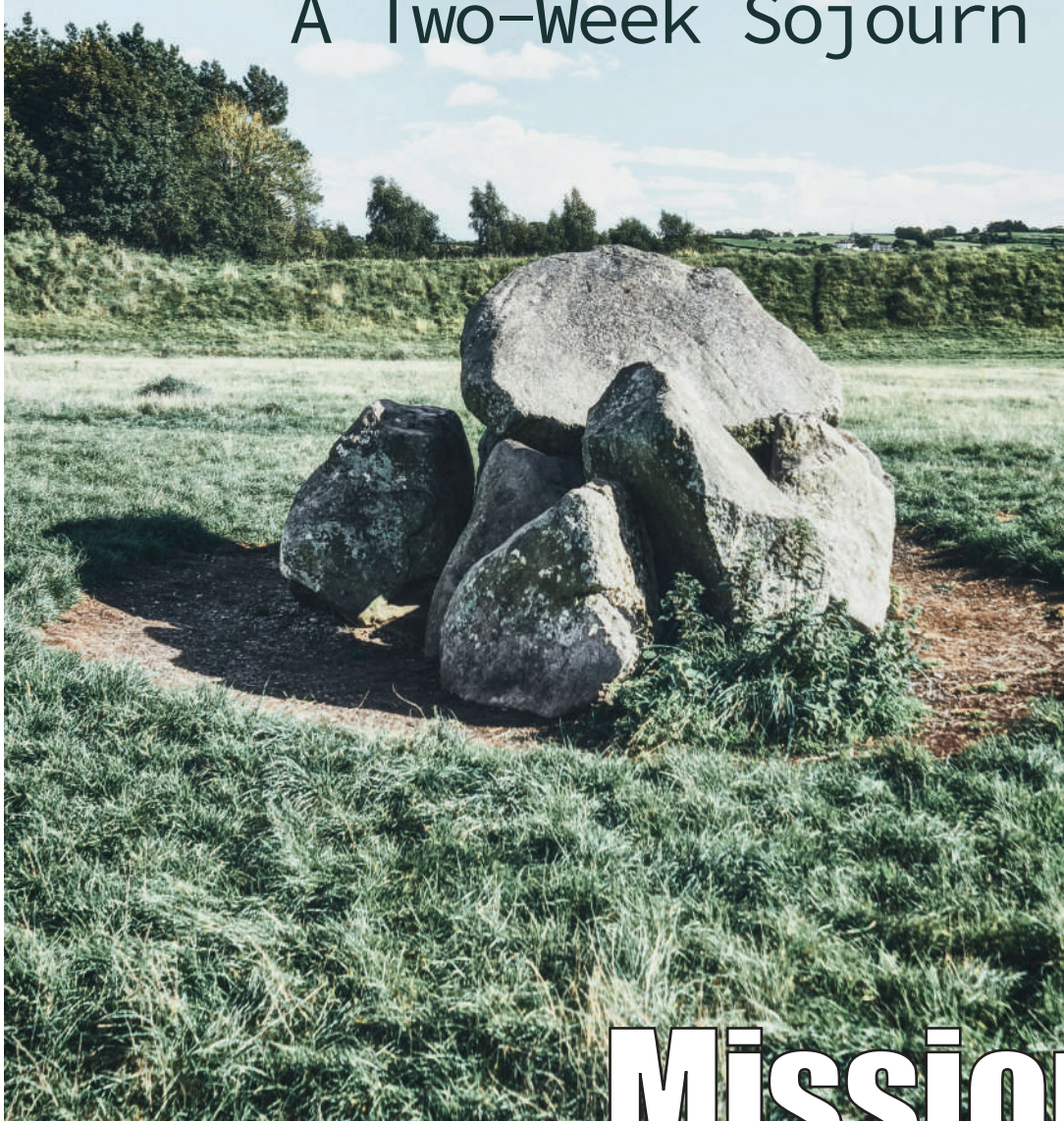
The Adis offer the sacrifice of Mitun to please the evil spirits which keep bothering them. They think that by sacrificing the Mitun, the evil spirits will be pleased with them and for some time at least they may not be bothered or disturbed by the evil spirits.

Our accepting the pain and suffering is not for pleasing the evil spirits but rather participation in the salvific suffering of Jesus Christ as atonement for sins.

In the silent suffering and death of Jesus the evil spirits were not happy but rather they were defeated and Jesus attained a name greater than every other name and at His name every knee should bend in heaven and earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father- Philip-ines 2: 9-11

Our silent suffering and accepting the pain will give us an edge over the designs and plans of the evil one, and fortify us to face any challenge being thrown at us by the world under the sway of the evil powers.

Immersed in Village Life: A Two-Week Sojourn



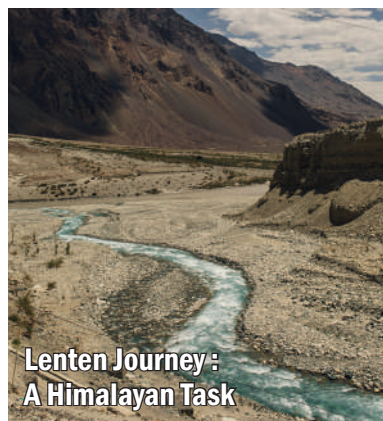
Jibin Manakuzhiyil CMI
Rajkot

Mission Villages

Embarking on an odyssey to a secluded village opened the door to a rich cultural panorama, unfolding over a transformative two weeks. Nestled within a family exuding warmth and a village steeped in tradition, I became a transient member of their daily rhythm, unravelling a trove of experiences and reflections. The family hosting me held a prestigious status in the village, a community bonded by a shared social standing. Their affectionate nature and inclusive demeanour swiftly enveloped me, drawing me into their familial orbit. As I partook in their daily activities, from tending cattle to household chores, I gradually assimilated into the village's social fabric. The linguistic barrier, predominantly the local Gondi language and some other native dialects, posed an initial hurdle. However, the younger generation's grasp of Hindi eased communication, fostering friendships and seamless interactions. Nevertheless, the spectre of witchcraft lingered, an unsettling facet gripping the lives of those who had previously embraced Christianity to escape its haunting clutches. Adjusting to the household chores and limited facilities, initially challenging, eventually morphed into a familiar routine. The simplicity of their daily life, commencing with early morning activities and participation in family chores, offered a glimpse into their seasonal rhythms and impending harvesting festivities. Conversations often revolved around comparisons between village life and city living, intertwining discussions about cultural practices and customs.

Notably, the village's distinct cultural practices, such as the spectacle of cockfighting and seasonal drinks like 'Hadiya' and 'Mahua' unveiled a world starkly different from my own. My role in sharing spiritual teachings, biblical stories, rosary recitation and music further bridged the gap, fostering mutual learning and understanding. An enlightening conversation with Sukram, the family's patriarch, illuminated their journey from non-realistic life and witchcraft

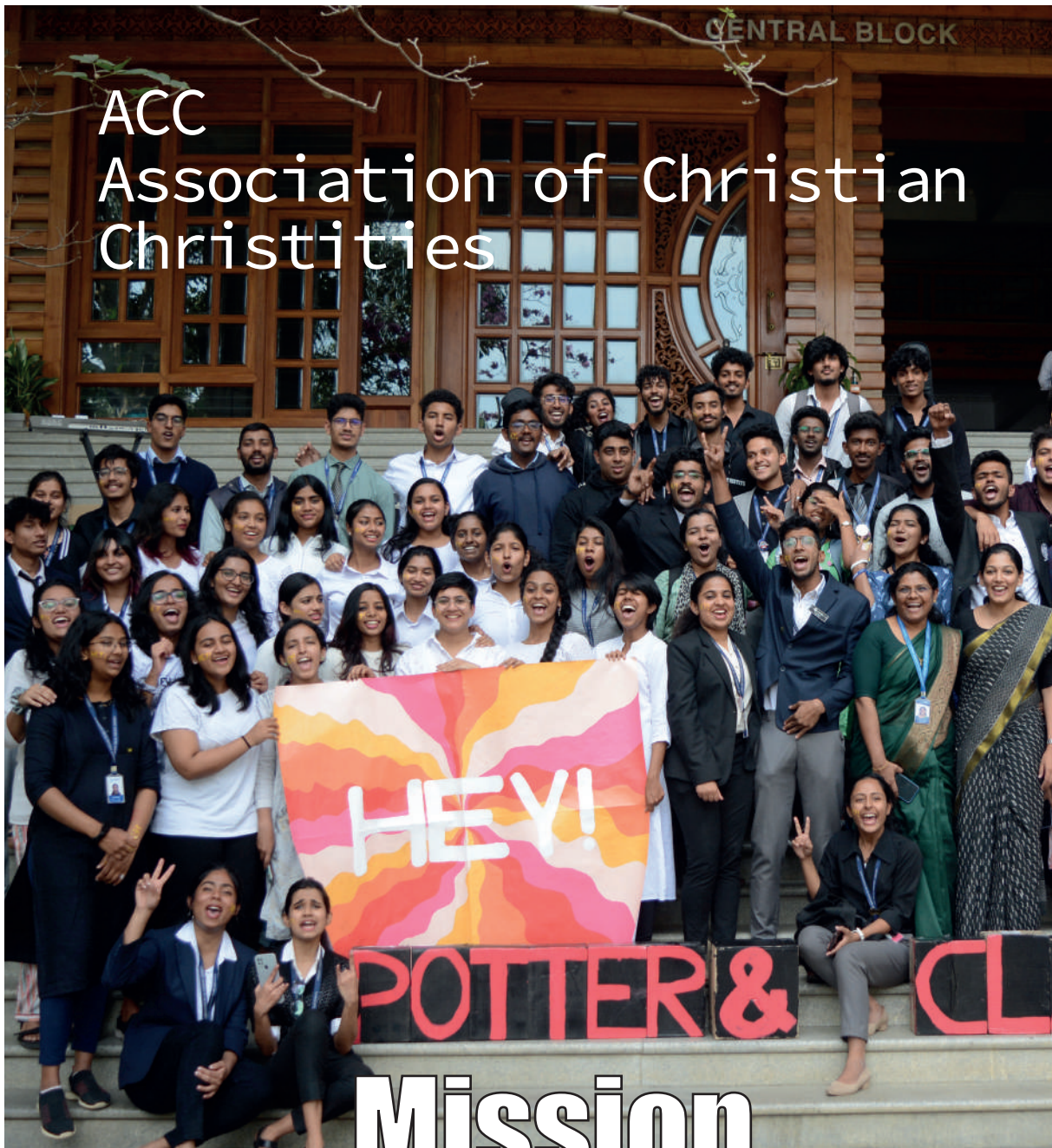
to embracing Christianity. Their belief in Jesus Christ's healing power transformed their lives, infusing them with unwavering faith. Witnessing their resilience and unwavering trust in God was a profound revelation. My time in the village offered a profound shift from my accustomed life. As I delved deeper into their daily challenges and shared spiritual support, I realized the simplicity and efficacy of faith in their lives. Their reliance on prayer and spiritual solace revealed the tangible impact and transformative power of unwavering belief. The lack of education and understanding sometimes led to their vulnerability, manifested in struggles with witchcraft and health crises. Yet, the overwhelming sense of community, their openness in sharing difficulties, and the transformative power of spiritual support emerged as profound takeaways. My two-week immersion in the village underscored the profound role of faith, community, and the resilience of the human spirit. The experience not only broadened my perspectives but also revealed the simplicity and potency of unwavering faith amidst life's complexities.



Traversing through the majestic mountains to reach their summit is always a daunting task, akin to conquering the Himalayas. However, once you reach the top, a sense of freedom envelops you. As we find ourselves in the Lenten season, Pope Francis reminds us in his Lenten message that "when our God reveals Himself, His message is always one of freedom." Each

Lenten season beckons us towards freedom, urging us to mature in our freedom and steer clear of falling back into slavery. Just as climbing a mountain demands physical strength and endurance, Lenten practices require spiritual fortitude and perseverance. Through prayer and fasting, individuals can deepen their relationship with God and strengthen their faith. While the journey through Lent may present challenges and difficulties, the rewards of spiritual growth and transformation make the effort worthwhile. The obstacles faced during Lent enable individuals to ascend to new spiritual heights and encounter God in a profound and meaningful manner. Similar to the sense of accomplishment and wonder experienced upon reaching a mountain peak, the Lenten season culminates in the joy and jubilation of Easter. By sacrificing and persevering throughout Lent, individuals can fully grasp the significance of Jesus' resurrection and revel in the joy of new life in Christ. Lent serves as a period of introspection, repentance, and rejuvenation, providing a chance for individuals to draw closer to God and deepen their faith. Just as climbing a mountain can be both challenging and rewarding, Lent offers a similar opportunity for spiritual growth and transformation. The swift flow of the Ganges River symbolizes the intensity and unwavering commitment required during this period of reflection, repentance, and sacrifice. Both journeys are challenging yet fulfilling, ultimately leading to a sense of accomplishment, inner resilience, and spiritual cleansing. Just as conquering a towering mountain or navigating the currents of a mighty river demands dedication, embracing the Lenten season can result in personal growth, transformation, and a deeper connection with one's faith. This Lenten season has the potential to liberate us from our shortcomings, allowing the love of Christ to guide us towards true freedom. May this daunting task find success, much like the Ganges flowing from its source in the mountains to its ultimate destination.

ACC Association of Christian Christities



Mission Collaborators



Andrea Vanessa Rego
Bangalore

The Association of Christian Christities (ACC) is a community consisting of Christian students studying in CHRIST (Deemed to be University). ACC finds its foundation in these dedicated individuals who share the common vision and mission of ministry through humble prayers and fellowship through faith. ACC organizes various events throughout the academic year. Beginning the year with the Annual Inaugural Mass, to the Christmas Celebration and Thanksgiving Mass ending a fruitful year. Each event and occasion is prayerfully planned and specially designed to focus on spreading the love of God and serves as a platform for the participants to receive God's abundant blessings.

The members of ACC meet regularly for prayer and reflection to enrich and deepen the beautiful fellowship they share. With its primary mission to reach out to the people of God, ACC works through five unique domains namely - Animation, Liturgy, Media and Communication, Outreach and Audio-Visual (Theatre, Dance and Music). Every individual who is a part of ACC, works with the intention to Serve God and fellow students in the university, eventually becoming messengers of the good news to the world. True to CHRIST University's Motto "Excellence and Service", every individual is committed to the pursuit of excellence through the act of 'Servant Leadership', following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

ACC's growth over the years has been a journey of discipleship and living the will of God in one's life. ACC envisions to be a student driven community that emphasizes on the human qualities of being an individual and a part of society by reflection on our lives and the fellowship shared. Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, every ACC member finds inspiration to work for the Glory of God and there are various steps in this spiritual journey to walk the narrow path. A journey through the year with ACC

begins with Alegre, an orientation programme organized for the first-year students of CHRIST, wherein students are acquainted with the virtue of 'servant leadership'.

The first step to become true servant leaders is humility, patience and earnestly seeking the Will of God. Through this, ACC finds its primary mission to be the devotion to the purpose of knowing and serving God and the celebration of Holy Mass is the main catalyst to strengthen the spiritual lives of all ACC members, who pledge by the Word of God - 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'. Without fail, Holy Mass is celebrated every Friday and days of obligation throughout the academic year. The Liturgical Domain has borne witness to the testimonies of student leadership in organizing the Holy Mass, a heavenly experience on our earthly mission, partaking as members of the body of the Church of Christ.

Just as God called Moses and the prophets to lead his people, ACC believes in the 'God does not call the qualified but qualifies the called'. The students who undertake the roles and responsibilities as ACC Leaders are anointed by the pastoral team through an anointing ceremony at the beginning of the year and the University Core Team of ACC is officially announced. As the chosen leaders, every member of the Core Team is called to be a 'fisher of men', through their words and deeds. The leadership model on which ACC functions is a testament of God's promise to his people through the Gospel, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." The leaders are pruned to lead in the wisdom and understanding that comes from the creator himself, looking upon the source of life, as branches that depend on the vine, an intertwining of humanity and divinity to truly live as the Children of God who were made in his image and likeness.



The training for these future Christian Leaders begins at Transcend, a Leadership Training Programme (LTP), with two days of retreat and two days of training. Transcend sparks the flame to bring students to their God experience and sets a blueprint for the leadership roles they will take up on campus. This is further branched out to the Denary Level with an effort to reach each classroom where students are given the opportunity to become leaders as Class Representatives (CRs). The ACC Leaders along with the CRs play a pivotal role in brainstorming innovative ideas of faith formation for Christites. A truly spiritual exercise to strengthen themselves and whoever they meet in their journey as leaders.

This Servant Leadership with the goal to improve life through Christ brings together a form of Ecumenism, to unite as one through prayer. Inspired by the Ecumenical Taize Community, ACC organized the Taize Prayer, a simple, meditative form of worship, calling everyone to dwell deeply on Christ's presence around and within us. Meaningful hymns, prayerful silence, and short readings helped guide the prayer in a candle-lit environment, encouraging everyone to 'come as you are'. In a world, where division works as the enemy's tool against us, moments of prayerful encounter reminds us that as 'warriors of God' the battle truly belongs to God and all that is expected from us as Jesus says is, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." - the hidden truth of Christian leadership and fellowship.

Every year as we prepare to welcome Baby Jesus into our hearts, the whole of ACC engages in a grandiose Christmas Celebration, sharing the message but most importantly the joy of Christmas throughout the campus. Apart from festive decorations, ACC focuses on the person of Jesus, once again teaching us to be reborn into Christ with simplicity, peace and

kindness in all that we do. Just like the story of the little drummer boy who didn't have a gift for the newborn baby but played his drum for the baby who smiled; the dance, music and theatre teams use their God-given talents to proclaim the good news on this joyous occasion.

The Founder's Day is celebrated on 3rd January every year in honour of our beloved founder St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, who used his calling to revolutionize Education in India. Through a commemorative ceremony, followed by the reflection of the life of St. Chavara and intercessory prayer, ACC always looks at St. Chavara as a source of motivation and guidance to one day be exemplary christian leaders. A Quiz Competition is held to test the knowledge we have about the Saint, a priest, a religious, a philosopher and a social reformer, a truly powerful role-model.

For spiritual revival of all Christites, the Annual Retreat is conducted with more than 1800 students participating in inner healing, Eucharistic Celebration, Interactive talks and sessions about the Christian Faith, prayer, song and dance. This also serves as an encouragement to further take part in the rigorous Discipleship Training Programme (DTP) where the participants engage in a week of retreat and training to be the true disciples of Christ. Such events bridge the gap between our academic and spiritual life, when we stray away from the nourishment of our souls. As human as we are, when we have 'faith the size of the mustard seed', we doubt and question God the way Job did in the Old Testament, which is why we learn to defend our Christian faith through Christian Apologetics. We are taught once again to rely on what Jesus promised us through his word, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Through his teachings, we as Christian leaders are equipped with the power to move the mountains and split the seas that lie ahead in

our journey to eternal life.

A testimony of leadership and passion for audio-visual arts, Potter and Clay Productions, an inspiration from the Holy Spirit constantly working through ACC, was born. Established as a Production of Musical Theatre, it is now the flagship event of ACC. Potter and Clay Productions is a living testimony of the divine providence of the Almighty. A platform for all the Christites to engage in various domains like dance, music and theatre. A live drama, we witnessed 150+ on-stage participants including our non-christian brethren who came together to spread the love that one personally experiences with Christ. The debut play 'HEY: He Encounters You' taught each and everyone of us that miracles happen when we let go and let God take the lead, walking in faith and not by sight, fully trusting the Creator of the Universe with the life that he himself gave us. In God's time, he encountered each of us and we became a new creation in the hands of the Potter who formed us from the dust of the Earth. Now, the prayer of our hearts is, "O Lord, You are our Father, We are the clay, and You our potter; And all of us are the work of Your hand", to serve the Lord by loving our neighbours as ourselves and to be the reflection of Christ to all who encounter us in our journey of servant leadership.



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and the prophets to lead his people,
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A close-up photograph of a group of African children. In the foreground, a young girl with a wide, joyful smile shows her teeth. Behind her, several other children are visible, some with their hands near their faces, looking towards the camera with expressions of curiosity and happiness. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the children's faces.

Think Creatively,
Act Decisively
and Live Graciously

For
Mission

CMI Kenyan Scholastics

Here is a reflection about mission and basically the future of CMI mission generally based on the Regency experience. Have tried to base this reflection on the title, Think Creatively, Act Decisively and Live Graciously. This title I find it so profound and perfect in analyzing the mission and the future of mission in the CMI congregation. As mentioned early I will base this article based on personal experience during my regency period since the period of regency is a period to exercise our mission in a practical way. From my regency time have come up with a philosophy of life; that as a CMI religious, on the aspect of missions, in all our doing and undertakings; we should aim at making our mission Historic, Remarkable and Unforgettable to the people of God.

Now the big question is HOW CAN WE MAKE OUR MISSION AS A RELIGIOUS CONGREGATION HISTORIC, REMARKABLE, AND UNFORGOTTABLE? This will be answered by the title of this article, which is Think Creatively, Act Decisively and Live Graciously. As our congregation is composed of members who work in different missions, we have to adopt a philosophy of thinking creatively, from that, act more decisively on our thoughts and let our actions help us to live a life full of grace, so as to have an impact to the people of God whom we serve. This will make CMI mission more historic, remarkable and unforgettable in the body of Christ, which is the church. How can we Realize this Philosophy among Ourselves?

From my pastoral internship as a regent, dealing with different kinds of people. Living among them, and interacting with them in different levels of my pastoral ministry, I have first come to understand that the world's greatest need is great men; someone who will understand that there is no greater conquest than victory over oneself, i.e., mastering our thoughts, actions and minding our living. That why we realize that the real worth of a person is achieved, not so much by

speaking, but as by thinking creatively, acting decisively and living graciously. This is true since our impact should be felt by the people we minister. "The teacher who practices what he or she preaches will influence students more than the mouthers of textbooks. The listener to unvirtuous teachers may well say: 'I cannot hear what you say because I see the way you live.'"

The correlation between the way I preach and the way I live is intimate. Credibility and behavior are twins." Archbishop Fulton Sheen. As CMI's working in mission we should seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and put into actual practice the law that it is only by dying to the life of the body that we ever live to the life of the spirit. We should strive to have the bravery for the setbacks and taunts of a Good Friday to win the joy of Easter Sunday. We should, like a lightning-flash, burn away the bonds of feeble interests which tie down our energies to the world. We should arise with a fearless voice, like John the Baptist, and with determination and a lot of interest face the mission and make a way where seems to be no way for the mission of Christ to blossom and flourish.

The question to meditate together as a congregation which focuses on mission and on mission is; Who will gain victories, not by stepping down from the Cross and compromising with the world, but who will suffer in order to conquer the world for our mission to attain its intended depths and heights? We must be willing go out and try new mission, as the saying goes we do not do not learn to ride a bicycle in a classroom. The practicability part of mission should be taken with a lot of interest. We shall know which mission to focus on if we move out and meet people, interact with them and learn what they need most. Also on the aspect of mission we need the virtue of stickability, that is the ability to stick on the mission we are entrusted or assigned without becoming hopeless and letting go. Even at times of difficulties and setbacks as members who are on mission we should stick

the more on our assigned work, the mission.

From what we do now as members on a mission will shape how the future of missions will be. Since scholars say if you want a bright future begin today. The future mission can only be molded today. If today's mission is successful then there is greater hope against hope that the future is bright. But if we fail now then, we are in trouble. In conclusion, involvement in the mission, by our thought, our action and a graceful living is more important to liberate and transform our mission. Since all these impact should be felt by others from our contemporary living. So in order to save our missions we must act as if we are regenerated. So Nietzsche was right: "How do you expect me to believe in a redeemer if you do not act as if you had been redeemed?" so our actions can have more impacts. Also as the saying goes, "the speaker must be on fire in order to enkindle the audience." So we must be on fire for mission and then our mission will be enkindled. I assume without further ado that the grace of God is the one thing necessary, and that God will give that grace to those who do His will.

IN BRIEF news / events

On October 22, the acclaimed journalist, Mr. Vinod K Jose, engaged in a session with major superiors of the Syro-Malabar religious congregations at Chavara Hills. The discussion centered on the prevailing situation of Christians in India, with a specific focus on Manipur.



Grace Fest, a gathering of our esteemed priests aged seventy and beyond, took place at the Prior General's House from November 14 to 16. A total of 66 vibrant participants actively engaged themselves in the program, which was graced by the presence of Bishops George Madathikandathil, Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, and Antony Kariyil. They were enriched by the wisdom of Fr Benny Nalkara CMI and Mr George Gloria, illuminated the event.



The last quinquennial program series took place at Prior General's House from November 24 to 26, 2023. Over 25 young CMI members actively engaged in the sessions, focusing on the renewal, reflection, evaluation of their religious and priestly life, and sharing of experiences.



Please send information on releasing books , videos, Apps and its images for the next issue before 25 Noveber 2020
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IN BRIEF news / events

A workshop on 'Human Formation' for Formators was conducted at the CMI Prior General's House from October 23 to 26. The event saw the participation of 55 individuals from our congregation and other Syro-Malabar male congregations. The entire program was organised under the guidance of Fr Hans Zollner SJ, a German Jesuit, theologian, and psychologist. The sessions were enriched by the expertise of Dr Anna Mary Thumma SCCG and Dr Joe Paul Kiriyanthan.



Shalom Television, in collaboration with Men in Cassocks, the Music Ministry of the CMI congregation, showcased a special six-episode Christmas program titled "Jingle Vibes". The program, widely praised for its content and innovation, was broadcasted in the five days leading up to Christmas and on Christmas Eve. The shooting sessions took place at our Prior General's House on November 17-18, 2023. All six episodes of Jingle Vibes are accessible on YouTube.



Freshers Day 2024

Image Gallery



Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession for Rev. Fr Prior General



Golden Jubilee of Priestly Ordination



Reception to the Major Archbishop



Reception for New Priests



Printed and Published by Josey Thamarassery CMI for the CMI General Secretariat for Pastoral and Evangelization Chavara Hills, Kakkanad, Post Box 3105, Kochi 682 030 Kerala, India.

<http://wwwcmi.org.in/> Printed at Viani Printings, Kochi.