

CHAVARUL

Testament of a Loving Father

Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara

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2018

Chavara Central Secretariat

Chavara Hills, Kakkanad, Post Box 3105

Kochi 682 030 Kerala, India

Testament of a Loving Father (1868)

Original in Malayalam:

Oru Nalla Appante Chavarul

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English Translation

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Publisher

Chavara Central Secretariat

Chavara Hills, Kochi

150th Year Revised and Updated Edition

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Cover Design

Printartz, Kochi

Layout

CCS, Kakkanad

Printing

Viani Press, Kochi

Chavara Central Secretariat

Chavara Hills, Kakkanad, Post Box 3105

Kochi 682 030 Kerala, India

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DEDICATION

My beloved children,

In flesh and blood, I am the son of Kuriakose Chavara of the parish of Chennamkary. The omnipotent God most kindly brought me into this world. As I have been born in this family and from these parents, it is but natural that, in the order of charity and justice, I am bound to be grateful and to serve you. However, other than the few good deeds that have been done in general, there is nothing noteworthy enough that I have done for you. Hence, I bequeath to you this document in my own handwriting. This script will not perish even when I am dead and gone. So, I entrust this cherished treasure to you, my children of the Kainakari Church.

This is my last testament (will) given to you, my siblings and family members, and children both in the order of spirit and flesh. Let this be a mark of the fact that you are my successors. The countless favours God has bestowed

upon you are not entirely due to your meritorious lives, but earned also by the true love and trust of your forefathers. Hence, you must ensure that you do not lose it! Do remember that I came into this world and that I left it by copying this testament by as many as possible to preserve and perpetuate it in your homes. Keep the original locked in a box in the chapel. On the first Saturday of every month, all of you shall come together and read it; this shall be a commemoration of my death anniversary; there is nothing else you need to do to remember me.

Lastly, every month, after you have read this testament, you may whisper a short prayer on my behalf: "O! Lord, keep the soul of thy servant also in the abode of the just."

INTRODUCTION

A good Christian family is the image of heaven. The *raison d'être* of family is that the members live together by the bond of blood and affection, with children duly respecting and obeying their parents, walking peacefully before God and each one, seeking eternal salvation according to his or her proper state of life. The only sweet consolation for a person experiencing trials and tribulations in the sorrowful valley of this world is to belong to and live in a family where love, order, and peace reign. Likewise, it is most distressing for members to live in a family where order and peace do not prevail and where no one is concerned about the service of God and their own eternal salvation.

How sad and unfortunate are the families that have no concern about orderliness in their homes? How many of such rich, famous, and respected families have been ruined? How often have the behaviour and attitude of these

families led to quarrels, commission of sins, destruction, and death? Praying for divinely inspired clarity and peace of mind, I have framed these rules of conduct for families with the intention of their avoiding sin and destruction resulting from disorderliness. May I appeal to everyone to wholeheartedly follow and carefully enforce these precepts as a counsel coming from your revered ancestors!

Part 1

PRECEPTS FOR FAMILIES

Love

1. "Love one another" (Jn 13:34). Forgive the mistakes and shortcomings of each other. If you do so, you will experience peace on earth and eternal reward in heaven. How lamentable it is to find a home where there is discord and acrimony between brothers and sisters. Our Lord himself has stated that every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined (Mt 12:25). A family that experiences discord and fight among its members will soon perish. If you are not ready to forgive the mistakes and wrongdoings of your family members, how will they forgive you? If they should forgive you for mistakes you may make in future, shouldn't you forgive them today for theirs? If you love only those who have not harmed you, then you are doing

what people of other faiths and total strangers, who do not know each other, do. Should you voluntarily create more woes and difficulties than what our great father Adam has bequeathed already? Woe unto those who cause quarrels in families!

There is an instance of an old woman who incited several quarrels in her home. The devil appeared before her and offered her a bag full of gold and took her to the hell as his counsel, saying that she had successfully accomplished in three days what he had been unable to achieve in three years!

The honour and blessing of a family lies in coexisting without any quarrels and to be on good terms with everyone. Even animals retaliate against those who resent them. The ability to overlook faults in others and to forgive them is possible only for those who are really strong, prudent, and honour-

able. Once, while Emperor Constantine was walking along the road escorted by his royal troop, a man from the street came up and slapped him. Immediately, his people sought permission to retaliate and kill the offender. The Emperor, however, replied: "If I do what even my lowest officer can do, what merit is there in it? I, however, forgive him and that is the mark of the great might I have as an Emperor."

2. Civil litigations ruin families. Even in the most just case, many a litigant has come to rue the fact that it would have been better not to have gone to court. No one has been happy or better off by having gone in for civil litigation.
3. Celebrating family festivals and other commemorations on Sundays and days of obligation is an evil practice that, finally, leads the soul to ruin. Sunday is the Lord's Day.

Such devious habits and practices are the inventions that turn the Lord's Day into devil's day. Moreover, it is a deplorable custom, forbidden by God and the Church, for the bereaved family members not to attend the Church and to participate in other spiritual services on Sundays and days of obligation.

4. Don't make it a habit to borrow money, except for any urgent necessities; try to repay your debts as quickly as possible. Don't lend money to anyone except on the ground of charity. The wealthiest family is the one which is not in debt. If there are outstanding Mass obligations or any other debt left by parents or forefathers, hasten to fulfil them with zeal, as it is most perilous to ignore them. For, Divine wrath befalls on families burdened with such unfulfilled obligations.

Humility

5. Don't show off the status of your wealth. He who displays all his wealth is considered to be of lower status. Very often, the one who styles himself as rich will soon go begging. King David, being proud of his might and superiority, once ordered a census of his people; soon Divine wrath befell his people in the form of an epidemic throughout his kingdom wiping out a major portion of the population (Sam 24).
6. Be frugal in spending, and don't spend beyond your means in celebrating anniversaries and festivals. For, no one knows how long one can keep up such a style. The light of a mini lamp that burns longer is preferable to a torched haystack that blazes for a while and gets extinguished instantaneously. When Democritus, a renowned philosopher, was once asked as to who is the best among human beings, he answered: "The one who

least exhibits oneself is the greatest." A scholar once counselled a distressed man who had spent all his wealth on extravagant feasts and marriages and had become a pauper: "Brother, if you had not burnt away your lamp during the day, you could have lighted it at night."

Relatives and Friends

7. 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.

8. Don't contract relationship with families that lack order and fear of God. For, it is not the rich who bring goodness and delight into your family, but the orderly and God-fearing relatives. How many families have been distressed and ruined due to their regrettable association with rich relatives.

In France, a certain man had an only son. He made strenuous efforts to marry his son off to the daughter of an aristocratic woman. The marriage was, finally, solemnized on condition that all his ancestral wealth would be bequeathed to his son. After a while, his own son along with the bride's family began to resent his lower status and, hence, he was dismissed from the household. He went begging and was forced to feed himself on the remains of the food thrown out of his son's house during feasts and commemorations.

9. Don't entertain all sorts of people in your house, but receive only those who are well-mannered and God-fearing. As the old saying goes, "show me your friends and I will tell you who you are."
10. Let everyone know that your house is not a place for indecent talk, unchristian conversations, grum-

bling and uncharitable criticism of neighbours or anyone else. You must know that punishment will befall upon you for entertaining discussion on the shortcomings and evil deeds of others in your home. There was a man who habitually went around speaking ill of others. He ended up mad and began to bite his own tongue which was infested with worms and boils; he eventually died an unfortunate death due to the resulting infections.

Industriousness

11. Don't become too materialistic and keep acquiring novel items; instead, try hard to improve the holdings you already possess. The wealth of a family does not lie in amassing innumerable possessions, but in their quality. An industrious man lived happily with a limited number of assets. Some envious people accused him of hiding some priceless treasures, and took him to court. The king immediately

ordered his assets to be catalogued and assessed. He was, however, acquitted honourably when he informed the court that his treasure was a small plot of land, which was transformed into gold as he had worked hard on it and shed his sweat on its soil.

12. Labour according to your status in life. Refusing to work is not the style of a respectable person, but would fit only the indecent, who do not have a family and progeny. Laziness is the mother of all vices; it ends up in inculcating bad habits such as drinking. Alcoholism is a reprehensible evil in the society and the worst act before God. Kathon, a Roman chieftain, not only ordered that everyone desirous of living in Rome should show his or her toughened hands resulting from hard work to merit the disposition but also decreed that the Nobles and the Lords carry on their person

the tools of their respective trade when they are out on the streets.

13. Business is not only risky for your soul but also for your wealth. If there is no other option to make a living, you are not forbidden from pursuing business. It should, however, be carried out with due care, honesty, and justice. No unjust trader has been found to make steady and continuous progress in life. Riches amassed by fraud and deceit will melt away like snow.

There were two tradesmen who never prospered in their business despite adopting many tricks and frauds. One day they approached the confessional and confessed their tricks and frauds. The confessor advised them to desist from fraudulent and dishonest practices. When they acted accordingly, with God's abundant blessings, they prospered within one year.

Act of Charity

14. Days on which you have not rendered any good to others will not be reckoned in the book of life. Be desirous of others' love and respect than they becoming fearful of you. Let no beggar leave your home empty handed; likewise, don't hesitate, as much as you can, to give alms.

A man performed at least one charitable act on a daily basis as he was convinced that God the Creator has decreed it obligatory to render others some good every day. One day, while at supper, recalling that he had not rendered any good to anyone else on that day, he first attended to the matter at hand before having his supper.

15. Extravagance and miserliness are both sinful. Worms will devour the wealth of a miser. The luxuries of an extravagant will vanish like smoke. There was a man who spent generously on his household needs

and gave alms according to his state and means. As he prospered well, he began to neglect charity and focussed more on amassing wealth for himself. In course of time, he developed an infectious wound on his leg; he consulted many physicians and spent a lot of money on various treatment procedures. Then, an angel appeared and told him: "Know that those who amass wealth by refusing to do charity will face inordinate instances of spending money."

16. You don't require many friends; but choose one carefully from among a thousand. Those who do not love God will not truly love you either. David and Jonathan loved each other; united in one mind, they loved and helped each other genuinely till the very end of their lives. Their love did not diminish due to any trivial circumstances; instead, their close friendship grew

stronger in times of danger and hardship.

Desire for Justice

17. Don't allow to keep stolen goods even for a short while in your house. The Holy Spirit has warned that a house harbouring stolen goods will go up in flames. Don't mingle with those who steal; for, certainly, they will not hesitate to steal your possessions. Moreover, you will have a share in their sin as well.

There was a man who became rich by stealing and indulging in other dishonest means. While on death-bed, he invited the will-writers on the pretext of partitioning his assets, and dictated to them the following: "I leave my soul to the devil." His children were shocked by this, and they enquired of him whether he was in his senses or affected by delirium. The sick man, however, replied: "No my dear children; I am in my senses. Let

them write what I dictate: 'I leave my soul as well as that of my wife, who encouraged me to embezzle the properties of others, to the devil. I surrender your souls too to the devil; for, it was for you that I misappropriated these goods that belonged to others.'" Saying this, he unfortunately breathed his last.

18. Don't deny or delay just wages to labourers; for, it is a grave sin crying out before the throne of God. Don't humiliate or trouble the poor; for, God will seek retribution from you on account of their tears.

It is reported from the city of Leuven that there was a householder who was very rich. A poor widow and her four children were tenants on his estate. As he oftentimes harassed and saddened them, one day, having reached the end of her tether, the mother prayed on her knees: "Oh Lord, deliver us from this unfair and sad

state.” Instantaneously, the rich landlord dropped dead.

Fear of God

19. The most valuable possession of a family consists in fear of and devotion to the Lord. A family in which the fear of the Lord pervades will enjoy the fruit of divine blessings in this world as well as in eternity. Blasphemous language and vulgar conversations will fade away the brightness of a good family like dark clouds. As much as possible, participate daily in the Holy Mass. If it is difficult, take part in the Masses on Mondays for the souls in purgatory, on Fridays in commemoration of the passion and death of the Lord, and on Saturdays in devotion to our Lady of Sorrows. If all members from a family cannot attend daily Mass together, let them take turns, ensuring that one or two attend Mass every day. Confess your sins and receive Holy Communion at least once a month. If

you cannot participate in the Novena prayers associated with major feasts and the feasts of our Lady, and the monthly devotions in honour of the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph in the church, you must recite them at home.

Be exceedingly careful to be chaste and modest in all your postures, whether sitting or walking, lying or playing. Immodesty is reprehensible both before God and the world. We would learn only on the day of judgement about how many souls have been lost in hell due to boys and girls roaming around immodestly dressed and their unchaste body contacts, which their parents do not forbid.

There was an extraordinarily modest boy in France, who, even when he was alone, kept his whole body, including his arms, wrapped under the dress. When he was told that, were he to be punished to the hell, he would be naked there. On

learning this, he was awfully horrified and cried. Through the example of this boy, we understand how much he treasured modesty in his life.

Patience

20. Entrust yourself to the Divine Providence when you are faced with trials and tribulations, diseases and difficulties. He is not a strong person who is patient only when he is delighted. A devotee used to say: "In this world, everything happens according to my wish; for, I wish only that which is willed by God."

During a house visit, when Saint Ambrose was told that the family had never experienced any illness or agony or sorrow, he hastened to leave the house observing: "Let us leave this house; for, Divine Wrath will soon befall on this house." Immediately, the house collapsed killing everyone inside. For, punishment is a sign of God's love

for us and it helps us to seek God during trying times.

Good Books

21. Scientific books of the non-believers spread ignorance and erroneous knowledge. Collecting pagan or heretical books or those containing lewd songs in the house is identical to hiding fire in haystacks. Parents shall procure for their children the treasure of books packed with wisdom and philosophical knowledge that enhance piety. As much as possible, you shall buy and build up a collection of such books in your household.

There was a beggar who was illiterate. Yet, he bought books out of the alms he received; he managed to get them read out to him by those who could read and conformed his life to the noble way of life enshrined in them. Thus, he gave an edifying example to many.

Days of Obligation

22. One should not be complacent with only participation in the Holy Mass on days of obligation; instead, most of the day shall be spent in virtuous acts such as listening to sermons, reading good books, and in performing charitable acts such as visiting and caring for the sick, especially those who are very poor.

23. Appoint only those who fear the Lord for any service at home. Ensure that their numbers are restricted to the minimum. Many are the homes in which the sway of the devil is established through the appointed caretakers. Masters should know that they are responsible for keeping track of their servants' conduct and in assisting them in their spiritual welfare.

Daily Routine

24. Ensure that you go to bed and get up in the morning punctually. Everyone shall abide by the

following timetable strictly: At least by six o'clock in the morning, ensure that every member is up and recites the morning prayers. Then, all those who are able should attend the Holy Mass. Have breakfast at eight o'clock in the morning and lunch at twelve noon. In the evening, after praying the Angelus, all shall commonly recite the family prayers, which shall be followed by half an hour of meditation upon a theme based on what is read from good books.

Don't interrupt the routine of family prayer even if some important guests or visitors turn up at your house at that time. For, while, on the one hand, you feel attending to the people visiting your home, you also feel the call of God, on the other; in fact, God is closely watching your choice. Hence, you should not fail in observing the virtuous act of family prayer; by strictly adhering to it,

you set a good example for others. If they ridicule you, consider it to be a blessing. After supper at eight o'clock, you shall make an examination of your conscience and say the night prayers, following which you shall go to bed.

The head of the house shall ensure that these precepts are followed strictly. Read out these precepts before the members of the household on every Sunday and on the first day of every month.

Part 2

UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

1. Parents, you ought to know that bringing up your children is the most important thing and your primary duty in life. Children are sacred treasures entrusted to you by God Almighty. You should also remember that these are the souls that Jesus Christ has entrusted in your hands to sanctify them with His most precious blood and to make them His servants and, thus, to offer them back to Him on the Day of Judgment. If any of the children were to be lost in hell due to the fault of their parents, what a serious hindrance will it be for their salvation! Origen, a great theologian, has stated that, if the parents have been condemned to hell on the judgment day, due to the evil acts of their children, it is because God holds them responsible for the acts of their children. If you desire your

children to be with you and be helpful to you in your old age, ensure that they are trained to be good Christians in their tender age. If they do not fear and love the Lord when they are young, they will neither love nor respect their parents. Parents should offer their children to the Lord repetitively and submit them to the intercession of the Holy Family and pray for them often. God will receive a mother's petition as that of her baby.

2. As the children grow up, teach them to devotedly call on the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Let the children familiarise and kiss the image of the Holy Family and teach them to honour and venerate them. As they begin to speak, teach them to recite short prayers such as Our Father, Hail Mary, the Angelus, etc. How commendable it is to nourish their souls by these means along

with the nutritious food that you provide for their body.

3. Don't let your children move around naked even inside the house. Don't engage in unbecoming conversations and gossiping in the presence of children. Don't even wrongly assume that they don't follow what you say. Children in Christian countries are not even told that they are born of their mothers; instead, in their tender age, they are told that the baby was sent from the heavens during a rain or that the baby was found in a well.
4. Out of respect for the elders, don't let children sleep in their parents' bedroom. Moreover, don't let boys and girls sleep in the same room; for, the devil will teach them what they don't know by nature.
5. When the children are too young, don't permit them go out of elders'

sight to play with their friends. Don't trust servants who are careless with the children; very often these careless servants spoil them.

6. As soon as the children come of age, they should be sent to school. From time to time, parents should enquire about their progress in studies and also about the type of friendships they cultivate. Every Sunday, parents must review what they have studied.
7. Don't permit children to stay in the houses of relatives; for, although they leave as angels, many a time, they return as devils.
8. When children are seven years old, facilitate their confession after instructing them what they should know about it. Instruct them especially to be devoted to the Blessed Mother.

9. Both extreme strictness and too much leniency towards children are evil. While too much affection will make them proud, excessive anger and punishment will lead to lack of trust, shamelessness, and intellectual incompetence in them. Before inflicting corporal punishment, prudently make the children understand why they are being punished, and honourably advise them along with rationing their food and, occasionally, making them kneel down. Pouring out abuses in the process of correcting the children will not only have any positive effect on them, but will only make them repeat the same to their children when they grow up. The mother should set an example to the children in respecting and honouring the father; so shall the father teach the children by his example to love and respect the mother. If the parents don't love and respect each other, their children also will not respect them.

10. Don't train children in lying or cheating, or other shadowy tricks, saying that it is normal and that they need to be cunning to survive in the world. When you come across their mistakes, rebuke and correct them. Teach them to hold truth and justice in high esteem.

11. Ensure that all children are at home by the time the Angelus bells ring. Train them to greet and kiss the hands of the elders and parents as soon as the family prayers are over.

As the children reach twelve years of age, a period of extreme caution in their development, instead of sending them to various celebrations such as anniversaries, feasts, marriages, etc., care should be taken to ensure that they are trained at home in some occupation proper to their age. Dressing up girls for festival celebrations or as bridesmaids for weddings is an insidious custom that originated in hell.

12. Proudly showing off the daughters by dressing them up in expensive costumes and ornaments beyond their status and means, as it is apparently the way of the rich and aristocratic families, ignites hellfire for many a soul. The most desirable adornment for a girl lies in her modesty, piety, silence, and control of eyes.
13. Fight between children should not lead to quarrel among elders. Those elders, who cannot accept their children being slighted or hurt by someone else, are also childish in their reaction.
14. When they come of age, children should be given full freedom to choose their state of life. For, it is God who resolves on their state of life and it is the responsibility of the children to make the right choice; it is not the prerogative of the parents. Many are the parents and children who wail in hell owing to their

mistakes in this regard. Hence, decision about the state of life should not be delayed for boys beyond sixteen and eighteen and for girls beyond fourteen and sixteen years of age. Their consent must be specially ascertained before marriages are arranged. Seek in every alliance courteousness and noble qualities of conduct than wealth and social status. Otherwise, instead of joy and happiness, it may result in incessant grief for children as well as parents.

15. Parents shall not be indecisive or show undue regard for their children even when they are grown up and have become erudite and competent. As far as possible, don't entrust them the management of the household affairs. For, many a parent has ended up in disappointment after having transferred the authority of the household.

16. Parents, ahead of their own demise, should take steps to settle their children in their own homes. Apportion the properties among the children when parents are in their good senses. For, discord may arise among the children on account of property division and the parents will be held responsible for the sins from such dissensions and conflicts among them.

Finally, dear children, you are bound by the commandment of God to respect your parents and to ensure that their minds are not burdened or aggrieved. For, you shall remember that violating the fourth commandment of God would bring down God's curse not only in afterlife but also in the present.

In Japan, a heathen kingdom, there lived a mother with three children. They could not take care of their mother the way she deserved, as they were extremely poor. In this

kingdom, there was a rule that thieves should be invariably hanged and that those who capture and hand over thieves to the state shall be suitably rewarded. Being motivated by this rule and with the hope of providing better facilities for their mother, one of the children pretended to be a thief and the other two handed him over to the authorities for which they, in turn, collected their reward. When one of the wardens in the jail saw the two brothers compassionately bidding farewell to the thief and encouraging him to be brave in facing death for the sake of their mother, he enquired of him the reason for such kind behaviour. The warden came to know that the person facing the gallows is the brother of the other two, who decided on his own to die for the sake of their mother's welfare. When the king was informed about this fact, he not only set the brother free, but also decreed to offer maintenance to the

mother till her death. My dear children, remember this incident always!

Father Kuriakose Elias of the Holy Family
Prior of the Mannanam
and Other Monasteries of the TOCD

13 February 1868

A BRIEF LIFE HISTORY OF SAINT KURIAKOSE ELIAS CHAVARA

Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara was born on 10 February 1805 in Kainakary, a small village of Alleppey district in the Travancore state. After his primary education he joined the Pallipuram seminary attached to Saint Mary's Church, Cherthala. Father Thomas Palackal was his malpan (professor of sacred sciences). He received his subdiaconate in 1827 and diaconate in 1828. On 29 November 1829, he was ordained a priest at Saint Andrews Church, Arthunkal. From a very young age, Kuriakose was instructed to chant the name 'Jesus', as a result of which he eagerly wished to live a life dedicated to Jesus and the Church.

After his priestly ordination, he joined Father Thomas Palackal and Father Thomas Porukara, his malpans, and laid the foundation for a spiritual movement at Mannanam. They were joined by

Brother Jacob Kanianthara who shared their lofty ideal of life in seclusion, away from worldly pursuits. They established a residence at Mannanam in the year 1831 and named it '*Beth Rauma*' (house on the hilltop). *Beth Rauma* had a humble beginning and grew into a dwelling place for a group of religious priests who, later, came to be known as Servants of the Immaculate Conception. This religious community at Mannanam laid the foundation for the congregation of Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). Father Thomas Palackal and Father Thomas Porukara died in 1841 and 1846 respectively.

With the demise of his malpans, Father Kuriakose was entrusted with the responsibility of this new congregation, which he led until his death. In 1861, Archbishop Bernardinose of the Archdiocese of Verapoly appointed Father Kuriakose the Vicar General of the Syrian Catholics, and he fought against the schism arising from the arrival of

Bishop Roccas, which did disturb the unity of the Malabar Church.

From 1831 onwards Father Kuriakose engaged in various spiritual and welfare activities, such as starting a Sanskrit school at Mannanam for the educational development of the area, establishing the first wooden press in Kerala, renewing the Order of the Liturgy, popularising Sunday sermons and organizing annual retreats in parishes to facilitate the spiritual renewal of the people. In 1866, he founded the first Indian religious congregation for women, the Congregation of Mother of Carmel (CMC).

Saint Kuriakose spent the last seven years of his life at Koonammavu, Kerala, where he died on 3 January 1871 and was buried in Saint Philomena's Church, Koonammavu. Later, on 24 May 1889, his mortal remains were transferred from Koonammavu and re-interred in the Saint Joseph's Monastery Chapel at Mannanam, the mother house of the CMI congregation.

Saint Kuriakose Elias was well known for his sacrificial life and continues to be a model of Christian virtue and a solace for many in their trials and tribulations. Many favours have been received through his intercession. Saint Alphonsa, the first saint of India, sought the intercession of Saint Kuriakose and was instantly cured of her illness. She had certified this cure by her own handwritten testimonial.

The canonization process of Father Kuriakose Elias Chavara began in 1956 and, on 8 February 1986, he was beatified by Pope John Paul II at Kottayam, Kerala.

The miraculous cure of the crippled feet of Joseph Pennaparampil from Calicut, Kerala, through the intercession of Saint Kuriakose was approved for the beatification. The miraculous cure of the alternating convergent squint eyes of Maria Jose Kottarathil from Pala, Kerala, was approved by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Vatican, for the canonization of Saint Kuriakose. On 18

March 2014, Pope Francis signed the Decree approving Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara to be declared a saint.

On 23 November 2014, Kuriakose Elias Chavara was canonized at Rome by Pope Francis. The tomb, where the mortal remains of Saint Kuriakose are interred, is situated in front of the main altar of Saint Joseph's Monastery Chapel at Mannanam.

PRAYER TO SAINT CHAVARA FOR FAMILIES

O! God, we thank you for giving us Saint Kuriakose as the patron of families. All the glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Saint Kuriakose, special devotee of the Holy Family, pray for us so that peace, love, unity, and prosperity shall be preserved in our families. Help us to grow in true faith and to cultivate devotion and reverence to God. Grant us the strength to overcome the hardships of life and the grace to thank God in all circumstances. Teach us to seek only the will of God and to rely on His loving Providence. Increase our zeal for God's kingdom and to instil in us the desire to live for the glory of God. Let more vocations to priesthood and consecrated life arise from our families. We trust in your powerful and incessant intercession and ask you to obtain for us this particular favour ... (*silently present your petition*) from our merciful Abba, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, 1 Glory Be

MILESTONES IN THE LIFE OF SAINT KURIAKOSE ELIAS CHAVARA

- 10-02-1805 Born at Kainakary, Kerala
- 18-02-1805 Baptized at Chennamkary
Parish Church
- 08-09-1805 Dedicated to Blessed Virgin
Mary as her servant at
Vechoor Church
- 1810 Started primary education at
Kainakary
- 1818 Joined the parish seminary at
Pallipuram
- 29-11-1829 Ordained priest at Arthunkal
Church
- 11-05-1831 Foundation of the first Indian
indigenous religious
congregation for men,
Carmelites of Mary
Immaculate (CMI), along
with Father Thomas Palackal
and Father Thomas Porukara
- 1831 Popularized Sunday
Homilies and introduced
Retreats for priests and laity
in the Kerala Church

- 1833 Establishment of the first Syro-Malabar Common Seminary at Mannanam
- 1838 Introduction of 'Way of the Cross' devotion at Mannanam
- 16-02-1844 Appointed Malpan (tutor of sacred subjects) and examiner of Scholastics with the authorization to issue patents to the newly ordained priests to hear confession and to preach in the Church
- 03-07-1846 Foundation of the first printing press and publishing house of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mannanam
- 1846 Foundation of the First Catholic Sanskrit School at Mannanam
- 1853 Foundation of the First Syro-Malabar Catechumenate at Mannanam
- 08-12-1855 First priest to profess as religious in the Indian Church (along with 10 other members)
- 1856-1857 Wrote 10 Eclogues (Shepherd Plays) on the nativity of Jesus Christ

- 27-07-1861 OCD Affiliated the
Congregation as Third Order
of Carmelites Discalced
(TOCD)
- 08-06-1861 Appointed as the First Vicar
General in the Syro-Malabar
Church after the time of
Archdeacons
- 1861 Fought for Syro-Malabar
Church against schismatic
intruder bishop Roccas
- 1862 Wrote the First Malayalam
Narrative poem,
*Anasthasiayude Raktha-
sakshyam*, an inspirational
story of a martyr
- 1862-1869 Edited the Divine Office for
priests, compiled and
composed Liturgical Rubrics,
Liturgical Calendar, Office
for the Dead, Little Office of
Immaculate Mother, etc., in
the Malabar Church
- 1864 Introduced the 'May
Devotion of Blessed Virgin
Mary' at Mannanam
- 1864 Implemented the concept, 'A
School for a Church'
(*Pallikkudam*), in the Syro-

- Malabar Church as its Vicar General
- 13-02-1866 Foundation of the Indian Religious Congregation for women, Congregation of Mother Carmel (CMC), at Koonammavu together with Father Leopold OCD, an Italian Missionary
- 15-02-1866 Introduced 40 Hours Eucharistic Adoration in Kerala at Koonammavu
- 02-01-1868 Started the first boarding house and school for girls in Kerala at Koonammavu together with Father Leopold OCD
- 13-02-1868 Wrote the first instruction manual, *A Testament of a Loving Father (Orul Nalla Appante Chavarul)* for Christian families, the first of its kind in the Church
- 1869 Foundation of the first lay charitable organization, the 'Confraternity of Saint Joseph for Happy Death' at Kainakary
- 1869 Foundation of the first Home of Charity, *Upavisala*, for the

- sick, old, and destitute at Kainakary
- 1869 Initiated Catholic reunion movement
- 03-01-1871 Slept in the Lord at Saint Philomina's Monastery at Koonammavu
- 04-05-1889 Mortal remains reinterred at Saint Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, Mother House of the CMI Congregation
- 21-12-1936 Canonization process started at the congregational level
- 09-12-1955 Official permission to start the process of Canonization
- 03-01-1958 Diocesan process started with the title Servant of God
- 07-04-1984 Declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II in Rome
- 08-02-1986 Beatification at Kottayam, Kerala, by Pope John Paul II
- 20-12-1987 Release of the postal stamp by the Government of India in recognition of the social commitment of Saint Chavara
- 04-05-2006 Portrait of Saint Chavara unveiled in the Literary Academy Hall of Thrissur by Government of Kerala for

contribution to Malayalam
literature

19-10-2014 Publication of Eclogues by
Kerala Sahithya Academy

23-11-2014 Canonization of Saint
Kuriakose Elias Chavara at
Vatican by Pope Francis

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