

Light, More Light



When Life's Day-dreams
Melt And Vanish From The Sight
May Our Dim And Longing Vision
Then Be Blessed With Light, More Light

- Goethe



A NEWSLETTER OF INDIAN DELEGATION
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**The Camillian ministry
of HIV/AIDS in Kerala
gets a new pace**

On The Shore of

LOVE

Delegate's Corner



Mathew Perumpil MI

Changes ...New Beginnings....

This issue of Vartha reaches you in conjunction with the opening of our new care and support centre, Snehatheeram in Aluva. It is a sign of our moving forward, expanding our ministries and marking new beginnings. Also this issue is the first after the changes that have taken place in our administration and communities.

We are all familiar with changes as it is an inevitable aspect of our lives. Everything in the universe continuously experience changes. Some changes are easy, others can be painful and difficult. We do not always have control over the events and happenings in our lives. But certainly we can choose how to deal with them positively or negatively. One way to handle change is by changing our thinking habits. New thoughts will lead a person to be filled with great amount of positive attitude, energy and enthusiasm. This way we can make the changed environment always a favourable situation to bring out the best in us and those around us.

Another way to handle change is by accepting whatever is present in the present moment and doing what is required at the present moment. When we accept change there is possibility for growth and we slowly learn to move forward with the changes. Every change is a challenge and challenges when faced may bring success or else it may act as stepping-stones to success.

I wish and pray that the changed environment of our lives- new roles, new communities and new responsibilities - be filled with positive energy so that these changes may lead us to new possibilities and beginnings. May our founder Camillus and the blessings of our Mother guide us in our moving forward to new frontiers and directions.

Between the Lines

Monsoon Blues

Siby Augustine MI

Outbreaks of seasonal epidemics like dengue fever, viral fever and chikunguniya in Kerala during the last few monsoons, which have affected millions of people across the state, have caused serious concern about a crisis in public health in Kerala. The famous public healthcare system that helped Kerala achieve developed-nation status in all the major human development indices like life expectancy, infant mortality, etc, is now being seriously challenged.

With the onset of the monsoon this year, which started in early June, came a chikunguniya epidemic that practically immobilized the entire state. Over one million people were treated at various hospitals across Kerala. According to local newspapers, over 100 people died of chikunguniya in the two months of June and July, although official agencies dispute claims that the deaths were due to the epidemic.

Generally, two major reasons are attributed to the return of epidemics in a state that had practically banished such scourges more than a quarter of a century ago: erosion of the grassroots-level public healthcare system that once thrived on government support, and dysfunctional municipal systems that do not deal effectively with waste-disposal.

According to recent National Family Health Survey 3, there has been an evident decline in the grassroots level

healthcare system. It points out that the rate of immunization and fertility rate have declined over a past few years. The focus of the state's healthcare system has been shifted to specialty hospitals and referral centers. Doctors serving the government sector, especially in rural areas, are leaving to join the mushrooming private hospitals.

Added to this is the accumulation of wastes and the failure of the public systems to cope with it. National highways now resemble public dumping grounds, and most of Kerala's rivers and waterways are clogged with stinking bags full of waste materials. In Kochi, the fastest-growing city in the state, the situation has become unbearable.

According to the experts, the spread of *Aedis* mosquito (that transmits chikunguniya) has been aided by rubber plantations that now proliferate even in the midlands. Along with them came the widespread use of plastic and its indiscriminate disposal, with no public action to put in place an effective recycling mechanism.

Public campaigns and mass-based preventive methods are the best ways to tackle epidemics, as in most cases the diseases are caused by poor health awareness and lack of proper water supply and sanitation. For this to happen, a vigorous effort to revive government agencies like primary health centres is necessary.

Who Doesn't Like A Change?

Staff Reporter

Bangalore: The members of the Indian Delegation went through transfers and changes in all the communities. With Fr. Mathew Perumpil being appointed the Provincial Delegate for a second innings, the Delegation has set to head forward with much fervor.

Snehadaan Community consists of five members. Antony Raj has been appointed the Superior and the Training Coordinator, while Johnson Vellachira continues to be the Novice Master. The Delegate himself is the Project coordinator and Biju Souriamthottiyil has been appointed the Counselor and the spiritual care coordinator. Sunny Aresseril, while doing his renewal programme, has been entrusted with the administration of the house. Biju Sebastian, who pursues his MSc Counselling studies, and Suneesh Memana, the newly ordained, are members of the larger Delegation community.

Baby Naikkarakudy, the master of the temporary professed and the Delegation procurator, is also the superior of the Upasana community. The other members of the community are Sojan Koonanickal and John Kakkarakunnel. In the residence of Trichy, Doise continues to be the in-charge of the pre-philosophy candidates and Vellamattathil Binu, the procurator of

the house, coordinates the community healthcare programmes.

In Snehasadan, Joy Inchody has been appointed the superior and the project coordinator, and Teji Anickattuvayalil as the patient care coordinator. Siby Chennattu continues to be the administrator/procurator.

In Eluru Minor Seminary, Shibin Arppathanathu and Benny Chengalikkavil continue with their tasks. Vincent Kakkadampallil has joined the community with the task of initiating the HIV/AIDS care project in Hyderabad.

Sunil Pattakudilil has been transferred to Philosophy Study House, Nagpur as the Rector, while Bijoy Kuliraniyil continues to be there with the duties of the procurator and ministry in-charge.

Baby Illickal has been appointed the Rector/superior of the Mananthavady Minor Seminary and Thundathil Santhosh has been entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the Community Healthcare Programmes. In the residence of Snehatheeram, Aluva, Naveen Mathew coordinates the ministry, while Kaitharan Siby continues to be the procurator and parish ministry in-charge and Biju Elanjickal is the patient care coordinator.



Babychan Pazhanilath MI
[General Councilor, Secretariat for Formation]

Individual Responsibility Of Formation

Being a General Councilor, I am entrusted with secretariat for formation. I feel this is the secretariat most fitting to me, as I have some experience in the formation, where as the secretariat for ministry and mission would be more difficult for me.

The duty of the general secretariat is to promote and animate initiatives in vocation promotion, the formation of candidates and the ongoing formation. This is actualised through a Central Commission which consists of six members including me. Practically speaking, there is not much to do directly at the general level. The program is done at each province and delegation level and which is animated and checked by each regional secretary. The secretariat for formation has its general formation guidelines which clearly explain the program, and each province/delegation has or should have one's own particular guidelines and they are to be implemented.

Emphasis given in formation differs according to the particular situation and needs of the region. Some countries, for instance, which were rich in vocation to religious life, are facing a considerable decrease in the number of vocations. Therefore the concern is to find new ways

and means to promote vocations and to work with much more enthusiasm and dedication. In these countries there are very few candidates in formation. In some provinces ongoing formation of the members is also to be structured and followed with much more seriousness and individual responsibility and community collaboration. In countries where the Order is rather new, the concern could be selection of the motivated candidates and giving them solid formation by formed formators. Special formation program for the young perpetual professed as recommended by the church and as done in other institutes, is another area that needs special attention.

The recently concluded General Chapter has not given much guidelines or suggestions for the Formation Secretariat. Of course, the value of *justice and solidarity* has to be emphasised in the formation and community life.

Vocation promotion, formation of the candidates and ongoing formation have to become the responsibility of each member and it has to be a part of each one's daily life and not merely the responsibility of vocation promoters or formators or Formation Secretariat.

The new members of the Delegation Council: Joy Inchody, Baby Naikkarakudy, Naveen Mathew and Shibin Arppathanathu



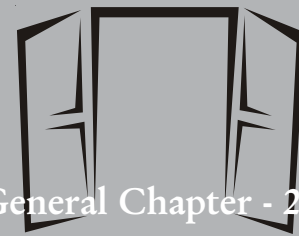
Biju Nannattu MI

Greetings from Nieder (low) Austria... Nieder Austria, comprises of Wien Viertel (Wien Quarter), Wald Viertel (Forest Quarter), Most Viertel (Fruit Juice Quarter) and Industry Viertel, is one of the 9 States of Austria. I am now living in Wien Viertel, which is about 60 Km away from Vienna city. As the name indicates it is a Wien growing area. Some of the best Wine brands come from this area. Besides Wien large scale of vegetables, potatoes, maize and so on are also cultivated here.

Since September 2007, I am appointed in these wonderful outskirts of the City, to assist in one of the Forane Churches of the Arch Diocese of Vienna. I am staying in the neighbouring parish (where Joshy K. stayed) with two other Priests. My Parish Priest is responsible for five parishes and 17 station-churches within 15 Km diameter. (I have, of course, not yet been to all of them) Each parish church has one pastoral assistant to help the Parish Priest. Therefore there is a good team to work with. It is interesting and encouraging to see the participation of the laity.

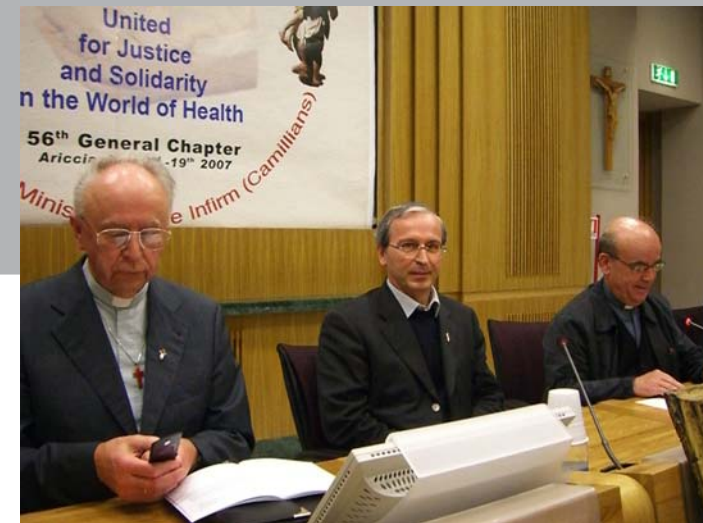
Sadly, I hardly see youngsters in the Church. The people are friendly. I find that they are also patient because I test often their patience with my language.

I hope to gather a lot of pastoral experience, to learn the culture and of course to improve my language...



General Chapter - 2007

Historic Moments



Historic: The Definitior General Fr. Alvarez (Right) congratulates the newly elected Superior General Fr. Renato Salvatore (centre) flanked by Fr. Gregotsch.

Mathew Perumpil MI

General Chapter is always a defining moment of the life of the Order. The 56th General Chapter of the Order brought together confreres from around the world where Camillians are continuing the healing mission of Christ. From India, Fr. Shibin and I were privileged to represent our Delegation to add to the growing diverse colours and nature of the Order. It was an occasion for us to meet many Camillians both with rich experiences of participating in many chapters and those who are in

the chapter for the first time. Two defining moments of the chapter were, the election of the new Superior General of the Order, Fr. Renato Salvatore, on his 52nd birthday on May 15; and the election of Fr. Babychan Pazhanilath as one of the General Consultors. Participating in this most significant event of the Order brought both of us closer to the rich legacy and tradition of our Order and the beautiful mission all our confreres are carrying out in the healing ministry.

Bangalore: Much to the pride and surprise of Indian Delegation, Fr. Babychan Pazhanilath was elected a General Councilor of the Order.

Fr. Mathew Perumpil, on behalf of the delegation, wished him all the best in his mission and offered prayers and support during a farewell Mass held on July 23.

It is the first time a member of the Delegation becomes a General Councilor. He has been entrusted with the Secretariat for Formation. Bro. Luca, who held this responsibility in the former Council, has been reelected and entrusted with the Secretariat for Ministry.

Fr. Babychan, later, told *Vartha* that the secretariat for Formation would be the most fitting since he had some experience in formation. He also expressed his gratitude to the members of the Order for placing such a great responsibility on his shoulders. He left for Italy on July 24.

Snehasadan Owns Children's Custody

Joy Inchody MI

Mangalore: Snehasadan has launched a new phase to its care and protection plan of orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) by presenting them for custody to the Child Welfare Committee, Mangalore.

It all happened this way as two children's both maternal and paternal family claimed the possession of these children. Since the issue was bit sensitive and conflicting in nature, legal aid was sought and it was advised to regularize all children's stay at the center. The Child Welfare Committee, Mangalore, has extended their wholehearted support and guidance in this whole process.

At present Snehasadan accommodates 27 OVC of whom 14 are fully and the rest are partially orphans. As the country's legal system does not allow institutes to keep orphan children without a procedure, we have been forced to embark on with this process.

As of now, Snehasadan has already received the custody of 11 children until they reach 18 years, and we are determined to go ahead with the same procedure for the rest of the children. The next step is to obtain a fit-institute certificate for Snehasadan for the stay of OVC.



Danio with a child at Snehasadan

Staff Reporter

Bangalore: "I got an opportunity to live in a young and pleasant community that lives the spirit of St. Camillus". That's the experience Danio Mozzi had while being in Indian Delegation for two months.

Danio from the Lombardo Venitian Province was in India as part of his Pastoral Year programme. He visited three minis-

Adding An Indian Smile To His Life

try houses of the Delegation, viz., Snehadaan, Snehasadan and Snehatheeram. "I understood the importance to serve with love and not to be a hero", he says. "I was interested to observe and learn how to serve the sick in a fraternal atmosphere".

He pointed out that he was in India, not as a tourist, but to have a fruitful experience in ministry.

Priestly Ordination

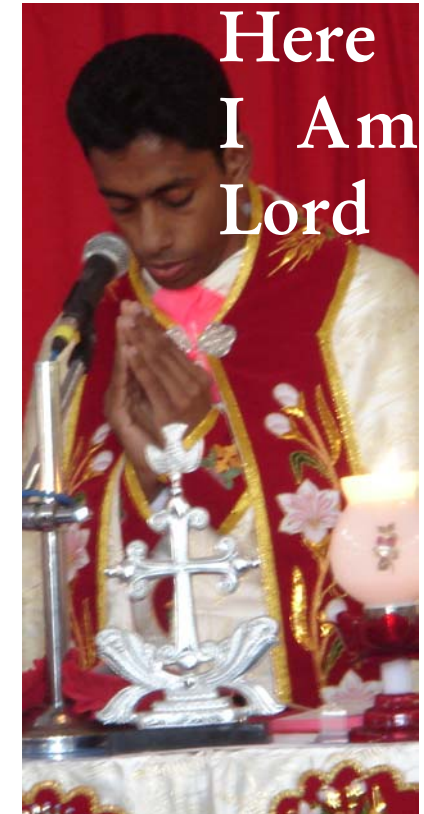
Special Correspondent

Pala (Kerala): Memana Suneesh was ordained a priest on 3rd October 2007, at St. Sebastian's Church, Kondadu, in the diocese of Pala, Kerala. The same bishop who ordained him to diaconate, Josph Kallarangattu, of Palai diocese ordained him priest as well, during the function that started at 9.30 a.m. in a pleasant weather.

He was blessed with the presence of his parents, dear ones, many priests and nuns, and certainly many Camillian confreres including the Delegate Fr. Mathew who stood beside him for the ceremony of ordination.

In his homily the former vicar general of the diocese of Manthavady Fr. Njaralakkattu talked about Camillians and exhorted the newly ordained to lead a spiritual life while appreciating him for making this life choice.

Fr. Suneesh offered his first Holy Mass with lots of devotion and compose. Suneesh is the second qualified nurse to be ordained from the delegation.



Fr. Suneesh Celebrates his first Holy Mass at his parish church

Content.....



Fr. Frank Monks completed his six-years-term as the Superior General of the Order at the venue of the 56th General Chapter. The Indian Delegation is grateful to Fr. Monks for his fatherly affection and guidance to the Delegation during this term.

With the inauguration of *Snehatheeram*, HIV/AIDS ministry in God's own country enters a new era

John Kakkarakunnel MI

"It's really tough...
This experience of being forsaken
Rejection- even from my dearest ones
Even my beloved wife and mom
It's really hard to go on...
The nearby death, I see beckoning me...
Worse still that I have to face it all alone
I'm really frightened
I feel like being thrown away into the raging sea and
consuming waves
I wish I reach the shore and find someone there to hold on
to my hands...
And walk that shore at least a while..." (Words of an HIV/
AIDS sufferer)

Surely, it's a shore with someone over there to hold the hands and walk the most painful life-moments. *Snehatheeram* - shore of love - in the beautiful God's own country is good news to the HIV sufferers. Camillians are stretching their healing hands to the most unfortunate sick of the time in this region of the country.

It comes as a most suitable response to a real need of the time, in a state with the country's highest literacy rate, for which it prides, yet, unfortunately behaves illiterate in their attitude towards HIV/ AIDS. For Camillians in India, it's also a loving tribute to Fr. Crotti, a zealous Italian missionary from the Lombardo-Venetian province who planted the seed of the charism in the Indian soil in Kerala.

Snehatheeram was officially opened and blessed on 4th October 2007 at 3 p.m. by the Major Arch Bishop of the Syro Malabar church Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil. In his inaugural address he focused on the radical commitment of Camillians towards the sick through the fourth vow.



Well begun: Cardinal Varkey Vithayathil inaugurates the new care centre

Syriac Thomas, Ex- Vice Chancellor of MG University, quoted Gandhiji who said, 'Small is beautiful. Often what the big cannot do small can do'. "This religious society (Camillians) is quite a small group in India; however they are doing a big thing". He also quoted mother Theresa: Its not how much we do that's important but what we do. "This group does something small but with lot of love in it which contains the factor of greatness", he added.

The Kerala minister for fisheries Sri S. Sharma was with lots of appreciation for the humanitarian works of the religious. He said that Fidel Castro of Cuba saw in what Mother Theresa and her nuns were doing what communism envisioned as its ultimate.

The Provincial Delegate Fr. Mathew made a point clear that the Camillian Order did not want *Snehatheeram* to be an exclusive project of Camillians but of the people, of the society.

Through the chronicle...



December 8, 2003 - Biju Nannattu, Siby Kaitharan, Sunny Aresseril and Siby Augustine, as part of their pastoral year, began this project in a rented house in Ernakulam with a focus on HIV/AIDS awareness programme.

November 28, 2004 - Bishop Thomas Chakkayath blessed the new residence at Kadungalloor near Aluva.

December 21, 2004 - *Snehatheeram* was shifted to this house at Kadungalloor, and Santhosh and Siby Kaitharan continue the ministry

May 22, 2005 - Biju Kizhakkarakattu joins as the director

April 1, 2006 - The HIV/AIDS awareness campaign concluded

April 29, 2006 - Foundation stone laid for *snehatheeram*