



# St. Paul's Messenger

Department of Education and Media

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## Provincial's Message

### Life, Death and True Self

Priya Koodapirappukale,



Once a pastor was talking to a group of children in his church. Holding a ten-rupee coin in hand he asked, "My dear people of God, who wants this ten-rupee coin? Please raise the hand". Immediately all the students raised their hands. Then he threw the ten-rupee coin to a bucket which was filled with dirty water and said, "As you can see this ten-rupee coin is put in the dirty water, now who wants this coin? Please raise your hands". Again, all students raised their hands. Then the pastor said, "just because the ten-rupee coin is in dirty water, it did not lose its value". The same is true about our life. The true value of our life remains even if we are attacked by corona virus and even if we are crushed and crumbled by death.

The following lines give some positive reflection about pandemic COVID19 and the sad demise of our dear Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath. The situation of the whole world due to corona infection is very dangerous. People were trying to save the life by lock down and many other precautionary measures for 50 days. Due to financial breakdown and mental uneasiness we came out of the cocoon stage of lock down and started leading a normal life. But the situation is becoming extremely dangerous as the number of COVID19 confirmed cases are increasing in a geometrical sequence all over India. We do not want to go back to another cocoon stage even if the virus put us on a death bed. 'Communication and Comfort' was the motto of pre COVID19 human endeavors. Now the situation forced us to change the motto as 'Adjust for Survival'. We shall do all our adjustment with an orientation of 'Nurture the Nature'. Nurture the Human Values! Nurture the Nature! Protect the Mother Earth. Toil the soil for foil of stomach. This is a return to the 'Paradise'.

We believe that Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath also returned to and entered the Paradise. Let us thank him for nurturing the human values through his unceasing spiritual direction, nurturing the nature with his love and work in the gardens and library. He toiled the soil of our Province for its growth for more than 24 years.

Oh, benevolent soul, pray for us to live in your motto 'Nurture the Nature' to keep the value of our life and faith and survive the struggle of COVID19.

God Bless us all ■

Fr. Varghese Kelamparampil CMI  
Provincial



## 1. Diakonia - Service

Four brothers - Noble Kumbilivelil, Rijo Ennakudampoovathinkal, Rejo Jacob Kalathil and Prince Ponpuzha have received the Sacred Order of Diaconate on 18 May 2020 at Dharmaram College, Bangalore and Br. Jaison Poovathumparambil has received the Sacred Order of Diaconate on 20 May 2020 at Samanvaya Theologate, Bhopal. The whole Province is very happy on your achievement. Congratulations and best wishes to each one of you in your journey of service in love. May the good Lord shower his choicest blessings upon you....! ■



## 2. Allegiance to God alone. Forever..!



Br. Laiju Mukkomtharayil made his final commitment on 06 June 2020 at Carmel Bhavan, Mysuru. Whole hearted prayerful support, encouragement and best wishes dear Laiju...! ■

Fr. Varghese Kelampampil, the Provincial of Mysuru Province, inaugurated the distribution in Mysuru area among the backward community. Indeed, it was a great support for 2500 members when the price of key commodities have surged largely because of panic buying.



## Break the Chain: Mask Stitching and Distribution

At a time when many pharmacies are charging exorbitant prices for the masks in the backdrop

## 3. Social Work Department News

### Distribution of Food kits amid corona virus pandemic

In an attempt to ensure basic essential to all during this lockdown due to the corona virus pandemic, St. Joseph's Charitable Institutions, Mysuru has begun distribution of over 600 food kits for poor and marginalized in 18 villages of Kodagu and Mysuru districts, Karnataka.

The social work department of the Province has tailor-made these food kits that comprised of 12 items. Each kit, worth around Rs.800 contains 12 items including one kg sugar, five kg rice, 250 gm tea powder, one kg salt, green gram, half-a litre cooking oil, two kg atta, one kg black chana, soaps and everything essential for a family to survive. 600 families in Kodagu and Mysuru received food kits.



of high demand due to the corona virus pandemic, the social work department has come up with several measures to fight the pandemic and distributed masks to 500 families in Mysuru area. As the majority of the population in Mysuru is characterised as vulnerable, the department expedited to take resilient measures for protecting the lives of many amid the virus. The social work wing has gone an extra mile by initiating the stitching and distribution of masks to over 500 families in Mysuru villages. After the country was put on lock down from 24 March, Rev. FCC sisters of Hallikerehundi and philosophy brothers have been engaged in making face shields and reached to families with a helping hand.



### Break the Chain: Awareness Campaign in Villages

The bold and decisive leadership of the social work department of St. Paul's Province, Mysuru has implemented remarkable strategies to protect the livelihood of people especially in villages. SJCI is in the frontline to make consensus to curb the spread of the virus by the awareness campaign.

The members of the organization visited houses and gave proper information on protective measures during the corona virus pandemic. Undoubtedly, each village member has taken the “break the chain” slogan to their minds by staying at home for promising future ahead. As the number of novel corona virus cases continues to rise around the world and in Mysuru, the team urged people to stay at home and maintain social distancing to prevent further spread of the virus. Evidently, the organization has taken huge steps to spread the awareness about the global pandemic and urged people to protect their lives and livelihood amid the corona virus outbreak ■



### 4. Prayerful Homage

Let us prayerfully remember the reposed soul of Mr. Chacko Koikara (96), beloved father of Rev. Fr. Johny Koikara CMI, who was called to eternal rest on 26 June 2020. We express prayerful condolence to Fr. Johny Koikara and the bereaved family members ■



## 5. *Dei Gloriam*

As part of Golden Jubilee celebration of St. Joseph's Residence, Hanbal, the church was renovated and it was blessed by Mar. Sebastian Adayanthrath, Bishop, Diocese of Mandya on 28 June 2020.

On 20 May 1970, CMI fathers from Sacred Heart Province, Kalamassery purchased the land at Hanbal. On 20 April 1970, Prior General Fr. Canisius gave permission to erect a house at Hanbal in the name of St. Joseph.

On 25 May 1970, Bishop Sebastian Valloppilly gave permission to establish a CMI house at Hanbal. On 17 March 1973, St. Joseph's Residence was blessed as a CMI house. On 29 July 1973, Mar Jacob Thoomkuzhy erected St. Joseph's Church, Hanbal as a parish.

Fifty years of God's providential protection and human dedication to service and sacrifice...!

Congratulations to Fr.Chacko Parakkattukuzhiyil, Fr. Shaiju Narimattathil and the team behind the great moment...best wishes...!■





## 6. Always Poised - Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath CMI



Rev. Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath CMI (78), also known as Johnny, was born on 09 May 1942 at Thuruthippuram, Ernakulam. In 1956 he joined aspirancy at Vazhakulam. He had his novitiate in Krukutty and made his first profession on 19 May 1962. He was ordained on 21 April 1969. In 1974, he completed his Masters in Philosophy from Pune University and did Library Science from Mumbai University in 1975. He had his post-graduation in library Science from Dominican University, USA.

He served as the Provincial and Vicar Provincial of St. Paul's Province, Mysuru for two terms each. He was also the novice master for two terms. He was the founder of Siddhi Vihara (Formative Spirituality and Counselling Centre) at Srirampura, Mysuru.

He served Dharmaram College, Bengaluru for 30 years as the master, animator, spiritual director, confessor, librarian, secretary, professor, priest-in-charge, etc. He was called for his eternal reward on 17 June 2020.

### Lest We Forget (Funeral Homily by Fr. Jomon Kolenchery CMI)

Your Excellency Bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath, Rev. Fr. Provincial, Fr. George Edayadiyil - Rector, Dharmaram College, Fr. James Mekkara, Rev. Fathers, Sisters and Brothers.

Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath, the beloved of all of us, has journeyed to his homeland. Dear Fr. Thomas Kunianthodath, Our Master, I stand before your mortal remains with a heart full of your immortal memories...! Many are the illuminating reminiscences of novitiate time under your mentoring and manoeuvring...! You were poised yet strong in your convictions. Every part and particles of this novitiate house has stories to tell of your stringent steering and compassionate advising. Though 24 years old are those involvements yet they are vivid memories like yesterday.

Now as we leave your body to 'earth to earth', 'dust to dust' we want to tell you dear master, 'your body parts now, not your memories'. The departure of Fr. Kunianthodath is a 'heavy loss' in the real and pure sense of the word. His parting leaves an irreplaceable gulf of deep silence. 'Who he was' tells us the depth of the void his eternal journey has left behind - a great loss for the CMI Congregation in general and Mysuru Province in particular.

Admiring his personality, I went through his bio data once again. He was two times Provincial, two times Vicar-Provincial, two times Novice Master and also was the founder and director of *Siddhi Vihara*. The above mentioned records summarises his service to Mysuru Province. The fact that his service is unmatched is a glaring sign of the gravity of the loss. He was never after to be great but greatness ceased to follow him.

From a conventional Province like Kochi Fr. Thomas stepped in to the elusive terrain of Mysuru Mission discerning the call of the spirit from within. He wanted to be simple and 'the Lord who raises the lowly' placed him on higher role many a times. He worked hard never trumpeting but ever successful in giving a strong foundation to the Province. Being a man of content he was convinced in quality priestly training for integrity of ministry. So he started two formations houses - one in Bogadi and the other in Kushalnagar and they became nurturing homes of the future generation.

There was a time when Mysuru Province was known because of *Siddhi Vihara* - formation training centre. In a time when not many have ventured in this path he was the strenuous protagonist of the national centre for human wholeness.

The fact that without bank loans he could actualize significant projects of the Province leaves a big space to learn from him about creative generation and productive use of the finance.

He was a soft spoken and gentle person always with a smile on his face. He was a powerful administrator albeit he was a spiritual father. He had the moral courage to say 'yes' to good 'no' to bad. He was a compelling competitor of the truth but never ready to succumb for lucrative and consumeristic compromises. He always stood tall among oppositions with incredible honesty.

His affinity with books is analogous to his life. Composed was his commitment to library work which comparatively did not have pageantry or joviality. He was so orderly like the properly stacked books in the racks and his life was like a book and you need to open and start reading to understand it. Until the previous day of his death he lived his routine religious life of order and discipline. We have never seen him with murky clothes or lazy face. A day before his parting he told Fr. Koluthara, who paid him a late time courtesy visit, "You don't have to visit me in this late time of the day". Such was his gentleness in not troubling others and valuing their time.

In a world where spectacle and beauty are almost mixed up beyond recognition Fr. Thomas was the ambassador of genuine beauty. That beauty naturally adorned his positions and lead roles. Feeble was his voice and he never wanted to be noted by his raised voice. But he made his presence felt with pleasant presence and now he leaves his presence felt all the more deeply with his absence of presence. He was conscious of his confines but he overcame it by knitting together with the right people in his kit. That was the crux of his accomplishments.

He was like a soldier who laid his life in the battlefield. He was diagnosed with cancer when he was working as a librarian at the Prior General's house. Imminent death did not dare to stare at him rather he won over it being more pro-active in his life and in his routine library work. Even in the last week when Fr. General called him he expressed his desire to work in the library as long as possible. He was a great believer in the religious camaraderie. He was special but never asked for special things even special food on his sick bed. His only demand was to stay with his fellow brethren whom he always loved. As he wished he had to stay away only five hours in the hospital from his religious fraternity. "Man fully alive is god's Glory", said St. Irenaeus of Lyons and Fr. Thomas says, holiness is not just abstaining but lovingly doing good things of your passion. In his pastoral field of Ashokpuram Mass centre of Mandya diocese, he was the spiritually animating face of God. As the master of students at the Novitiate and in Dharmaram he retained equity and fairness with all his students.

CMI Congregation and Mysuru Province are obliged to Kunianthodath family for giving great priests like Frs. Rufinos, Ludvikos, Cheriyan and Thomas. They are the priests who walked with the history of CMI Congregation with immense prominence and we consider Fr. Thomas great among them. We thank you. We will remember you and pray for you. We are indebted to you.

We have heard of some birds which spend the night on branches of trees and move on to their new destinations on the next day. When they set off some of them leave behind murky stuff and some others fly off letting their beautiful feathers. Today Fr. Kunianthodath, the beautiful soul, flew away from branches of our lives without any uproar leaving shining evergreen feathers of memories. Dear Fr. Master with great pride and sincerity of heart we affirm there is no death to your memories. Lest we forget..! You will live through the lessons you embedded in us. We will meet in prayer until we meet in the heavenly kingdom.

**"The Lord make His Face shine upon you"**

**(A Farewell Note by Fr. Augustine Thottakkara CMI)**

I am writing this note in the wake of the departure of Father Thomas Kunianthodath to the other shore; he has rejected his embodied existence and has flown to the eternal abode of peace, joy and harmony. For the past few weeks, we knew that it will happen sooner or later; but when it really happened, it pains us intensely and makes us nostalgic of the wonderful time we spent with him.

I am bonded with him with the cordial and friendly relation and camaraderie of many years. We started our pilgrimage from the VIII Standard, and we traversed together through High School studies, two years of language studies, two years of Novitiate-Juniorate, and three-year Philosophy course. We were again together at Dharmaram for many years as part of the teaching fraternity.

Our walkathons are known to everybody: At least once in two weeks we undertook long promenades. We sauntered three routes: To Brigade Road, which invariably ended up in the Indian Coffee House in Church Street; to Koramangala, which ended up with a visit to the Sapna Book-Stationery-Gift shop; and to Jayanagar which also ended up before the steaming Masala Dosa in a chic restaurant.

Father Thomas was a spiritual seeker of genuine, unflustered and serene religiosity and spirituality; a silent and unassuming spirituality. He was a perfect gentleman, who had immense faith in the goodness of others, and transacted with others with humility and utmost respect. He was intensely aware of his capabilities and limitations. He had a craze for neatness and orderliness; always dressed pica-bello. His unadulterated altruism always kept him vigilant not to cause the least inconvenience to others. He was a reliable confidant of his confreres. A decent human being of pleasant character and demeanour, he was easily approachable and accessible to all.

Dear Father Thomas, "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His Face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His Countenance upon you, and give you peace". RIP■

*Wishing you all*  
*Blessed Feast of*  
**St. Thomas the Apostle**

