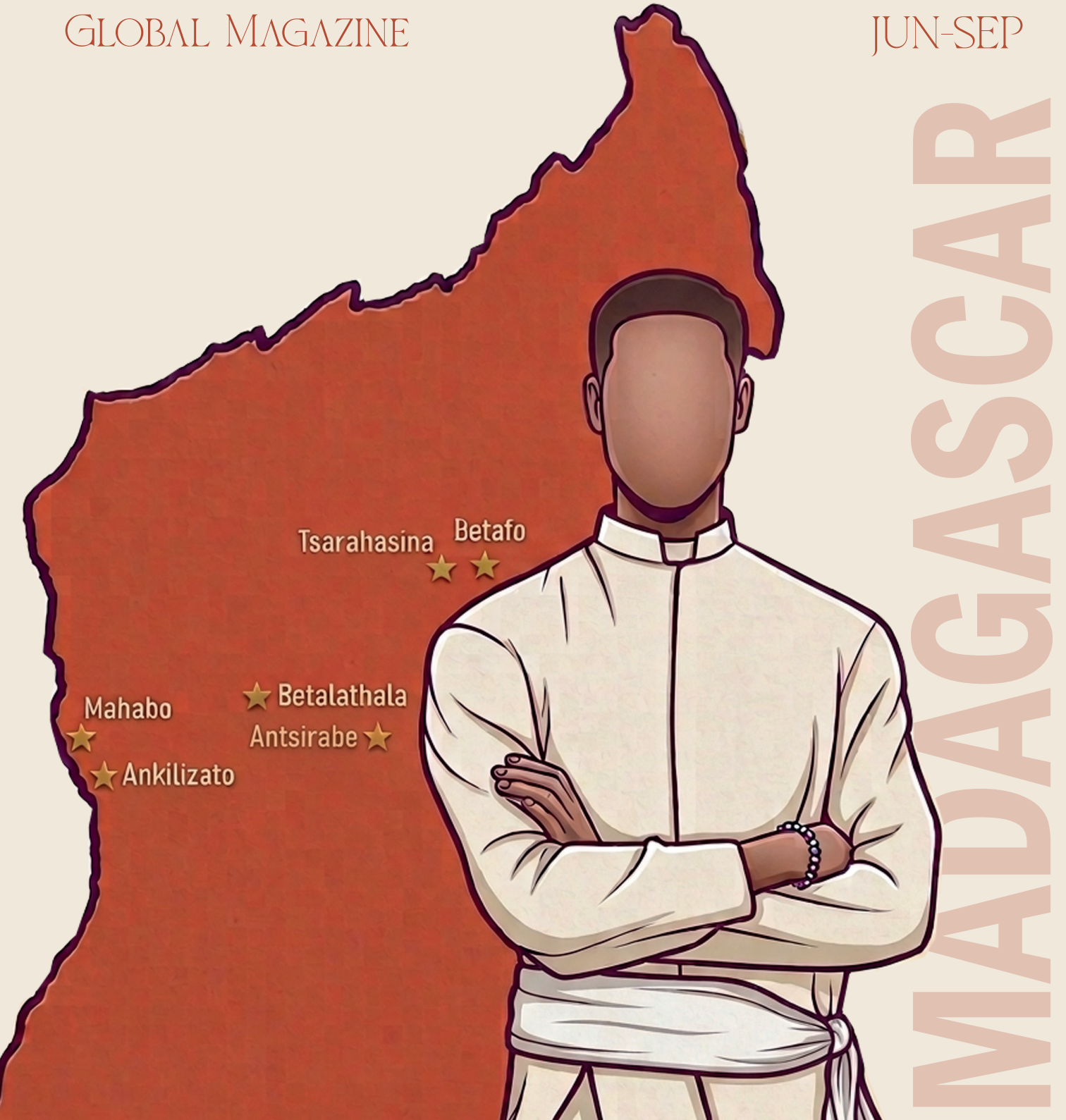
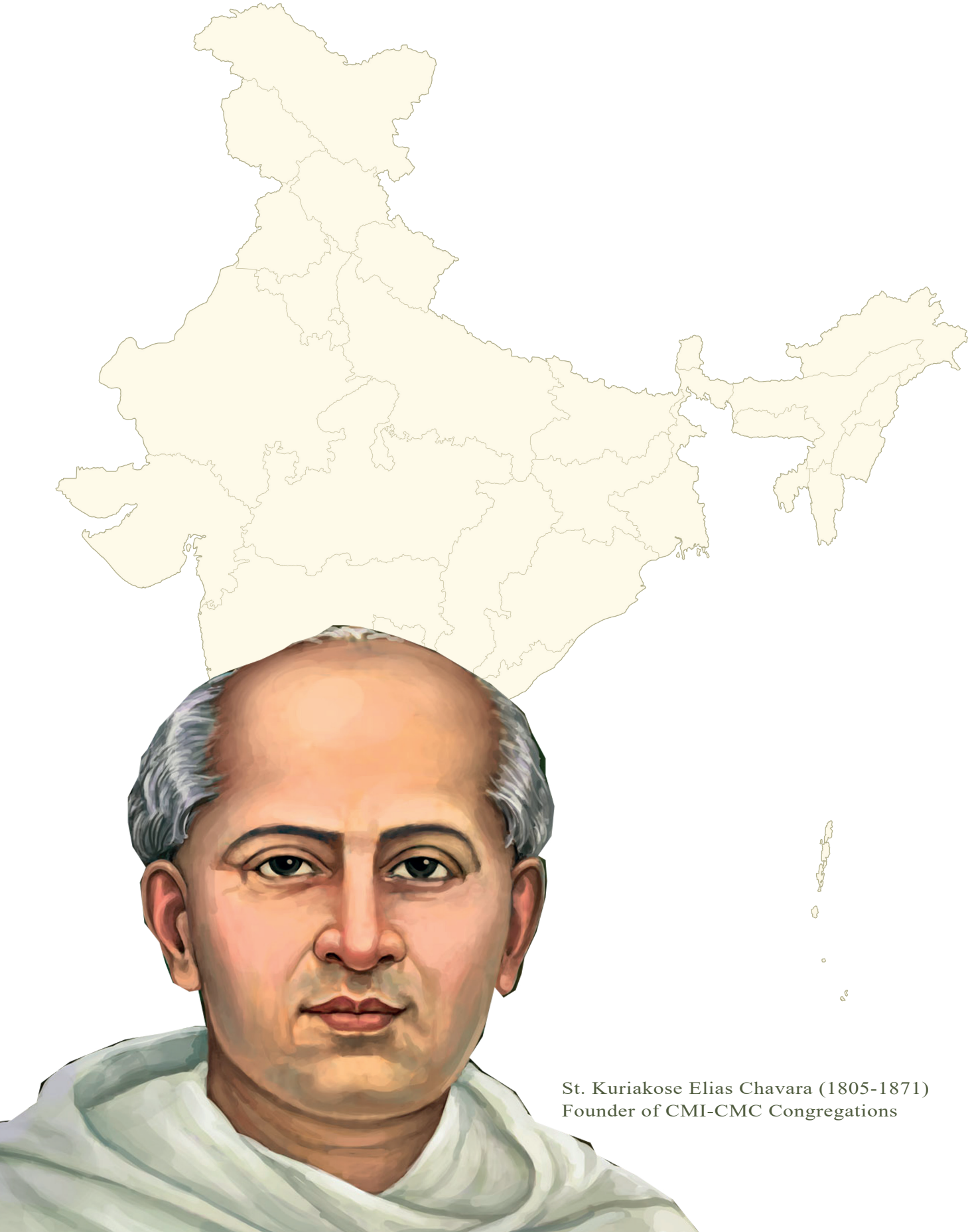
CMISSION '26

GLOBAL MAGAZINE

JUN-SEP



MADAGASCAR



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



WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW WITH
CONCERN THE EVENTS UNFOLDING IN VARIOUS
COUNTRIES TORN APART BY WAR AND VIOLENCE.
LET US NOT FORGET THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING AND
DYING BECAUSE OF THESE CONFLICTS, AND LET US
ADD OUR CONSTANT PRAYERS
TO THE GENEROUS EFFORTS
FOR PEACE.

POPE LEO XIV



Featuring CMI Missions

CMISSION

Jun-Sep '26 Vol-XIX Issue-1

Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry

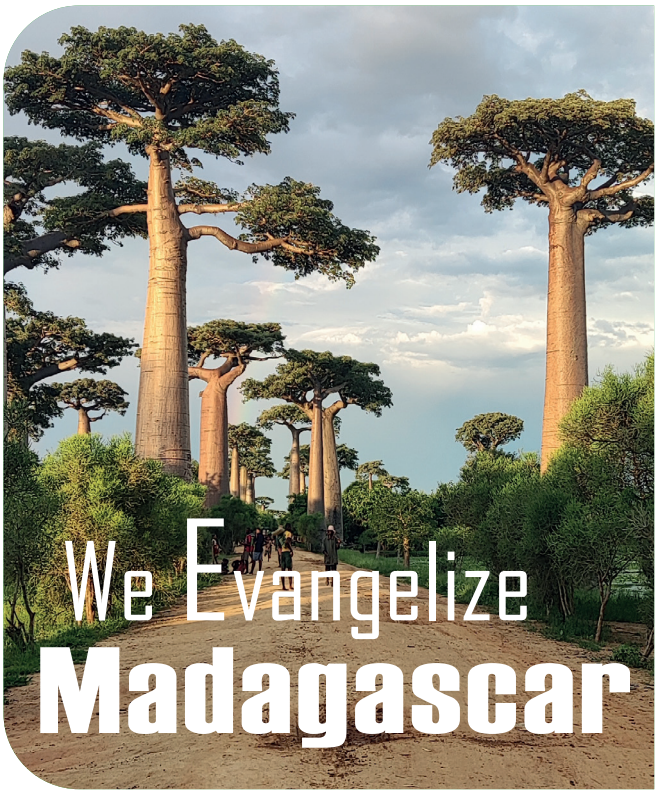
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Mission of God is ever moving, transforming and converting the hearts of many. It is an opportune time to think about our mission dynamically and creatively for the kingdom of God and His works. CMIssion is a publication from the Department of Evangelization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

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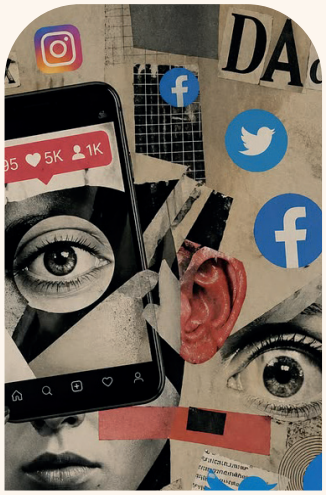
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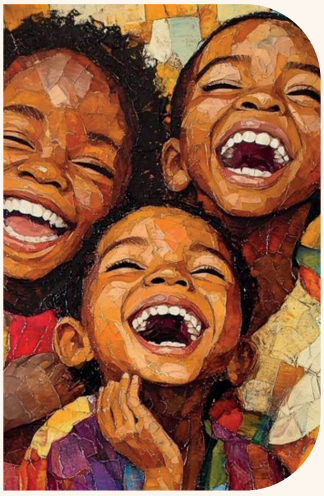
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Editorial

FR BENNY NALKARA CMI
Chief Editor
Vicar General & General Councillor
for Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry

CMIS WITH CONTEXTUALIZED MISSIONARY INITIATIVES

The XXXIX General Synaxis of our Congregation invites us to embrace a renewed missionary vision: "Being a Grace-filled and Synodal Presence for a Transformed World." This theme reminds us that mission begins not simply with what we do, but with who we are becoming. A transformed world first calls for transformed hearts—hearts rooted in Christ, open to one another, and attentive to the movements of the Holy Spirit. With this renewed enthusiasm, let us rededicate ourselves to our missionary endeavours at both the personal and communitarian levels.

Mission belongs to the very identity of the Church and to the vocation of every CMI religious. As St Paul reminds us, "The love of Christ urges us on" (2 Cor 5:14). When our encounter with Christ becomes deep and authentic, mission naturally becomes passionate. This calls us to embrace Contextualized Missionary Initiatives—missions that listen before they speak, accompany before they direct, and collaborate rather than impose. Whether in Africa, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia, or elsewhere, our missionary communities are called to discover new ways of proclaiming Christ through education, healthcare, pastoral ministry, social transformation, formation, digital evangelization, and compassionate presence among the marginalized. The CMI missionary tradition is marked by this capacity to read the signs of the times and respond through contextualized missionary initiatives. The call of GS39, therefore, is not merely to do more mission, but to become a missionary presence. Synodality gives mission a new face: walking with people, listening to their stories, discerning together, and building communities of communion.

The month of October, traditionally dedicated to the missions, becomes a special moment of grace for the CMI Congregation. It invites us to rediscover that mission is not the responsibility of a few missionaries working in distant lands. Today, the CMI missionary presence extends through CMIS in 32 countries, witnessing to the universality of the Congregation and its readiness to go beyond geographical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. As we celebrate the CMI Mission Month, let us renew the missionary fire inherited from St Kuriakose Elias Chavara and the founding generation. May our missionary presence in 32 countries become not merely a geographical network, but a spiritual network of grace, communion, and compassionate service. Let us remember with gratitude and pray for all our missionaries who generously offer their lives in the service of the Gospel.

This edition of CMission presents, in a special way, the witness of our dedicated missionaries engaged in Contextualized Missionary Initiatives in the challenging mission of Madagascar. Their courage, creativity, perseverance, and compassionate presence truly inspire us to embrace mission with passion.

As we celebrate this Mission Month, we also remember with gratitude all those who have worked behind CMission over the years and all those who continue to dedicate themselves to bringing this publication to our readers.



Message

FR PAUL ACHANDY CMI
Prior General

Dear CMI confreres,
October is a month particularly close to the heart of the Church and to the missionary spirit of our Congregation. It is a month to pray for missionaries, remember them with gratitude, accompany them with our affection, and renew our own missionary calling. Mission is part of our identity. The Church exists for mission, and a missionary congregation must continually renew the fire that sent its members beyond familiar boundaries to proclaim Christ and serve humanity.
The words of the Lord continue to challenge us: "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15) And the prophet Isaiah gives us the missionary question: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8) Isaiah's response is the response of every missionary heart: "Here am I; send me!"

MISSION BEGINS ON OUR KNEES:

Our first missionary responsibility is prayer. Our missionaries need our prayers and fraternal support. Many of them live far from their motherlands, cultures and languages. They face unfamiliar situations, pastoral challenges, loneliness, economic limitations and some times difficult living conditions. Yet, through their quiet and persevering presence, they continue to proclaim the Gospel. St. Paul reminds us: "How are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?" (Romans 10:14) And he asks the Christian community: "Brothers and sisters, pray for us, so that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified." (2 Thessalonians 3:1) Let us take these words personally during this Mission Month. Let us pray for our missionaries by name. Let us pray for missionary vocations. And let us pray that every CMI religious may have a missionary heart. A missionary is never alone. Behind every missionary there should be a praying, encouraging and accompanying Congregation.

A missionary must learn to listen before speaking, to understand before judging, to accompany before directing, and to love before expecting results.

MARY: MOTHER OF MISSIONARIES:

It is providential that the month dedicated to mission is also the month of the Holy Rosary. Mary is the Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church and Mother of missionaries. She teaches us that every mission begins with listening, openness and surrender to God. At the Annunciation, Mary received God's Word: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) Immediately afterwards, she became a missionary of God's love. The Gospel tells us: "Mary set out and went with haste."(Luke 1:39) She carried Christ within her and carried Christ to others. This is the essential movement of every missionary vocation: Receive Christ. Carry Christ. Give Christ. Mary did not keep Jesus for herself. The Christ she received became the Christ she brought to others. That is why every missionary needs Mary. Let the Rosary therefore become a missionary prayer. As we contemplate the mysteries of Christ with Mary, may our hearts become increasingly like the heart of Christ—a heart sent for the salvation of the world.

THÉRÈSE: THE MISSIONARY WHO NEVER LEFT HER CONVENT:

October also places before us the extraordinary missionary witness of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, Patroness of the Missions. Thérèse never travelled to Africa, Asia or Latin America. She lived within the walls of a Carmelite monastery. Yet the Church recognized in her an extraordinary missionary. Why? Because she discovered that the deepest foundation of mission is love. She wrote: "In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be Love." And she understood that her vocation was inseparable from the missionary mission of the Church. Her life reminds us that mission is not measured only by distance travelled, institutions established or activities accomplished. The deepest measure of mission is the depth of our love for Christ and for those to whom He sends us. Thérèse teaches us something essential: Before becoming missionaries with our feet, we must become missionaries with our hearts. A CMI religious may be thousands of kilometres away from home and yet lose the missionary spirit. Another may be serving quietly in a familiar place and possess an intensely missionary heart. Mission begins not with geography but with a heart surrendered to Christ.

TERESA OF AVILA: A HEART ON FIRE:

October also invites us to remember the missionary passion of St. Teresa of Jesus (Teresa of Avila). Teresa lived in a period of great challenges and renewal in the Church. Her response was to deepen her friendship with Christ and to place herself completely at His service. Her famous prayer expresses beautifully the mystery of Christian mission: "Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours." Whether or not one takes every line of this prayer as a direct historical quotation from Teresa, its spiritual message beautifully expresses the missionary vocation: Christ continues His presence and work in the world through His disciples. St. Paul expresses the same mystery: "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20)

FRANCIS OF ASSISI: MISSION WITH A DIFFERENCE:

The witness of St. Francis of Assisi gives us another beautiful dimension of mission. Francis proclaimed Christ through simplicity, fraternity, poverty, peace and love of creation. He did not approach people from a position of superiority. He became a brother. His famous words are often expressed as: "Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary, use words." Francis teaches us that our life itself must become a Gospel. The world today does not need missionaries who merely speak about Christ. It needs missionaries who make Christ visible. The missionary presence of Francis was a presence of fraternity. In a world divided by religion, race, nationality, ideology and economic inequality, we are called to build bridges. In a world where many people are lonely, we are called to become companions. In a world where the poor are often invisible, we are called to see them. In a world searching for meaning, we are called to point towards Christ. This is mission with a difference.

32 COUNTRIES, ONE MISSIONARY HEART:

Today, our CMI missionaries are present in 32 countries across the globe. They are writing a new chapter in the missionary history of our Congregation. They cross geographical boundaries, but mission requires more than crossing geographical boundaries. It requires crossing cultural boundaries, linguistic boundaries and the boundaries of our own comfort zones. A missionary must learn to listen before speaking, to understand before judging, to accompany before directing, and to love before expecting results.

The words of Pope Francis are particularly meaningful here: "The Church is called to come out of herself and to go to the peripheries, not only geographical but also the existential peripheries." Mission is therefore not simply about going somewhere far away. Mission is going where Christ wants to be made present.

MADAGASCAR: WHEN THE MISSION FIELD BECOMES A SCHOOL OF FAITH:

I am glad to note that the current issue of C Mission has focused on challenging CMI Mission in Madagascar and joyful CMI missionaries over there. A missionary who goes to Madagascar does not simply bring the Gospel to the Malagasy people; Madagascar itself becomes a Gospel for the missionary. The simplicity of the people, their deep sense of community, their generosity, their joy amid difficulties, and their faith in the midst of life's struggles can profoundly evangelize the missionary. The missionary goes to proclaim Christ, but discovers Christ already present in the lives, hearts and culture of the people. The missionary goes to serve, but discovers that he too is being served. He goes to teach, but finds himself learning. He goes to give, but receives gifts he could never have anticipated. As Jesus reminds us: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) And yet, paradoxically, in giving oneself generously to the people of Madagascar, the missionary receives far more than he expected. Mission becomes a sacred encounter in which the missionary and the people walk together, mutually enriched by the presence of Christ. We go to Madagascar to bring Christ, and we discover Christ waiting for us there.

FROM MANNANAM TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH:

The missionary spirit is deeply rooted in the history of our Congregation. Our founding fathers at Mannanam were not men who lived only for themselves. They dreamed beyond themselves. Their vision was larger than their own generation. The CMI story began in a particular place, but it was never meant to remain confined to that place. The Lord's command remains: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Today, the CMI missionary presence extends from India to Africa, Latin America and many other parts of the world. As we journey towards the third century of our Congregation, we need to ask ourselves: Are we still a missionary Congregation? Not merely: How many missionaries do we have? But: How missionary is my heart? A CMI religious can work in India and have a missionary heart. He can teach in a college and have a missionary heart. He can serve in a parish and have a missionary heart. He can work in a hospital, formation house or social ministry and have a missionary heart. Mission begins wherever someone says: "Here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

LORD, GIVE US MISSIONARY HEARTS:

As we approach the third century of the CMI Congregation, perhaps this is one of the most important graces for which we must pray: Lord, give us missionary hearts. Hearts that can say with St. Paul: "The love of Christ urges us on." (2 Corinthians 5:14) Mission is not sustained primarily by programmes, structures or strategies. Mission is sustained by love. When love for Christ becomes weak, mission becomes a duty. When love for Christ becomes a fire, mission becomes a joy.

LET OCTOBER REKINDLE THE FIRE:

Let this October not pass as merely another month in our calendar. Let it become a month of missionary renewal. Let us pray for our missionaries. Let us encourage them. Let us tell their stories to our young people. Let us accompany the missions of our Congregation. Let us support missionaries who are working in difficult circumstances. And let us personally ask: Where is the Lord sending me? May Mary, Mother of missionaries, teach us to say Yes. May St. Thérèse, Patroness of the Missions, teach us that love is the soul of mission. May St. Teresa of Avila teach us to keep our hearts on fire for Christ and His Church. May St. Francis of Assisi teach us the mission of simplicity, fraternity, peace and Gospel witness. May St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and our founding fathers rekindle in us the missionary fire with which our Congregation began. And may the Holy Spirit renew the CMI Congregation so that we may continue to be: A grace-filled presence, journeying together in communion, serving with compassion, and going forth with missionary passion to transform the world. May October rekindle the missionary fire in every CMI heart. Mission is not merely something we do. Mission is who we are.

“

The most important
conversation in a human life
–the one that takes place
in the depths of the heart.

Blessed Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen



CMI Celebrating the Year of Media



CMI Media & Mission



Benny Benedict CMI
Chetana, Thrissur

FROM THE PRINTING PRESS TO THE DIGITAL PULPIT

Part 1

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MASTER STORY TELLER

Jesus, the most effective storyteller par excellence in human history, is the supreme model for every Christian communicator. Parables are the best examples of Jesus's storytelling that reached `mass audiences', namely, shepherds, fishermen, farmers, tax collectors, ordinary people and all. He chose the idiom of the common man, the man on the street. "Jesus being the master communicator, the perfect image of God the Father, and the sacrament of Divine Life and Relationship, made use of the best of communication technologies of His time, such as person-to-person contact, parables, signs/miracles, and so on "(Communitarian Witnessing Beyond Boarders, pp.70).

Church teachings have always emphasised the role of media in carrying out the work of Missio Dei, utilizing human creativity and communication skills. The Second Vatican Council, in its Decree Inter Mirifica, affirmed that media are marvellous technical inventions that, if properly utilized, can be of great service to humankind and to the Church's mission. Late Pope Francis often drew attention to the efficacy of media to influence and inspire people, saying "The Catholic Church and all people of goodwill must see great potential in social media when the `net' and `networks' bring people together, help them share useful information and educate one another, and offer immense scope for preaching the Good News" (24 January 2019). In the Apostolic Letter on Education in the Digital Age, Disegnare Nuove Mappe Di Speranza ('Drawing New Maps ', October 28, 2025), H.H Pope Leo XIV presents a broader vision on church's mission of communication, "Communication is not only the transmission of information, but it is also the creation of a culture, of human and digital environments that become spaces for dialogue and discussion.".

Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) congregation, the first indigenous religious order in India, has played a significant role in shaping the print and mass media and the cultural landscape of Kerala, maintaining media as a foundational pillar of their educational and social reform and evangelization. The media apostolate of the CMIs is a historic journey that mirrors the evolution of communication in Kerala, transitioning from hand-pressed moveable type to offset printing, music and other performing arts, electronic media broadcasting, modern day film schools and media colleges and powerful digital media presence in the Third millennium. The CMI legacy in media ministry dates back to the initiatives of its founder, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, who utilized various means of communication available in his time, like literature, drama and print media as ample vehicles for propagating the Word of God.

PRINT MEDIA MINISTRY, DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM THE FOUNDER

St. Chavara articulated his creative genius in commendable literary works like `Almanuthapam', `Ansthasyaude Rakthasakshithvam' and experimented theatrical formats like the eclogues. In the 19th century, printing in Kerala was tightly controlled by the government and a few non-Catholic Christian groups. Recognizing that social transformation and faith education required the written word, Saint Chavara took a bold step and founded the first indigenous press in 1846. Denied permission and technical help to use existing government or CMS presses, Saint Chavara designed and constructed a wooden printing press from scratch at Mannanam, Kottayam. This became St. Joseph's Press, the first indigenous Catholic printing press in India. St. Joseph's press gave birth to Nasrani Deepika in 1887, which eventually evolved into Deepika—the first daily newspaper in the Malayalam language and the oldest running newspaper in Kerala today. It was not conceived as a religious bulletin, but as a potent weapon against caste discrimination, giving a voice to the marginalized and driving Kerala's historic educational renaissance. The press at Mannanam was instrumental in the printing and publication of various prayer books and spiritual journals.

As the CMI mission expanded to Central and Northern Kerala printing press and publications were established in Thrissur and Malabar region, the latter predominantly meant to cater to the spiritual needs of the migrant communities. In 1910, St. Joseph's I. S. Press was founded at Elthuruth, as an affiliate of the industrial school to equip local youths with typesetting and binding skills. The press was later shifted to Thrissur town and `Jyothi Books' was attached to it as an auxiliary, operating as a specialized publishing and distribution outlet for religious literature, catechetical books, liturgical manuals, and moral science textbooks. In the Malabar region, Fr. Hormice Perumalil CMI established the San Thom Press and Prakasam Publication at Amalapuri in 1956. Over the decades, this centre evolved to address modern communication needs, currently operating as Amala Media House, which coordinates regional publications, digital content, and community outreach.

Down through the past two centuries a notable number of CMI writers and poets carried on the legacy of St. Chavara in the field of creative writing and publishing. There have been various individual initiatives in the field of literature, many were not properly documented, others are well recognized, like the contributions of Cherian Kuniyanthodath, Z. M. Muzhoor, Dan Thottakara, S. Vengaloor and others who could leave a mark in the secular, intellectual circles. We also have had well established CMI scholars regularly contributing to nationally and internationally acclaimed philosophical and theological publications, like `Journal of Dharma' `Herald of the East' `Jeevadhara' etc. There have been important journals and magazines that stand witness to the CMI print media ministry at a collective level, such as 'Karmala Kusumam', `Kudumbadeepam', `Samarpitha', `Kuttikalude Deepika'.

An overview of the contributions of the CMI congregation to the print media ministry underlines certain salient features, namely, democratization of literature, literary enrichment to all classes and age groups, and creating niches of readership through various periodicals meant for specific target groups. Many CMI writers significantly translated classical texts from foreign languages and pioneered the development of Christian literature in the vernacular. Beyond daily news published in Deepika, the CMIs introduced specialized periodicals for families, children, and spiritual enrichment, heavily influencing the reading habits of generations.

MUSIC, MEDIA AND PERFORMING ARTS

The contribution of Fr. Abel, C.M.I, and his brainchild, 'Cochin Kalabhavan', founded in 1969, represents an important milestone in the history of church and secular music and entertainment media of Kerala. Kalabhavan significantly contributed to the production of liturgical and devotional songs and prayers. Prior to the 1960s, liturgical music and Christian devotional songs in Kerala were heavily reliant on Syriac chants or rigid, Western-influenced melodies that felt detached from local cultural roots. Fr. Abel envisioned a system where Christian worship could be expressed through the rich tradition of Carnatic music and simple Malayalam poetry. As a lyricist, Fr. Abel penned hundreds of devotional songs that remain deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of Kerala. Kalabhavan broke traditional caste and class barriers by providing structured training in classical music, instrumental music, dance, and drawing to all students. Kalabhavan is widely credited with institutionalizing the Ganamela (live music concerts) and inventing the modern format of Mimics Parade. Fr. Abel's vision transformed Christian faith and devotion into a shared cultural experience for all Malayalees and



നസ്രാണി ദീപിക

The Nazrani Deepika

ഇൻഡ്യയിലെ ഏക കത്തോലിക്ക പ്രതിദിനപത്രം.

THE ONLY CATHOLIC DAILY NEWSPAPER IN INDIA.

റോമാവിശേഷങ്ങൾ.

(സ്വന്തം ലേഖകൻ.)

പ്രതിദിനചിന്തകൾ.

ബാങ്കുകൾ

സെൻറ്റൽ ബാങ്ക് (കിഴ്പ്പം)

Nazrani Deepika News Paper

laid a foundation that continues-to feed the Malayalam Film and Television industries with unparalleled creative talent.

In the 1980s, another pioneering media ministry project was undertaken by Fr. Isaac Alappat CMI in the field of cinema and electronic media, under the auspice of Thrissur Devamatha Province, laying the foundations for 'Chetana Film and TV Institute', and its offshoots in sound engineering, music and dance sprout out in the later decades. After graduating in Communication Arts from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, Fr. Isaac returned to Kerala with a vision to build a world-class production infrastructure modelled after Hollywood and he designed the first underground Sound Studios in South India. He directed two Malayalam feature films, Kunjikaikal and Chakravalangal. Remarkably, a script he wrote during his studies, Kuttavum Sikshayam, was included in the academic syllabus at Loyola Marymount. He firmly believed that media ministry should not be confined to traditional religious pamphlets; instead he utilised secular artistic tools and technology to communicate universally humane and ethical values.

Fr. Paul Alengattukaren CMI, after his studies in Los Angeles, brought in state-of-the-art equipment and gave a new face to Chetana Sound Studios, integrating high-end audiography to Christian music, supporting the production of thousands of high-quality Christian devotional albums and hymns. He also launched the first Post Graduate Diploma programme in Sound Engineering and turned Chetana Studios into an important production hub for Malayalam film industry. Another visionary, Fr. John Edapilly CMI, who authored `The Emerging Electronic Church', gave an impetus to expand the media ministry of Chetana into seven specific branches (Saptachetana') of culture and communication. In 1991, Fr. Thomas Chakkalamattath founded `Chetana Music Academy', which stands as a stellar institution in nurturing, structuring, and popularizing Western classical music education in South India. With its long-standing affiliation with Trinity College London, the academy has transformed from a modest initiative into an institution of international repute. The academy systematically prepares hundreds of students annually to take international grade and diploma examinations in Piano, Violin, Acoustic/Electric Guitar, Drums, and Western Vocals and organizes the national `Musicophilia' and `Audiophilia' fest and contest.
At the dawn of the new millennium, Chetana launched and developed five more institutions, namely, Chetana Media Institute, Chetana Sangeet Natya Academy, National Institute of Vocology, Chetana College of Media and Performing Arts and `Chetana Ganasram'. Chetana Media Institute, established in 2002 by Dr.Fr. Benny Benedict CMI, holds the distinction of being the first-ever private Film School in Kerala, offering affordable world-class film education locally. The Institute produces value-based content, short films, documentaries, and tele-serials focusing on social justice, family ethics, and spiritual reflections, which are broadcast on secular and Christian networks, You Tube and other online portals. Chetana has routinely provided audiovisual training to priests, nuns, and seminarians. The Institute designed the `ViBGYOR International Short and Documentary Film Festival' and has successfully conducted thirteen editions so far. Chetana College of Media and Performing Arts was founded in 2015, to offer graduate and postgraduate degrees in Mass Communication and Journalism, Visual Communication, Multimedia, Film and Television and Visual Communication and has become the unique stand-alone Media college in Northern Kerala, under the leadership of Fr. Jijo Theethai CMI.

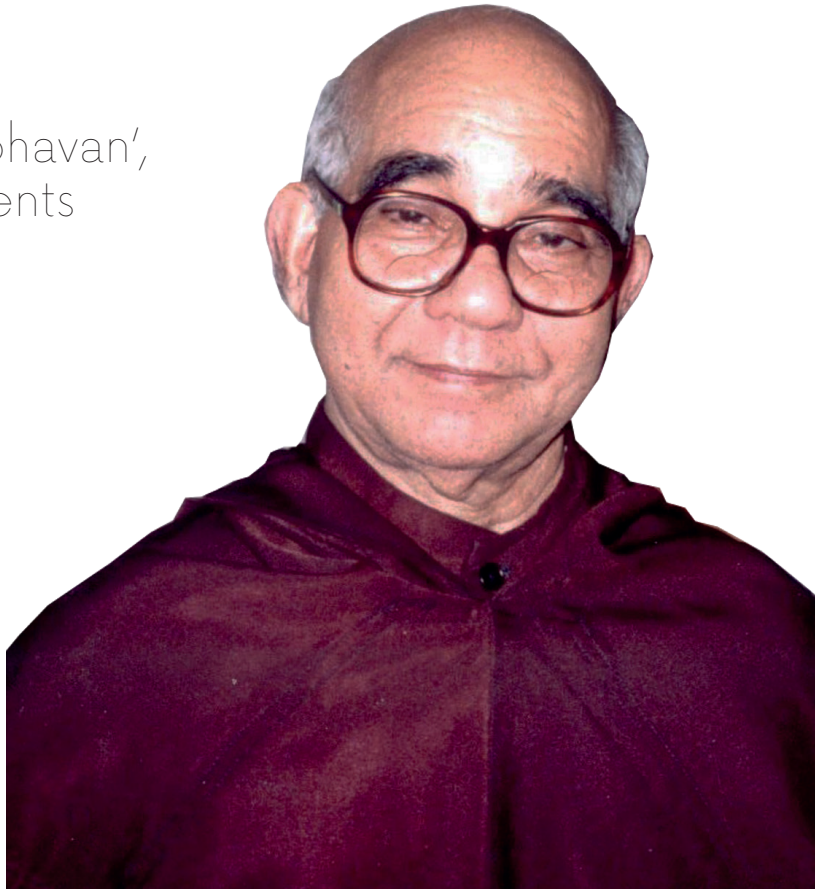
Dr. Fr. Paul Poovathingal CMI, the first Christian priest to secure a doctorate in Indian Classical music, founded Chetana Sangeet Natya Academy in 2005, as a premier centre for research, training, and the propagation of Carnatic music and Classical dance. He introduced raga-based chanting and classical compositions into Christian liturgical music. For promoting communal harmony, he composed songs integrating Hindu, Christian, and Muslim devotional themes, underscoring the philosophy that "music is a bridge between all religions,". Fr. Paul, the first certified vocologist in India, established Chetana National Institute for Vocology in 2010, dedicated to the science of voice habilitation and rehabilitation, treating professional voice users, including singers, clergy, lawyers, teachers, and actors, remedying voice disorders through muscular and breathing exercises without surgery or medicine. Chetana Ganasram is an ambitious dream project of Fr. Paul, launched in 2025, that aims at the integration of music, science, and spirituality, using music as a medium for meditation, therapy, and holistic wellness.

Similar to the endeavours of Chetana institutions, there have been laudable attempts along the same track of high-end music and electronic media productions in other

CMI provinces also, like 'Nadopasana Academy (Thodupuzha), `Vikasvani (Thengodu, Kakkanad)', `Strings Sound studio (Palakkad)' and `Navachetana' (Bhopal), to name the most prominent ones. In recent times there were more CMI inititiatives in this field, such as `Darsana Studios' (Kottayam), Amala Media studios (Kozhikode) and 'Chavara Cultural Centre Sound Studios & Preview Theatre' (Ernakulam).

Nadopasana Academy for music, dance, and fine arts, located in Thodupuzha under Carmel Province, Muvattupuzha, was established in 1986. Having trained over 8,000 students since its inception, its core activities include Choral and Liturgical music training, church choir arrangements, and the Vocal music and instrumental training such as Piano, Keyboard, Guitar, Violin, and Jazz Drums and Indian Classical music. The academy offers comprehensive training in traditional Indian dance forms including Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Mohiniyattam, and regional folk dances. Nadopasana facilities talented students to appear for the official graded examinations in conducted by the Trinity College London. In addition to training, the institution has a long legacy of composing, recording, and releasing widely recognized Christian devotional albums such as Patheya, Yagavediyil, Arathi, and Thrikkaikalil to name a few. The academy regularly hosts annual Talent Day celebrations, cultural festivals, and formal debut performances (arangettams) to give students the necessary stage exposure. Fr. Antony Urulianickal CMI and Fr. Kurian Puthenpurackal CMI are two names that deserve special mentions, who guided Nadopasana and also contributed to Christian devotional music field to a great extent. Vikasavani Studios and Productions (Vikasavani Televisions Limited) was a pioneering media production venture in Kerala, closely tied to early television programming, commercial advertising, and telefilm production. Founded in 1988 by Fr. Cyriac Thudnyil CMI (St. Joseph's Province, Trivandrum) during the nascent era of television broadcasting in Kerala, Vikasavani focused on creating value-driven, educational, and entertaining media content. Over the years, the studio became a prominent name in the production of Telefilms and television programs, Radio broadcasts and audio cassette productions, Documentaries and public awareness advertisements.

The contribution of Fr. Abel, C.M.I, and his brainchild, 'Cochin Kalabhavan', founded in 1969, represents an important milestone in the history of church and secular music and entertainment media of Kerala.



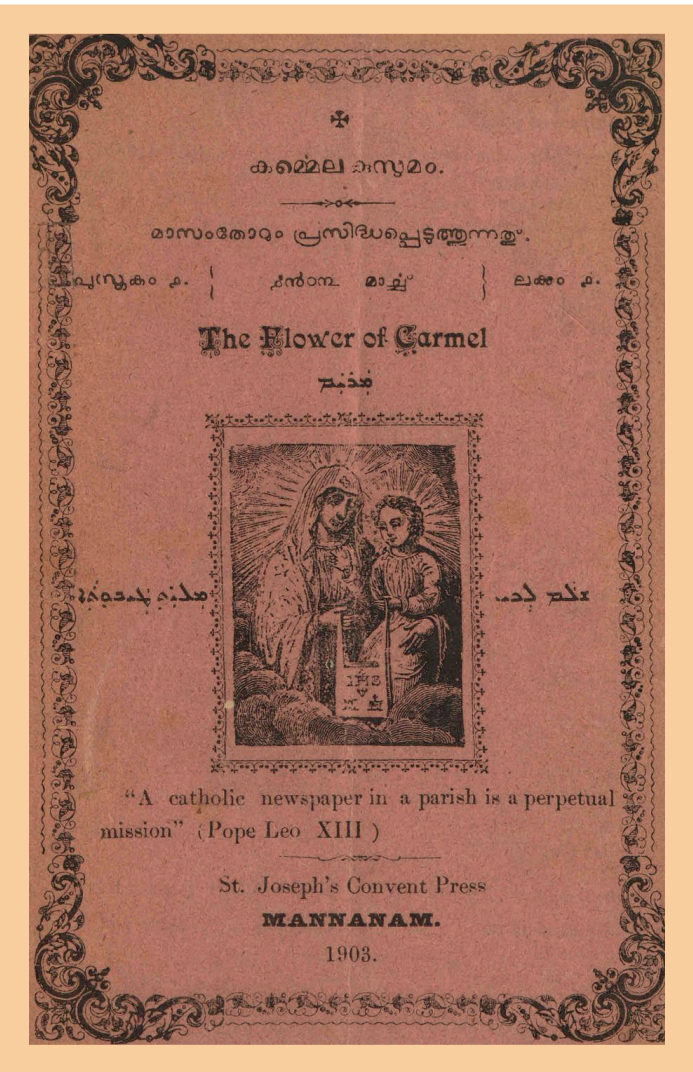
Navachetana, founded in 1990 by St. Pauls' mission Province, Bhopal, utilizes modern mass media, traditional performing arts, and digital platforms to reach out to the public, particularly focusing on value education, youth development, and pastoral communication. They produce audio-visual materials, including devotional music, hymns, cultural documentaries, and educational dance dramas. The highly regarded student magazine called Heights provides young people with psycho-spiritual and ethical values. Navachetana runs a dedicated web TV channel, a Hindi YouTube news portal called "Kalisiya", and a mobile application named "Homilies Navchetana" to assist in digital ministry and community outreach. By blending classical and tribal performing art forms with moral narratives, Navachetana acts as a unique bridge between diverse religious, social, and economic groups in North India. By localizing its media outputs into Hindi and regional dialects, it has played a prominent role in promoting media literacy among underprivileged rural communities. Fr. James Muttickal CMI, Fr. Anto Amarnath CMI, Fr. Sebastian Eluvathingal CMI have been the pioneering figures behind this innovative venture.

In contrast to the high-end technological infrastructures of the CMI electronic media institutions, `Poonjar Navadhara Theatres' stands apart for its focus on performing arts. Founded by Fr. Eapen Aerthayil CMI (St. Joseph's Province, Kottayam). For decades, Navadhara has played a vital role in preserving, teaching, and modernizing the performing arts, music, and theatrical traditions of Kerala. The centre is formally affiliated with the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi. Navadhara operates both as a training academy and a touring production house, staging professional, historical, and socially relevant dramas (Natakam). They perform across Kerala for temple festivals, church perunnal (feast), and cultural clubs. A major offshoot of the institution is its popular musical band wing, the Poonjar Navadhara Bandset, which specializes in high-energy brass band performances, fusion music, and cinematic covers.

There are other new media ministry initiatives such as `Kaladarasana' (St. Joseh's province, Kottayam) `Amala (St. Thomas Province, Kozhikode), `Strings Studio' (Preshitha Province, Coimbatore) and `Rajagiri Media (Sacred Heart Province, Kalamassery). Kaladarsana Academy for Arts & Music Training is an offshoot of Darsana Culture Centre. It provides professional training in classical music, musical instruments, and traditional dance forms, painting and lifestyle arts like Yoga and, Karate. Amala Media House, an extension of Chavara Cultural Centre, Amalapuri, Kozhikode, is a state-of-the-art audio and video recording studio. It caters to media production, independent musicians, commercial jingles, voice-overs, video editing, and dubbing for films and digital media. Strings Musical Academy & Recordings in Palakkad, has gained distinct recognition in the Christian devotional and musicological spaces for its contributions to unique musical genres like Syriac chants, devotional and commemorative audio-visual tributes to legendary CMIs like Fr. Dunston Olekkengil CMI.



St Jesoph Press, Mannanam



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മാസംതോറും പ്രസിദ്ധപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതു.

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The Flower of Carmel

"A catholic newspaper in a parish is a perpetual mission" (Pope Leo XIII)

St. Joseph's Convent Press

MANNANAM.

1903.

Karmalakusumam, Magazine in 1903

“

We have no right to rest; I repeat, we have no right to rest for a single moment, as long as even one soul is in Satan’s grasp!

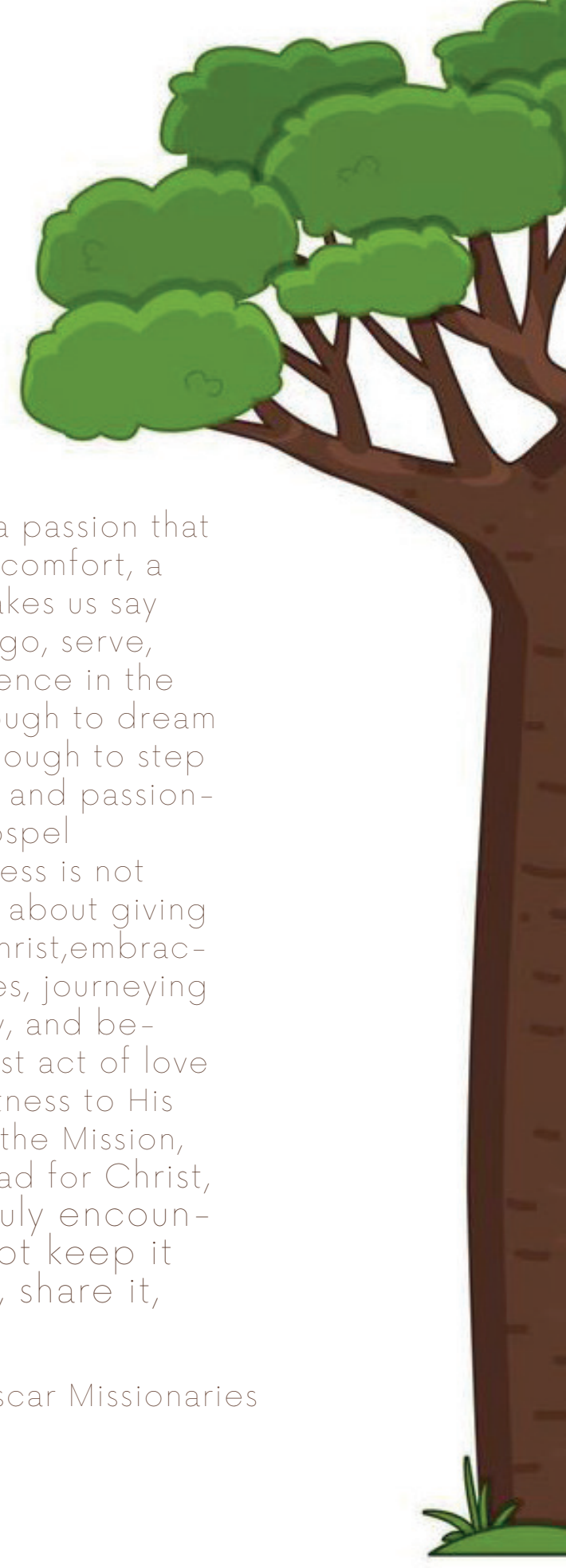
St. Maximilian Kolbe



CMI Mission Madagascar



THE MAD MISSION-ARIES OF MAD-AGASCAR



Madness for Christ is a passion that refuses to settle for comfort, a fire within us that makes us say YES when Christ calls us to go, serve, love, and become His presence in the world. It is being crazy enough to dream beyond ourselves, brave enough to step beyond our comfort zones, and passionate enough to carry the Gospel wherever we go. This madness is not about losing our minds, but about giving our hearts completely to Christ,embracing new people and cultures, journeying with others, serving with joy, and believing that even the smallest act of love can become a powerful witness to His presence. We are mad for the Mission, mad for the Gospel, and mad for Christ, because when we have truly encountered His love, we cannot keep it to ourselves, we carry it, share it, and live it.

Madagascar Missionaries

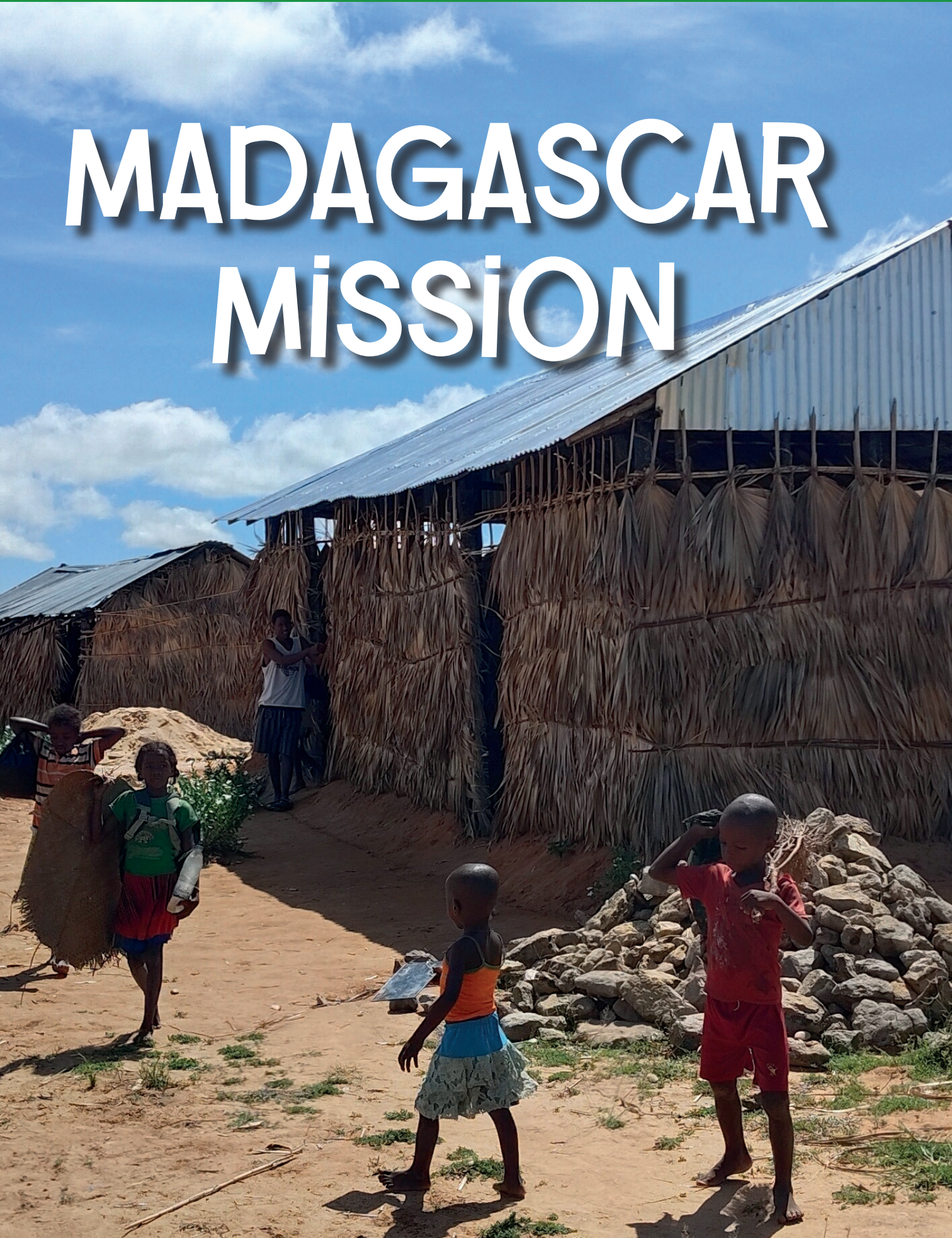
A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND PROVIDENCE

When I look back at the beginnings of our CMI mission in Madagascar, my heart is filled with gratitude to God. What began as a humble response to a missionary invitation gradually unfolded into a remarkable journey of faith, struggle, friendship, and grace. At that time none of us imagined how the small seed planted in 1987 would slowly grow and bear fruit in the life of the Church in this beautiful island nation. Madagascar is a vast island in the Indian Ocean facing the coasts of Mozambique and South Africa. Its people are unique in culture and history. The Malagasy trace their roots not only to Africa but also to distant lands of Asia—Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Their language, traditions, and worldview reflect this fascinating blend of Asian and African heritage. When we arrived, the country was going through economic hardship and political uncertainty. Yet what impressed us most was the deep religiosity of the people and their openness to God. Beneath the poverty and struggles of daily life we found hearts ready to welcome the Gospel.



Paul Moses CMI
Thrissur

MADAGASCAR MISSION



THE INVITATION THAT OPENED THE DOOR

Our journey to Madagascar began with a providential encounter within the Church. The Diocese of Morondava, where La Salette missionaries had been working for many years, needed additional priests to serve the growing pastoral needs of the people. Through contacts with Archbishop Antony Padiyara of Changanacherry, the bishop of Morondava and the La Salette Fathers came to know about the CMI Congregation. In 1985 they travelled to India and requested missionaries from our congregation.

Our Provincial, Rev. Fr. Eusebius, responded generously to this appeal. After studying the situation in the diocese, three of us volunteered for this new mission: Fr. Kuriakose Cheeran, Fr. David Kolengadan, and myself. Looking back, I feel that it was truly the hand of God guiding us toward Madagascar.

PREPARATION FOR A NEW MISSION

Before arriving in Madagascar, we spent several months in Rome preparing ourselves for the mission. We stayed at the La Salette General House and began learning French, which was widely used in Madagascar. Those days in Rome were filled with grace and encouragement. One unforgettable moment was when we had the privilege of celebrating Mass with the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. He blessed our missionary crosses before we left for our mission. That blessing remained a source of strength for us in the years that followed.

On our way to Madagascar, we also spent two weeks in Kenya with fellow CMI missionaries. It was our first exposure to African culture and helped us prepare ourselves for the new world that awaited us. Finally, on the 11th of March 1987, we arrived in Madagascar. The La Salette Fathers welcomed us warmly, and from the very beginning we felt that we were not strangers but members of a larger missionary family.

OUR FIRST HOME IN THE DIOCESE OF MORONDAVA

At that time the Diocese of Morondava had very few priests. In a territory almost the size of Kerala there were only about twenty-one religious priests serving the entire diocese. Soon we were entrusted with the pastoral care of the district of Mahabo. On the 6th of December 1987, when the parish was celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception, we officially took charge of the parish in a solemn celebration attended by clergy, religious, and local authorities.
I was appointed as the parish priest of Mahabo, while Fr. Kuriakose Cheeran and Fr. David Kolengadan served as assistant pastors. In addition to Mahabo, two other districts—Ankilizato and Mandabe—were also entrusted to our care. Our mission territory included numerous small villages scattered across vast rural areas. Many of these communities had rarely seen a priest.

THE JOY OF BEING WELCOMED BY THE PEOPLE

One of the most beautiful experiences of those early days was the warm welcome we received from the people. Though we came from a distant country and struggled with language, the Malagasy people welcomed us with great affection. They brought us small gifts, invited us into their homes, and patiently helped us learn their language



and culture. Very soon we began celebrating Mass not only in the parish church but also in the bush churches spread across the villages. Travelling to these places often required long journeys on difficult roads. Sometimes even bullock carts became our means of transport. Yet these journeys were filled with joy because we encountered communities hungry for the Word of God. Within a short time, the number of people attending Sunday Mass in Mahabo increased from about 120 to nearly 400. This was a clear sign that the Spirit of God was already at work among the people.

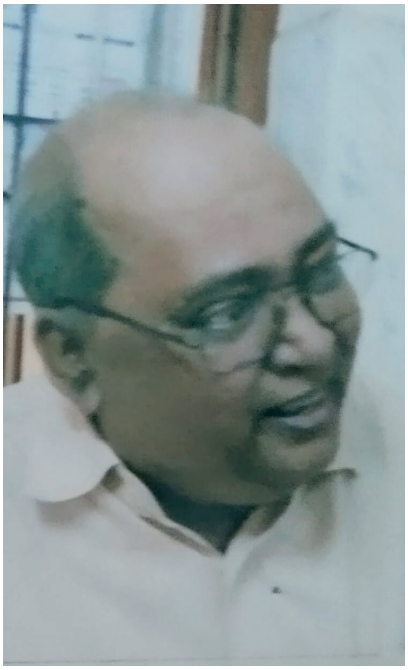
LEARNING THE CULTURE OF THE PEOPLE

For us missionaries, one of the first challenges was learning the language and understanding the culture of the Malagasy people. Besides French and official Malagasy, we had to learn the Sakalava dialect spoken in the Menabe region. Some customs initially surprised us. For example, funeral traditions were very elaborate. Families sometimes kept the body of a deceased relative in their home for several days or even weeks while relatives gathered for prayers, meals, and music. Marriage customs also differed from the sacramental understanding of the Church. Many couples lived together without formal marriage. Yet we gradually discovered that the people possessed a deep spiritual sense and a profound respect for God and their ancestors. This opened meaningful paths for dialogue between the Gospel and their traditions.

EVANGELIZING THE SAKALAVA VILLAGES

One of the most important missionary efforts we undertook was the evangelization of the Sakalava tribal communities. Many Sakalava villages around Mahabo had no churches and very few Christians. In 1988 we began visiting these villages regularly with the help of the parishioners and pious associations. We encouraged small groups of lay people to adopt certain villages. They visited these communities, taught catechism, conducted literacy classes, and supported the people in their daily struggles. Gradually friendships developed and trust was built.

The fruits were extraordinary. Six new Christian communities were formed, and six churches were built in these villages. One day remains unforgettable in my memory. In the village of Vangoroka we celebrated the baptism of 107 Sakalava people in a single day. It was a moment of great joy for the whole community.









SERVING THE POOR: OUR SOCIAL INITIATIVES

From the beginning we realized that proclaiming the Gospel also meant responding to the material needs of the people.With the support of Catholic Relief Services, we started the Mother and Child Programme in 1989. Nearly six hundred children benefited from nutrition and health support.
Through the Canadian Food for Children programme, we received containers of food supplies, medicines, and clothing which we distributed among the poor.
Later we also collaborated with the national nutrition project called SEECALINE, working through Caritas Mahabo to address child malnutrition. Schools, dispensaries, and small health centres were established in different mission stations. These services became signs of the Church's love and care for the people.

STANDING WITH THE PEOPLE IN THEIR STRUGGLES

One incident remains deeply etched in my memory.
In the village of Manamby there was a natural water source that provided drinking water for thousands of people. A wealthy businessman attempted to take control of this source through corrupt dealings with local authorities. Fr. Kuriakose and I felt that we could not remain silent. With the support of the Christian community, we raised our voice against this injustice.
After much struggle and public attention, the President of Madagascar himself visited the village and cancelled the illegal registration of the land. The water source was restored to the people. It was a powerful reminder that the mission of the Church includes defending the dignity and rights of the poor.

INCULTURATION: ENCOUNTER BETWEEN GOSPEL AND CULTURE

One of the most meaningful aspects of our missionary journey was the dialogue between the Gospel and Malagasy culture. The Malagasy people have a profound respect for their ancestors and believe deeply in God whom they call Andriananahary. Instead of rejecting these beliefs, we tried to help them see how the Gospel fulfils their deepest spiritual aspirations.
One initiative that emerged from this effort was the establishment of a Christian parish tomb (Fasana Kristianina) in Mahabo. This allowed Christian burial traditions to resonate with local cultural practices.

Over time such initiatives helped the people experience the Church not as something foreign but as a living part of their own culture.
Looking Back with Gratitude
When these memories were first written in 2011, the mission had already grown significantly from its humble beginnings. But in the years since then, God has continued to bless the mission abundantly.
Today the Madagascar mission has grown to twelve missionary priests working in the field. Two priests serve in France in pastoral ministry in support of the mission, and another priest is undergoing studies for the formation of future missionaries.

The mission is also blessed with nineteen candidates in formation, among whom seven are professed members. At present the mission has six mission centres—including four district churches with numerous mission stations and one parish—serving many communities across the region.

In the capital region of Antananarivo, at Betafo, we now have a growing mission campus with a Pilgrim Centre, Sub-Regional House, and Study House, which serves as a centre for formation and spiritual activities.

A MISSION THAT CONTINUES

When we first arrived in Madagascar in 1987, we were only three missionaries with very limited resources. Today, seeing the growth of the mission, I feel deeply humbled by the mysterious ways in which God works. The real builders of this mission are not the missionaries alone but the people of Madagascar themselves—the catechists, the faithful, the children, and the families who embraced the Gospel with generosity.

As I look toward the future, my greatest hope is that many Malagasy young men will join the CMI Congregation and continue this mission among their own people. The story of the CMI Mission in Madagascar is still being written. And I believe with all my heart that the best chapters are yet to come.





WE ONLY BEGAN WHEN WE LEARNED TO TRUST THE CALL



A Missionary's Reflection on **Formation** in Madagascar



Louisraj Porathur CMI
Madagascar

When I look back now, the journey of forming local vocations in Madagascar feels less like a project we planned and executed, and more like a path along which we were slowly led—sometimes hesitantly, sometimes even reluctantly—but always guided. I share these reflections not as a report, but as a memory of grace. Perhaps the younger missionaries, our brothers, and even our lay collaborators may find in this journey something of their own calling—to trust, to wait, and to begin when the time comes.

A CALL WE DELAYED

I still remember the year 2000, when we gathered for the CMI Pan African Mission Meet. There was clarity in that meeting—we were to promote local vocations in Africa. Kenya responded immediately. We, in Madagascar, did not. It was not that we rejected the idea. We simply did not feel ready. There was a certain fear in us, about the people, the culture, the unknown future. We had just begun to find our footing as missionaries. To think of forming local vocations felt like stepping into something much bigger than ourselves.

But the question did not leave us in peace. Our provincial authorities would ask us again and again: "Why are you not starting?"

And then the local Church began to ask us the same question. The bishops here were very direct. They told us, sometimes gently and sometimes firmly, that our mission cannot remain only at the level of service. "You must share your charism," they said. "You must give something of your spiritual heritage to the people of this land." Those words stayed with us. Slowly we began to realize that mission is not complete until it becomes local—until it finds a home in the hearts of the people.

LEARNING TO SEE BEYOND FEAR

Our hesitation was not without reason. We had already begun to understand the Malagasy society, especially in the interior and coastal regions where our mission was present. Life there is simple, but also complex in ways we were not used to. One of our biggest concerns was about celibacy. In many places, it is not considered a special value. It is not something that is consciously lived or admired. Family structures are different, relationships are different, and the idea of lifelong commitment in chastity is something that does not naturally arise from the cultural experience. We often asked ourselves: How can we invite someone into religious life when the very foundation of that life is so foreign to their lived reality? We also heard many discouraging stories—about difficulties in other places, about candidates who struggled, about vocations that did not persevere. Slowly, without realising it, we allowed these voices to shape our thinking.

But God has a way of correcting us, not through arguments, but through quiet clarity. Through prayer, through conversations with other missionaries, with local priests, with bishops, something began to shift within us. We began to see vocation not as something for which we must "find perfect candidates," but as something we must accompany into growth.

The question changed from "Are they already ready?" to "Are they willing? Are they open? Can they grow?" And once that change happened, the fear began to lose its strength.

THE GRACE OF BEGINNING

Even then, we did not rush. Years passed in reflection, in discussion, in waiting. Sometimes we feel we lost time. But at other times, we feel those years were necessary—for us to become inwardly ready.
Finally, when the Aspirants' House in Antsirabe was completed in 2018, we knew that the time had come.

In 2019, we received our first group. I still remember those boys—not as numbers, but as faces. There was simplicity in them, a certain innocence, and also an uncertainty. They did not come with great clarity. But they came with openness. Many of them came from the central regions, especially from the Diocese of Ambositra, one of the oldest Catholic dioceses in Madagascar. That itself was a grace. The faith there has deeper roots and a long Catholic tradition.
And then there was the quiet but powerful role of people like Fr. Silber.

He was a diocesan priest serving in a district church called Innito, a place known for many priestly and religious vocations. Fr. Silber had a truly missionary heart when it came to vocations. He believed that helping young people discern God's call was one of the most important services the Church could offer. With the help of religious sisters and committed lay people, he had founded an association called Bon Vocation — Good Vocation — to encourage and guide boys and girls in their discernment journey. They would identify children, accompany them spiritually, prepare them, and send them to vocation camps conducted by different congregations.

For our first vocation camp, Fr. Silber sent six boys to us. From those six, four became part of our first batch. Altogether nearly thirty boys attended that first camp. Many had not yet completed their higher secondary studies, and after much discussion among ourselves, we decided to admit only those who had completed their schooling. Finally, we selected seven boys for the first batch.

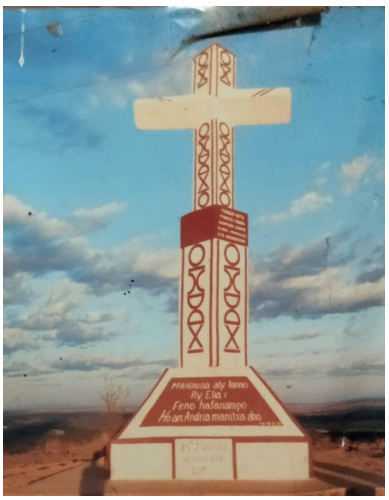
Today, when we see two brothers from that very first batch pursuing their philosophical studies at Dharmaram in Bangalore, we feel deeply grateful. Both of them were among the boys sent by Fr. Silber. As long as he remained there, he continued sending six to eight boys every year to our vocation camps. Looking back now, we feel that people like him were among the hidden instruments through whom God slowly built the foundation of our vocation ministry in Madagascar. That was our beginning.

WALKING WITH THEM, NOT AHEAD OF THEM

Formation, we have learned, is not about shaping someone according to a system. It is about walking with them, often slowly, sometimes patiently, and always attentively. Very early, we realised that we cannot simply transplant a formation model from elsewhere into Madagascar.
These boys come from a life that is deeply connected to the land. They are used to working with their hands, caring for animals, living close to nature, and sharing responsibilities in the family.
If we suddenly place them into a life that is only books and classrooms, we risk losing something essential in them. So we tried to listen—to their life, to their rhythm.



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We began to include manual work as part of formation. Farming, caring for animals, maintaining the house—these are not additional activities for them; they are part of who they are.
There is a word in Malagasy: tamana. It means to feel at home, to be at peace, to be happy in a place. That became, in a way, our guiding principle. If a candidate is not tamana, he cannot grow. So our effort has been to create a formation that is both faithful to our charism and close to their lived reality.

THE HIDDEN SIDE OF FORMATION

There are many moments in formation that never appear in reports. We remember nights when a brother would fall sick—often due to simple reasons like food or water. We would try home remedies, and when nothing worked, we would rush to the hospital in the middle of the night. In those moments, formation is not about spirituality or theology. It is about care.

We have often thought of sisters living in remote villages, far from any hospital, facing such situations. Their courage is something we do not speak about enough.
Formation, in its deepest sense, is about presence—being there when needed, in simple and human ways.

A GROWING PATH

Today, when we look at the formation programme, we see something that has begun to take shape. From the first batch in 2019, we now have 26 candidates at different stages. Some are in Antsirabe, some in different mission centres for pastoral exposure, some in Kenya for novitiate, and some in Bangalore for philosophical studies.

Each stage has its own challenges. Language is a constant struggle. Cultural adaptation is not easy—neither for the Malagasy candidates going abroad nor for missionaries coming here.

We also feel the need for trained formators. Formation cannot depend only on goodwill; it requires preparation, depth, and commitment. Financially too, there are limitations.

But despite all this, there is a quiet sense that something is growing—not quickly, not dramatically, but steadily.

WHAT WE HOPE FOR

If you ask us today what we dream of, our answer is very simple. We do not dream of large numbers. We dream of depth.
We would prefer a few vocations who are well accompanied, well formed, and deeply rooted in our charism, rather than many who pass through without being truly formed. The Malagasy boys, in our experience, have a natural goodness. They are humble. They are open. When they trust you, they share their life without hesitation. If we can build that trust, if we can accompany them patiently, we believe they will carry forward this mission in a way that we cannot. One day, this congregation must not feel foreign here. It must feel like it belongs. And that will happen not through us, but through them.

IN THE END, IT IS HIS WORK

When we look back, we see clearly that this journey was never ours alone. We delayed, we hesitated, we questioned but God continued to call. Even now, we try to plan, to organise, to improve—but formation remains, in its deepest sense, God's work. We are only instruments. A Word to Those Who Continue the Journey
To the younger missionaries, to our brothers, and to all who support this mission, we would simply say: Do not be afraid to begin, even if you feel unprepared. Do not wait for perfect conditions.
And do not judge a vocation by its past—look at its openness to the future. Accompany with patience, trust the process. And above all, trust the One who calls.

HOPE AND PRAYER

As this mission continues to grow, we carry a quiet prayer in our hearts:That God may bless this land with good and generous vocations. That those who are called may respond with courage.
And that we, who are entrusted with their formation, may remain humble, patient, and faithful.
If the seed has begun to take root, it is only by His grace.
May He bring it to fullness.



A special word of thanks to **Fr Raphy Kadavi CMI** for his dedicated efforts in collecting and coordinating the articles from the Madagascar Mission.


A
MISSIONARY
PAR EXCELLENCE

A Missionary's Reflection on **Evangelization** in Madagascar



Johnson Thaliyath CMI
Madagascar

There are moments in missionary life when the words of the Gospel suddenly become alive before our eyes. Standing in a remote village in Madagascar, surrounded by people who are hearing the name of Jesus for the very first time, one begins to understand what the apostles must have felt when they first went out into the world. The call of Christ is not a story from the past; it is a living invitation that continues even today.

"Jesus went up the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired. They came to Him so that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach." (Mark 3:13–14) "Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

Even today, the Lord continues to call those whom He desires—so that they may be with Him, and so that He may be sent out to proclaim the Gospel to all creation. We, elevan missionaries from the CMI congregation who have gathered in Madagascar, have come here with one simple desire: to offer our lives in gratitude for the love of Jesus.

A LAND READY FOR THE GOSPEL

Madagascar is truly fertile soil for the proclamation of the Gospel. Christianity has been present on this island for nearly two centuries, and it is often described as a Christian nation. Yet when we travel beyond the towns into the interior villages, we discover another reality. There are still many people who have never encountered Jesus personally. The villages scattered across the island are filled with people searching for meaning, hope, and faith. For missionaries, this reality brings both urgency and hope.

For the members of the CMI congregation, proclaiming the Gospel—sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly according to circumstances—has always been a hallmark of our mission. By God's grace, Madagascar today offers many favourable opportunities for direct evangelisation. Government policies are generally supportive, and the local people often welcome missionaries with warmth and curiosity. For a missionary, this openness brings great joy and encouragement. The Christians here also stand beside us as companions in the mission.



By God's grace,
Madagascar today offers
many favourable opportunities for direct evangelisation.
Government policies are generally supportive,
and the local people often welcome missionaries
with warmth and curiosity.



Many of us hesitate
to be sent precisely because we possess
good health, talents, and intelligence. Instead of offering
these gifts freely, we often prefer comfortable places
where life is secure and recognition is guaranteed.

Many villages in the dioceses where we serve have entered into the faith, bearing witness to the zeal and sacrifice of missionaries who came before us. Here the words of the Lord ring true: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few."

THE CHALLENGES OF THE MISSION

Yet missionary work is never without challenges. For us foreigners, the most immediate obstacle is language. Malagasy is not easy to learn, and communication can become a slow and patient process. Travel is another difficulty. Roads are often rough or nonexistent, and transportation facilities are limited. Communication networks are also sparse in many rural areas. Because only a small number of missionaries are sent, visits to remote villages sometimes become infrequent. But we also know this: if we grow in patience, learn the language well, and remain close to the people, the harvest for the Lord will be abundant.

THE ZEAL THAT INSPIRES MISSION

I often remember a striking story that illustrates the spirit of mission. Once a woman who had lost one leg due to polio applied for a visa to go to Africa as a missionary. During the interview, the visa officer asked her a simple question: "Why do you want to go through such hardship, especially when you are disabled?" She replied without hesitation: "Because those who have two legs are not going for Jesus." Her answer was so sincere and powerful that the visa officer granted her visa immediately. Stories like this challenge our complacency. We see the same spirit in the Gospel when the Samaritan woman encounters Jesus. After meeting Him, she leaves her water jar behind and runs to share her experience with others, bringing them to Christ. (John 4) An authentic encounter with Jesus naturally becomes a proclamation.

WHOM DOES THE LORD CHOOSE?

Looking at such examples, we might wonder why Jesus chose simple and ordinary people to accomplish His mission. The Gospel clearly shows that the Lord does not choose based on power, beauty, health, or knowledge. He chooses those who rely completely on Him. Their trust is not placed in their own abilities or achievements but in the Lord Himself. They come without conditions, without bargaining, and without complaints. When people come to Him like humble lambs, the Lord knows they will not become selfish like wolves.

THE TEMPTATION OF COMFORT

Many of us hesitate to be sent precisely because we possess good health, talents, and intelligence. Instead of offering these gifts freely, we often prefer comfortable places where life is secure and recognition is guaranteed. Sometimes even those who claim to have received a vocation quietly place conditions before the Lord. Yet the reality of life reminds us that we can become weak or disabled at any moment—physically or spiritually. If our weakness comes from serving the Lord, even those whom we left behind will be proud of us. But if our lives are spent only seeking comfort, we risk losing something far greater.Jesus warns us clearly: "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62)



> The Lord does not ask whether the road is easy, He only asks wheth–er we are willing to walk it with Him.

WHEN RITUAL REPLACES RELATIONSHIP

At times we become distracted by secondary things. We argue about customs, traditions, and practices while forgetting the very Lord who invites us inside. Some stand outside the house discussing the decorations along the road but never enter to meet the Master. They delay others who wish to enter and eventually waste their own lives. Like the proverbial dog in the manger, they neither enjoy the blessing themselves nor allow others to receive it. The Lord calls us beyond such attitudes.

THE MISSIONARY ROLE OF THE LAITY

Even among those who have consecrated their lives, the temptation for financial security or social status can sometimes become strong. Yet at the same time we witness something beautiful: many lay people are rising with missionary enthusiasm. In many places they are ready to proclaim the Gospel with remarkable courage. When opportunities for direct evangelisation exist, why should we remain passive? If we cannot share an experience of Christ like the Samaritan woman, we must ask ourselves honestly whether our hearts have grown empty. If we cannot even spare time to learn the language and visit the villages, how can we truly call ourselves apostles?
"Repentance for the forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations." (Luke 24:47)
"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19)

ENTERING A VILLAGE THE APOSTOLIC WAY

The best way to proclaim the Gospel in new villages is the method used by the apostles themselves. Go to the people. Live among them. Share their lives. Spend time with them in simple evening conversations. Once they begin to feel that we are not strangers but friends, they become eager to listen. In Madagascar, daily life is deeply shaped by customs, traditions, and taboos. The elders often hesitate to abandon long-held practices quickly. For this reason, when we visit unfamiliar villages, we usually begin by approaching the children.

THE DOOR THAT CHILDREN OPEN

The villages around Ankilizato did not know us in the beginning. Together with friends from the parish, we began visiting nearby villages such as Filanjara, Mavogisa, Malaikirafy, Ampandrabe, Migodo, and Andranotafika. Our approach was very simple. We befriended the children. We sang songs with them, taught them new songs, played games, and occasionally shared sweets with them. Children quickly open their hearts, and before long they became our friends. When the parents saw this friendship, they too began to approach us with curiosity and trust.
Soon the village elders themselves asked us to help start small schools and chapels. At that time, we did not yet know the language well. But with the help of interested believers from Ankilizato we formed a small "Apostles' Association." Among its members were the poor and even some with physical disabilities. Together we visited the villages.

Our dream was to reach all seventy villages in the parish area. Because of health limitations, long distances, and difficult roads, we could not reach every village. Yet we were able to establish prayer communities in about twenty villages, and in some places, chapels were built. Sometimes while we pursue our personal ambitions, the desires of Jesus remain unfulfilled within us.

A SIMPLE MISSION STRATEGY

When we arrived at Betalatala parish, we initially had fourteen faith communities. We encouraged each community to "adopt" a new village—to help establish another faith community there. The idea bore fruit. Within three years, eight new villages welcomed Christian communities. Very often we realise that many lay people have received a missionary call just as powerful as ours.

WALKING THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Mission life is not without disappointment and struggle. But these moments can be seen as small falls along the Way of the Cross. If we truly desire to give our lives for Jesus, we must also strive to develop the abilities needed for mission.
When we say "I cannot do this" yet easily find time for other things, we make the Lord who called us feel ashamed. But when the heart is willing, nothing becomes an obstacle—not language, not food, not rough roads, and not even failure.

ARE WE READY TO FOLLOW?

Madagascar continues to offer immense opportunities for the Gospel. The question remains for each of us: Are we ready to follow Jesus wherever He sends us?
If we are willing to step out in faith, the Lord will surely bless the mission. And one day we will return—not empty-handed, but with nets filled with the fruits of the Kingdom.





Ankilizato Mission

A Journey of Faith, Service, and Hope

A Testimony from the Missionaries of Ankilizato

Along the national highway, about 90 kilometres from Morondava, stands the humble yet grace-filled mission of Ankilizato. Today, this mission serves a population of around 23,000 people scattered across more than 60 villages. The mission story of Ankilizato dates back to 1928, when Jesuit missionaries, on their way to Morondava, stopped here and began preaching the Gospel. Gradually, a small Catholic community was formed, quietly rooted in faith.

A new chapter began in 1987, when CMI missionaries arrived and established Ankilizato as a substation of Mahabo. The pioneering missionary, Fr. Kuriakose Cheeran CMI, moved to Ankilizato in 1988 and laid the foundation of what we experience today. With great simplicity and dedication, he lived among the people, traveling to interior villages by bullock cart, often staying there during weekdays. His passion for evangelization inspired many villagers, who eagerly accompanied him in proclaiming the Good News.

At that time, the Catholic community here consisted of fewer than 30 families. But with patience and perseverance, Fr. Kuriakose nurtured this small flock. He also recognized the essential needs of the people and responded concretely. He started Carmel School at Ankilizato, which today continues to serve around 800 students under the care of Malagasy sisters. Alongside, he opened a small dispensary—the only medical facility available in the entire area at that time. For 13 years, from 1986 to 2000, he served tirelessly, planting seeds that continue to bear fruit. After his departure, however, the dispensary gradually declined and eventually closed.



Sony Thottian CMI
Madagascar



Jerin Thottian CMI
Madagascar


Café
MONEY
is calling...
Brooklyn
FOOTBALL




KRISTY
Mission Catholique
Mahabo

In the year 2000, Fr. Johnson Thaliyath CMI took charge of the mission and continued this journey with renewed vigour. Known for his tireless search for new communities, he ventured deep into interior villages, establishing new Christian communities and constructing small churches. His contribution was not only pastoral but also artistic—he personally painted beautiful murals and altars in almost all the churches of the CMI Madagascar mission.

Fr. Johnson also brought in developmental initiatives by collaborating with organizations such as Caritas and MIVA. He undertook road construction projects to remote villages, engaging local people by providing them with wages and food. His vision extended to education and community life as well. He constructed a parish church, parish hall, and a hostel that accommodated around 150 village students. However, after his transfer to Antananarivo in 2013, the boarding facility gradually became difficult to maintain and was eventually closed.
In October 2012, Fr. Joy Kalliyath CMI took charge of Ankilizato. Before arriving here, he had been serving in Dhanu, Maharashtra, where he was in charge of farming and a dispensary. Drawing from that experience, one of his first priorities was to revive the dispensary at Ankilizato. He renewed the necessary documents and made persistent efforts to find sponsors and religious sisters to manage it, but initially without success.

Providence intervened in 2014, when the mission councillor of the SD Sisters visited the region with a desire to expand their mission in Madagascar. While exploring possibilities in Ankilimeda, Mahabo and nearby areas, she met Fr. Joy. This encounter became a turning point. The SD Sisters agreed to take up the responsibility of managing the dispensary at Ankilizato, bringing stability and renewed life to this essential service.

Around the same time, a pandemic outbreak struck the region. It was a time of fear and helplessness. Many children in the villages lost their lives due to lack of timely medical care. In this dark moment, our dispensary became a place of refuge. The sisters and staff worked tirelessly, often around the clock, to treat the sick and contain the spread of the disease. Their dedication saved many lives and strengthened the trust of the people in the mission. A deeply moving incident from this period remains etched in our hearts—a mother who lost four of her children during the outbreak. Her suffering came to symbolize the pain of many families in the region.

In 2019, during the visit of Pope Francis to Antananarivo, Bishop Marie Fabian of Madagascar shared the story of our dispensary and its service, including this heartbreaking incident. Moved by compassion, the Holy Father expressed his desire to meet the mother. Fr. Joy and the sisters accompanied her for a private audience with the Pope—a moment of immense grace and consolation.

During that encounter, Pope Francis extended his support through a benefactor from Europe, offering a significant financial contribution for the construction of a new dispensary building. This assistance was received through Bishop Fabian, who promptly undertook the construction with his team of contractors and workers. Once completed, the new dispensary

> For here in Ankilizato, we truly experience the words of the Lord: "The harvest is plentiful, but the Labourers are few."






IZAHO
TIA



building was handed over to our mission. Today, this dispensary stands not just as a building, but as a sign of God's providence and the universal Church's solidarity with the suffering. It continues to serve countless people, offering care, healing, and hope.

In 2024, we, Fr. Sony Thottian CMI and in 2025 Fr. Jerin, began our ministry here, continuing this long tradition of service. As we visit the villages, often on foot due to the absence of proper roads, we encounter both the deep faith of the people and the harsh realities of their lives.

Today, out of more than 60 villages, 15 have churches, and we are able to reach 21 villages at least once a month. In the remaining villages, the faithful gather regularly for prayer and catechesis under the guidance of catechists. However, many villages still remain far beyond our regular reach due to lack of roads and accessibility. Even now, most of our journeys to these villages are made on foot.

Out of these encounters was born the EDUCARE Programme—an initiative aimed at providing informal education to children in remote villages. Many of these children had no access to schools and were increasingly vulnerable to negative influences. Responding to repeated requests from villagers, we began small informal primary schools in the interior villages.

The model is simple yet effective. Where there is a church, the school begins there; otherwise, villagers construct basic shelters with available materials. Teachers are appointed and supported, and children gather daily for learning. Once they complete primary education, they can move to formal schools far away or join boarding facilities in mission centres.

Before starting each school, we ensure that there are enough students. Often, villagers themselves gather children from neighbouring areas to make this possible. Today, we have 10 such schools functioning, serving around 1,200 students.
The contribution from the villagers is both touching and challenging. Each family of the students is expected to provide 30 kg of rice annually. While many strive to do so, it largely depends on the agricultural yield, which is often uncertain. This contribution alone is insufficient to sustain the programme, and it continues largely through the generosity of benefactors and our congregation.

During the famine months of August and September, the situation becomes even more difficult. As much as possible, we support families with rice. Last year, we could provide 8 kg of rice per child, though our initial plan was to give 10 kg. Even this limited support brought relief to many struggling families.

These schools are not merely educational centres. They are also places of catechesis. In villages that we cannot visit regularly, they become centres of faith formation, preparing children for baptism and other sacraments.

One of the most profound experiences of our mission was the solemn celebration of baptism in October last year. As part of the Silver Jubilee of Sacred Hearts Parish, we prepared 524 children from these interior villages for baptism. All the children were brought to the parish and given three days of immediate preparation filled with prayer, singing, and joyful activities. On the third day, in a grand celebration presided over by Mgr. Jean Pascal, the then Auxiliary Bishop of Morondava, all 524 children received baptism. It was a moment of immense grace and a powerful witness to the living faith of the people.

This year, on 13th December, we are preparing for another such celebration, with around 500 children ready to receive baptism.
The people of Ankilizato, many of whom migrated from Ambositra—a region known for its strong Catholic roots—remain steadfast in their faith. Their resilience, generosity, and openness continue to inspire us every day.

As we carry forward this mission, we are deeply aware of both the abundance of grace and the limitations we face. There is a great need for more missionaries, more resources, and better infrastructure to serve this vast mission effectively.

Yet, in the midst of all challenges, we continue with hope.

For here in Ankilizato, we truly experience the words of the Lord: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few." (Matthew 9:37–38)

And still, the harvest continues.

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
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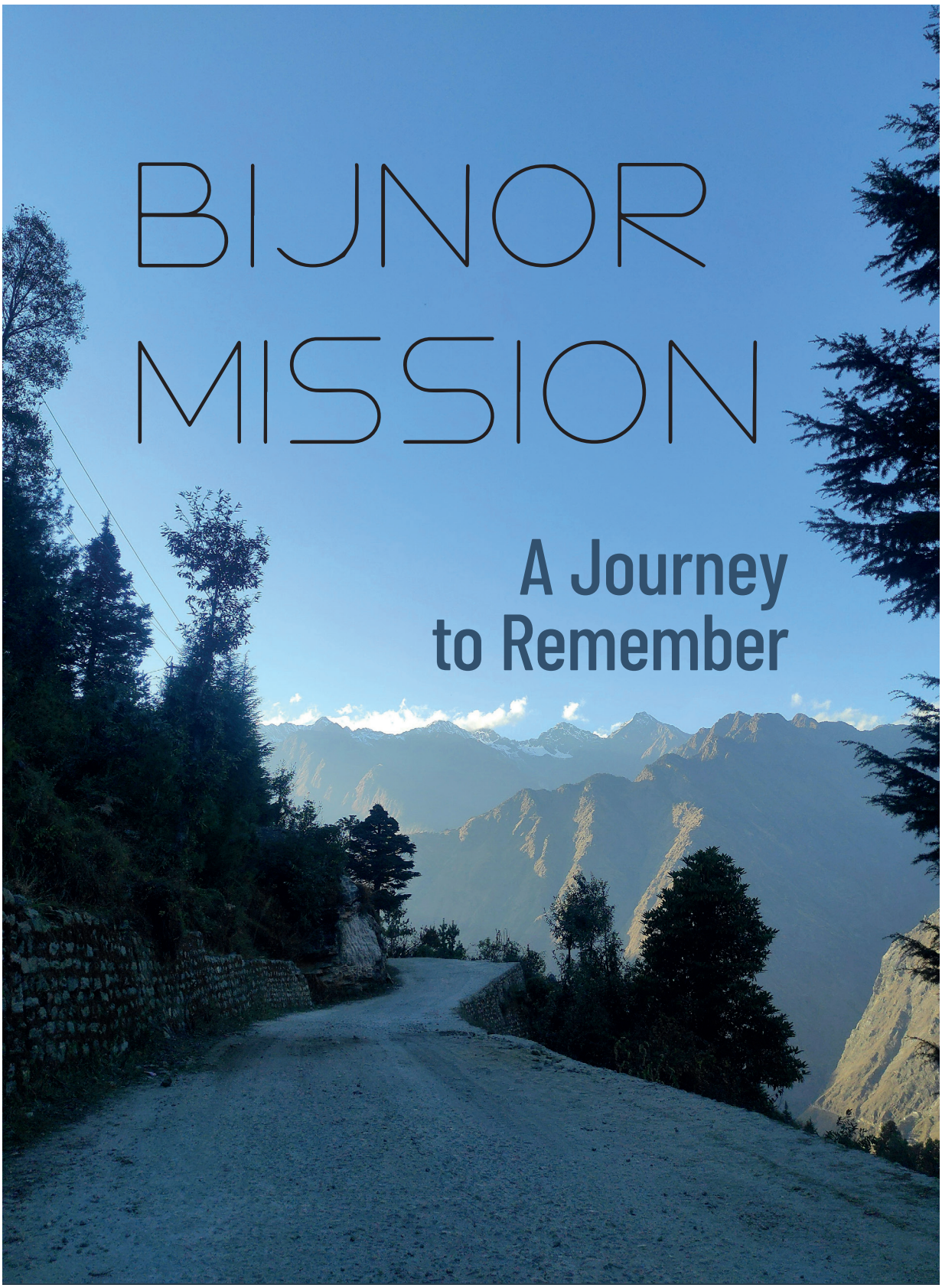
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Missionary spirit is not only about geographical territories, but about peoples, cultures and individuals, because the "boundaries" of faith do not only cross places and human traditions, but the heart of each man and each woman.

Pope Francis



CMI Mission Experiences


BIJNOR
MISSION
A Journey
to Remember

While I was leisurely glancing through the morning newspaper after breakfast, an unexpected yet deeply heartwarming visit brightened my day. My close friend and classmate, Rev. Fr. Mathew Thenakkalayil, accompanied by my mentor at the time of my entry into the CMI congregation, Rev. Fr. Mathew Karakunnel, and the esteemed Bishop John Vadakkel—renowned for his dedicated service in apostolic, cultural, and social spheres—arrived at Koonammavu Ashram.

Setting aside my reading, I warmly welcomed them. After a delightful exchange of memories and conversations, they extended an invitation to visit the mission areas of Bijnor and Nepal. It was this invitation that eventually led me, along with Fr. Mejit and Fr. Eranattu, to undertake a memorable journey to these mission regions. Although I had briefly visited certain places in Bijnor during an earlier trip to Delhi, this was my first meaningful and immersive experience of the region.

LIFE AS A JOURNEY

Life, in its essence, is a journey. Anyone who truly cherishes life cannot help but embrace travel, for the two are inseparably intertwined. Travel is intrinsic to human nature; whenever circumstances allow, we set forth—often without a clear destination or purpose. Yet, as reflective beings, we seek meaning in our movements.

We travel in pursuit of new experiences, to understand diverse cultures, to engage with people, and sometimes even in search of spiritual fulfillment. In reality, every journey we undertake is but a fragment of the greater journey of life. Whether external explorations or quiet inner reflections, all experiences contribute to the enrichment of our lives—provided we remain attentive and receptive.

Arrival at Dehradun and Journey to Rishikesh Our flight landed ahead of schedule at Dehradun Airport. Nestled amidst picturesque mountains and situated approximately 400 meters above sea level, Dehradun is a serene and inviting town, particularly enchanting during the spring and summer seasons. We were graciously received by Rev. Fr. Jose Padayatti, affectionately known as "Doctor Achan," who drove us to Rishikesh, a sacred destination for Hindus. Noticing our fatigue, he thoughtfully arranged a meal for us along the way. Strengthened and refreshed, we continued our journey and soon arrived at Samanvaya Vidyapeeth, a prominent theological center located along the tranquil banks of the holy Ganga. The institution, equipped with modern facilities and ample space, provides comfortable accommodation for seminarians. Its chapel, though modest in size, stands out for its artistic elegance, designed by the renowned artist Fr. Joy Elankunnapuzha.

INDIAN IDENTITY AND SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

We are Indians first, and Christians thereafter. Neither our birthplace nor our faith is a matter of personal choice; therefore, it becomes our responsibility to cherish our land, take pride in our heritage, and embrace its profound spirituality. India possesses a rich and timeless spiritual legacy. The ancient sages of this land prayed:
-Lead us from untruth to truth
-From darkness to light
-From mortality to immortality
This deep philosophical foundation finds meaningful expression in institutions like Samanvaya Vidyapeeth, making it an ideal center for theological formation rooted in Indian culture.

A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE: NAVARATRI AT RISHIKESH

On the evening of our arrival, we witnessed the Navaratri Ganga Aarti—a deeply moving spiritual experience. The temple complex, facing the sacred river, was filled with devotees from diverse backgrounds. The atmosphere was serene and reverent.
The ceremony began with devotional bhajans, followed by an insightful discourse by Hindu ascetics on the significance of Navaratri and the universal essence of divinity across religions. As dusk settled, the grand aarti commenced, with countless lamps illuminating the riverfront. Despite the vast gathering, the event unfolded with remarkable discipline and devotion, leaving a lasting impression on us.

THROUGH DEVPRAYAG TO SRINAGAR

From Rishikesh, we journeyed to Srinagar in Uttarakhand, passing through Devprayag—the sacred confluence of the Bhagirathi and Alaknanda rivers. This small yet spiritually significant town is dotted with temples, the most notable being the Raghunath Temple. Srinagar, located in the Garhwal region, is a well-developed town with educational institutions, hospitals, and facilities for travelers. It serves as an important base for those embarking on Himalayan pilgrimages. We also visited Sadharmyam, a cultural center dedicated to fostering dialogue and preserving local traditions. The initiatives undertaken here, including seminars and artistic training, are truly commendable.




ST. THOMAS
CONVENT SCHOOL





Charles Koroth CMI
Kochi

> In recent years, the CMI missionaries have extended their mission to Nepal, establishing four mission centers. Despite numerous challenges, their work in education, social service, and pastoral care is steadily progressing.

KOTDWAR CATHEDRAL: A SYMBOL OF HARMONY

Our journey led us to the Cathedral at Kotdwar, an architectural and spiritual landmark rising prominently amidst a predominantly Hindu environment. Conceived by Bishop Gratian Mundadan and brought to fruition under the leadership of Bishop John Vadakkel, the cathedral stands as a testimony to vision and perseverance.

The intricate carvings and artistic elements within the cathedral beautifully integrate Indian cultural motifs with Christian symbolism, fostering a spirit of interreligious harmony and mutual respect.

MISSION IN THE HIMALAYAS: DHAMDEVAL

The ascent to Dhamdeval, located high in the Himalayas, was both challenging and awe-inspiring. The steep, forested paths and the presence of wild animals made the journey demanding. Situated at an altitude of approximately 18,000 feet, the region experiences a cold climate and sparse habitation. Yet, it is here that dedicated missionaries serve with unwavering commitment. They reach out to local communities, sharing in their joys and struggles, offering compassion and hope.

Beyond religious boundaries, meaningful relationships have been nurtured—even reflected in simple yet profound interactions such as local youth gathering for sports and fellowship.

PREMDHAM: A BEACON OF COMPASSION.

Premdham stands as a remarkable expression of the Bijnor Diocese's humanitarian mission. True to its name—meaning "abode of love"—it serves as a center for empowering individuals with diverse disabilities. Here, persons with physical, intellectual, visual, and auditory challenges are provided with care, education, and vocational training. They are nurtured with dignity and integrated into mainstream society. The institution also promotes sustainable practices such as agriculture and dairy farming, ensuring holistic well-being. The dedication and compassion of those who serve here are truly inspiring.

EXTENDING THE MISSION TO NEPAL

In recent years, the CMI missionaries have extended their mission to Nepal, establishing four mission centers. Despite numerous challenges, their work in education, social service, and pastoral care is steadily progressing.

Nepal, once a Hindu kingdom, has embraced a secular democratic framework. While Christian presence is limited, especially outside Kathmandu, missionary initiatives have significantly contributed to educational advancement and social development.

The growth and vitality of the Bijnor Diocese stand as a testament to the tireless dedication and selfless service of its missionaries.

The visionary leadership of Bishop Gratian Mundadan, marked by faith, strategic planning, and perseverance, laid a strong and enduring foundation. Their lives echo the profound words of Scripture: "We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty." (Luke 17:10)As we reflect on these experiences, we are reminded to move forward with gratitude—never forgetting those whose sacrifices have shaped the path we walk today.



Bro. Andry Mickael Rakotoarisoan CMI
Bengaluru

A MISSIONARY JOURNEY THROUGH CULTURES

My life journey is a story shaped not only by my own choices but also by the grace of God, the call I received, the love of my family, and the experiences in the CMI Congregation that have formed me along the way. When I reflect on my life, I see a path filled with both joy and struggle, certainty and doubt, strength and weakness. Yet, through all these moments, I have come to understand that every experience has a purpose, as St. Chavara, our beloved founder, says, for my sanctification and the salvation of souls.

BEGINNINGS IN MADAGASCAR: THE LAND OF SIMPLICITY

I am Bro. Andry Mickael Rakotoarisoa, a first-year philosophy student at Dharmaram College, born in a simple village called Andrambonomby in Madagascar, into a humble and loving family. My parents were teachers who dedicated their lives to educating others, and through their example, I learned that true success lies in service, patience, and commitment. I have five siblings who were very supportive, and we had a very meaningful life together. It was a family of sharing stories, supporting one another during difficult moments, and above all, praying together, which was the root of my vocation. Even though we did not have much materially, we were rich in love, unity, and faith. "It is not what we have in life, but who we have in our life that matters."

The desire to be a priest was not a sudden incident, but a gradual thought strengthened by the good examples of priests and religious, and by my involvement in parish activities. After exploring different congregations, I eventually found the CMI Congregation, whose missionary spirit attracted me deeply. Through the help of Sr. Suzannah and Fr. Louisraj Porathur CMI, I was guided to the CMI Congregation. However, I did not enter immediately. I spent one year at home discerning my path, asking myself difficult questions, and seeking clarity. Finally, in 2021, convinced that this was my calling, I began my formation as an aspirant in Antsirabe. I am grateful to Pere Louis Raj Porathur CMI, my beloved Aspirant's rector, for his fatherly care and guidance. He helped me build a strong foundation in discipline, prayer, and vocation. His wisdom and patience shaped my early steps in this journey. "A good beginning builds a strong future."

I would like to say something proudly about my own land. Madagascar is an island where life is simple, peaceful, and deeply connected to faith. The Eucharistic celebration, following the Roman Rite, is calm and prayerful. For example, during Mass, people kneel in silence, sing softly, and listen carefully to the Word of God. There is no noise or movement like clapping; instead, there is deep respect and inner prayer. In Madagascar, a priest is called "Mompera," a name that shows both respect and closeness. Religion in Madagascar is strong, personal, and part of daily life. For example, families gather every evening to pray together, asking for God's protection and guidance. Faith is also shown through respect for elders and remembrance of ancestors, which reflects a deep spiritual awareness. People believe that God is always present in their lives, especially in times of difficulty. "Faith is not only in words, but in daily actions."

The culture of Madagascar is based on family unity and respect. For example, children are taught to greet elders politely and obey them. People help each other in times of need, especially in villages. Food is simple, such as rice with vegetables, cassava leaves, or fish. Sports include football played in open fields and traditional games. The languages are Malagasy and French, and the climate is warm and sometimes rainy. The lifestyle is humble and peaceful. "In simplicity, we find true peace."

Madagascar is an island where life is simple, peaceful, and deeply connected to faith. The Eucharistic celebration, following the Roman Rite, is calm and prayerful. For example, during Mass, people kneel in silence, sing softly, and listen carefully to the Word of God.

NOVITIATE IN KENYA: THE LAND OF COMMUNITY BOND

Leaving Madagascar for Kenya was a transformative moment. It was my first time traveling by airplane, and it marked the beginning of a new chapter. As I prepared to leave, I felt mixed emotions—joy for the new opportunities ahead and sadness at leaving my family and homeland. When the airplane took off, I looked down and reflected deeply on my life. That moment made me realize that life is a journey that requires courage and trust. "Life begins at the end of your comfort zone."

Arriving in Kenya, I entered a completely new environment with a more expressive way of life. Everything was different—the language, the culture, the people, and even the way of worship. The Eucharistic celebration was lively, joyful, and communal. During Mass, people sang loudly, clapped their hands, and even danced, especially during the offertory. Drums and instruments were used, making the celebration vibrant and full of energy. The church was also a place of community gathering where people shared testimonies, supported one another, and celebrated their faith visibly and actively. I learned that "a joyful faith is a living faith."

We called our Novice Master, Fr. Paul Arackal, "Baba." I am sincerely grateful to him for guiding me through my novitiate with kindness and understanding. He helped me deepen my spiritual life, grow in self-awareness, and understand the true meaning of commitment. His guidance strengthened my faith and inner life. "A true master forms not only the mind, but also the heart." There were moments when I doubted my ability to adapt, especially when I could not understand the language or express myself clearly. These doubts made me feel weak and insecure. However, I came to understand that doubt is not a sign of failure, but a step towards growth. "Doubt is often the doorway to deeper faith."

Learning Kiswahili was one of my important achievements in Kenya. It helped me communicate better, feel a sense of belonging, and build relationships. At the same time, I improved my English, which became an important tool for my studies and interactions. I realized that language is not just a means of communication, but a bridge that connects people and cultures. Kenya's culture is very diverse because of its many tribes, each with its own traditions, dress, and ceremonies. Hospitality is highly valued; visitors are welcomed warmly and offered food. Music and dance are part of daily life and celebrations. Food includes ugali, vegetables, and meat such as beef or chicken. Sports are popular, especially football, and Kenya is famous for long-distance running. The climate varies, but many areas are warm. The lifestyle is active and social. Kenya taught me confidence and openness. "Challenges help us grow stronger."

Living in community also brought difficulties, such as homesickness and adjusting to different personalities and lifestyles. Yet these experiences helped me grow stronger and more independent. One of the most painful moments was when my father was hospitalized for more than a month, and I was unable to visit him. Watching his condition worsen until he became paralyzed was very difficult. This experience tested my faith and emotional strength. "Sometimes God allows pain in our lives not to break us, but to shape us." Through this suffering, I learned patience, trust, and surrender. The most joyful day was when I made my first profession on 8 September 2025 at Karaba Parish.

FORMATION IN INDIA: THE LAND OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Another significant chapter of my journey was traveling to India, where the CMI charism and the founders' legacy lie. Unlike my first journey, I felt more confident and prepared. Traveling with companions gave me comfort and support. My stay in Mumbai allowed me to experience a new culture, modern infrastructure, and different ways of life. I also had my first experience traveling by train for 26 hours to Bengaluru, which was both long and fascinating. Observing landscapes, villages, and people along the way enriched my understanding of the world. "Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer."

India is a country of great diversity, with many languages, cultures, and traditions. At first, adapting to this diversity was challenging, especially because of the language differences and the fast way of speaking. However, with time, I became more comfortable and confident. The climate, food, and lifestyle were also different from what I was used to. Indian food, especially its spices and chili, was difficult for me at first, but gradually I learned to appreciate its richness.
I experienced even greater diversity and richness in the Eucharistic celebration of the Syro-Malabar Rite. There is more use of incense, chanting, and symbolic gestures. The celebrant faces the altar, and the prayers are more traditional and ancient.

The faithful show devotion through silence, prayer, fasting, and participation in rituals. Religion in India is deep, rich, and full of spiritual meaning. Faith here is not only practiced but also deeply experienced. “Faith becomes a mystery that touches the heart.”

My life at Dharmaram College has been a journey of adaptation and discovery. I had the opportunity to experience cultural traditions, music, dance, and community life. One memorable experience was participating in the traditional Margamkali dance, which required discipline and teamwork. Food here includes rice, chapati, curry, and many spicy dishes. At first, the spicy food was difficult for me, but I slowly adapted. Sports like cricket are very popular and loved by many people. India has many languages, such as Hindi, English, Tamil, and Malayalam, which shows its diversity. The climate is very hot, with heavy rains during the monsoon. The lifestyle is busy, colorful, and full of activities. Through these experiences, I learned that culture is not only something we observe, but also something we participate in and appreciate deeply. “Culture is the widening of the mind and of the spirit.”

Thanks to Fr. Jomon Mularikkal CMI, my philosophy master, for giving me the opportunity to share my life. Looking back, I see that each country has shaped my life in a unique way. Madagascar gave me strong faith, silence, and simplicity. Kenya taught me joy, strength, and community life. India showed me deep spirituality, cultural richness, and the beauty of different rites. Through all these experiences, I learned that differences in Eucharistic celebrations, religion, culture, food, sports, language, climate, and lifestyle are not barriers but opportunities. They help us grow, understand others, and deepen our faith. Today, I carry all these experiences in my heart wherever I go. “Though the world is full of differences, we are united in faith and humanity.”



News / Updates

BLESSING OF THE NEW RETREAT CENTRE IN US

The Carmel Retreat Centre in Liberty, Tennessee, celebrated the blessing of its new retreat houses on October 6, 2026. The programme included an open house followed by Holy Mass and the blessing ceremony presided over by Most Reverend J. Mark Spalding, Bishop of Nashville. Rev. Roy Palatty, CMI, Director, and Rev. James Panackal, CMI, Administrator, continue to guide the centre's mission of spiritual renewal, prayer, and retreat ministry. The new houses mark an important step in expanding opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection.







FR. LAWRENCE KINYUA KARANGU NEW REGIONAL SUPERIOR OF EAST AFRICA

Fr. Lawrence Kinyua Karangu Appointed First African Regional Superior On 9 July, Fr. Lawrence Kinyua Karangu was appointed the first African Regional Superior of the St. Thomas Sub-region of the CMI Congregation's East African Mission. Along with him, new councillors were also selected to lead the sub-region. This appointment marks a significant milestone in the mission's journey and growth in East Africa.



NEW BATCH OF ASPIRANTS JOINS THE MADAGASCAR MISSION

A new batch of eleven aspirants has joined the Madagascar Mission to begin their first year of formation. Fr. Louis Raj warmly welcomed the young aspirants to the Aspirants' House, marking the beginning of an important stage in their journey of vocation and formation.The arrival of the new aspirants brings renewed joy and hope to the mission. As they begin this journey of discernment, prayer, learning, and community life, we wish them a grace-filled and fruitful year of formation.

















Blessing of the New Retreat Centre in Liberty, Tennessee, US

Missionary works of CMI priests Rinoj James and Justin Kaimalayil of Carmel Province Muvattupuzha at St. Mary's Catholic Parish, Fort portal, Uganda















Congratulations and Grace-filled wishes to the Newly Elected Prior General, General Councillors and Auditor



Fr Paul Achandy CMI
Prior General



Fr Benny Nalkara CMI
Vicar General,
Evangelization and
Pastoral Ministry



Fr Benoy Elavunkal CMI
Education and
Communication Media



Fr Tom Arackal CMI
Social and Health Apostolate



Fr Joseph Ponmany CMI
Finance and Agriculture



Fr Sheejo Attupuram CMI
General Auditor

Heartfelt Thanks to the Former Prior General, General Councillors and Auditor



Rev. Fr. Thomas
Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General



Josey Thamarassery CMI
Vicar General,
Evangelization and
Pastoral Ministry



Martin Mallathu CMI
Education and
Communication Media



Biju Vadakkel CMI
Social & Health
Apostolate



Paulson Paliakkara CMI
Finance and Agriculture



Babu Mattathil CMI
General Auditor

CMI MISSION MONTH

October 2026

Dear Reverend Fathers and Brothers,
Greetings from Chavara Hills! We have been setting apart the Month of October as the CMI MISSION MONTH, especially to pray for our missions and missionaries across the globe. As we have taken the thrust "Mission with Passion" in the GS 39, let's take this opportunity to rededicate ourselves to become the faithful witnesses of our Lord and to proclaim his Gospel to "the ends of the earth". We shall continue the practice of dedicating each day during this month to pray specifically for a mission and the missionaries there. The following schedule is sent to you to assist our members and communities to pray for all our CMI missions. During the night prayers, our communities may make an intercessory prayer for each day's mission. Please inform the faithful about the mission month and ask them to pray for mission each day during the holy mass in our parishes and Eucharistic communities. We shall also arrange mission exhibitions for the public at our houses and institutions. All our formation houses are also requested to have special observations of this mission month.

Fr Paul Achandy CMI
Prior General

Oct 1: Argentina
Oct 2: Austria
Oct 3: Australia
Oct 4: Belgium
Oct 5: Botswana
Oct 6: Brazil
Oct 7: Canada
Oct 8: Ecuador
Oct 9: France
Oct 10: Germany
Oct 11: Ghana
Oct 12: India
Oct 13: Ireland
Oct 14: Italy
Oct 15: Kenya
Oct 16: Madagascar
Oct 17: Namibia
Oct 18: Nepal
Oct 19: Papua New Guinea
Oct 20: Paraguay
Oct 21: Peru
Oct 22: Philippines
Oct 23: Portugal & Qatar
Oct 24: Singapore
Oct 25: South Africa
Oct 26: Sweden
Oct 27: Switzerland
Oct 28: Tanzania
Oct 29: Uganda
Oct 30: UK
Oct 31: USA



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