



VINCENTIAN CONGREGATION MARYMATHA PROVINCE

Let the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ever be with us!

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brother and Seminarians,

Prayerful Greetings from Marymatha Provincial House!

Happy Feast!

The heart of every Vincentian is filled with joy on the occasion of the feast of our heavenly patron St. Vincent de Paul. In every House and Institution we celebrate the feast with due solemnity. We are going to prepare ourselves spiritually by reciting the Novena to St. Vincent de Paul and meditating on his teachings and exemplary life. We have to allow ourselves to be challenged by the heroic virtues practised by our heavenly patron.

I am inviting the attention of all confreres to learn from the prayer life of our heavenly patron as we are getting ready to celebrate his feast. St. Vincent de Paul was a man of prayer. He wanted his missionaries to be men of prayer, as much for their personal advancement as for the ability to be of real service to others. He was most anxious that his confreres should progress in their practice of this holy exercise. He said once: "Give me a man of prayer, and he will be able to do everything. He will be able to say with the apostle that he can do all in him who strengthens him and who gives him support (Phil 4:13). The Congregation of the Mission will continue in existence only as so long as mental prayer shall be practised. Mental prayer is the impregnable ramparts which will protect the missionaries from all sorts of attacks. It is like a mystical arsenal, a tower of David, which will be the source of their arms, not only to defend themselves, but to attack and rout all the opponents for the glory of God and the salvation of souls."

Sometimes in our busy life we forget the need of prayer. As religious we ought to be aware of the inevitability of prayer in our lives. St. Vincent exhorts his confreres: "What food is to the body, prayer is to

the soul, if persons were satisfied with taking a meal every three to four days, they would soon grow weak... they would be very weary, incapable of making any useful effort, and at last would have a body without strength or vigor. Soul not nourished by prayer becomes tired, weary, without strength, courage or power, a source of annoyance to others and unbearable to itself.” In this way, he wants his followers to be men of prayer. Our soul shall not become tired, weary without strength, courage and power because of not feeding our soul with the spiritual food of prayer.

As preachers and missionaries, the importance and need of prayer is very high in our life. St. Vincent says: “Prayer is a great book for a preacher: from it you will draw the divine truths of the Eternal Word, who is their source, and you in turn will pour them forth on the people. It is hoped that all missionaries may have a great love for this virtue, for without its help they will do little or nothing useful, but with its help it is certain that they will touch hearts. I ask God to give us the spirit of prayer.” According to St. Vincent, “we should have intense communication with the Lord in prayer. This is the reservoir where you will find the guidance you will need to carry out your job. When you have hesitations, turn to God and say to Him, ‘My Lord, the Father of Lights, teach me what I need to know in this situation’.”

As the spiritual sons of our heavenly patron St. Vincent de Paul, how can we give a fitting tribute to him on the occasion of his feast? It is only by practising what he taught us. Let us therefore become men of prayer. In that way let us become the faithful followers of our heavenly patron. Let me avail this opportunity to wish all of you a very Happy Feast! May the intercession of our heavenly patron bring upon us abundant blessings from the Lord!!

Rev. Fr. James Edavazhithara VC

Rev. Fr. James Edavazhithara VC, a Vincentian with a missionary spirit, was called to eternal rest on Easter Sunday, April 5, 2015. Fr. Edavazhithara, who was taking rest in his room after having tea at 10 am on Easter Sunday, died at 12 noon due to a silent cardiac arrest. The burial took place at 2:30 pm on April 7, 2015. The simple and zealous missionary life of Fr. James Edavazhithara is indeed inspiring

for each Vincentian. May the Lord grant peace and joy of heavenly life to Fr. Edavazhithara. Let us not forget to fulfill our obligation towards our deceased member as prescribed in *Practical Norms, n. 112a*.

Priestly Ordination

It is with great joy I am announcing the date of the priestly ordination of Deacon Joseph (Ajesh) Thundathil VC to be held on October 17, 2015 at 9.30 am at St. Sebastian's Church, Dharmagiri near Gudalloor in the diocese of Mananthavady. Deacon Ajesh completed his theology studies in the *Priester Seminar* in Augsburg, Germany. He was assigned for his diaconate ministry in Tabor Retreat Centre, Kalyan after his arrival from Germany. Let us pray for Deacon Ajesh who is getting ready for his priestly ordination. Let me take this opportunity to invite you to the ordination ceremony. Please grace the occasion with your esteemed presence to pray for Deacon Ajesh and to convey your best wishes and greetings to him.

Annual Retreat

We are aware about the need to participate in one of the retreats arranged by the Vincentian Generalate. Our Statutes and Practical Norms binds us with a responsibility to attend the retreat without fail: "We ought to spend at least five full days for annual retreat arranged for our community" (*Practical Norms, n. 19*). Retreats are arranged by the Generalate in different places in such a way that our confreres are able to participate in one of the batches. Let me remind you once again to participate in the annual retreat arranged for the members of the Congregation to renew our personal life and our priestly ministries.

Community Animation

It is with immense joy I remember the extensive participation of our confreres in the Renewal Seminars conducted in the Province level in the first half of this year. Thank you very much for your wholehearted participation in it. Open sharing and group discussions were conducted in connection with the Renewal Seminar. Many valuable suggestions were made by the members. I appreciate the members for their open sharing. One of the concerns expressed by the members was the need for a revival in prayer and community life. For a true and fruitful religious life, these two – prayer and community life – are inevitable components.

Hence, it was decided to constitute an Animation Committee to visit our Houses and to spend some time with the members of the community. The specific purpose of the visit will be to encourage and appreciate our members for the works they are doing for the Congregation in their respective communities and to motivate the members to foster the spirit of prayer and fraternal communion. Rev. Fr. Paul Parekkattil VC and Rev. Fr. Alex Chalangady VC will be the members of the Animation Committee. As the chairman of the Committee, Fr. Parekkattil will contact you to fix the date for the visit of the Community Animation. I request you to cooperate well with the Committee to rejuvenate the community and to make it more cordial and prayerful.

Founder's Day

The day of commemoration of the founder of our Congregation Rev. Fr. Varkey Kattarath falls on October 24. As we do every year, this year also we will pay homage to him by spending one day at Thottakom, our Mother House and the place where his mortal remains are laid to rest. The day will be marked with prayer service, preaching and Holy Mass. I request as many members as possible to attend the functions at Thottakom and to show reverence to our founder Rev. Fr. Varkey Kattarath. Let us also request his intercession for each one of us and for our ministries.

Burglary at Vikindu

Our House at Vikindu was attacked by dacoits on August 9, 2015. A group of around 12 people entered our House in the late evening on that day and attacked our Fathers, Novices and some of the guests who visited our community. They took away all the valuables from the House. The holy articles like vestments, monstrance and the documents like passport and identity cards were recovered from an isolated place not very far from Vikindu after two days. Our confreres are gradually recovering from the shock. Fr. Stephen (Shaiju) Mulanyinkal has come to Kerala for better treatment as he was attacked severely by the dacoits. Such incidents are not very common in Tanzania. However, the anti-social elements seem to profit from the present political unrest in the country as it is the time for general elections. Let us pray for our confreres in Vikindu in a special way. Let me appreciate our missionaries in Vikindu who showed an extraordinary courage in the face of such brutalities. It

reminds us the words of St. Paul: "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4, 8-9).

Mission Appeal

The season of Mission Appeal for the year 2015 is getting over by the month of September. The program was conducted very well this year. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate Rev. Fr. Francis Cheruparambil VC who is excellently organizing the programs and all those who collaborate with him in arranging the programs in their respective regions. Some preachers were chosen from among our confreres to preach the Mission Appeal in different parishes in US. Let us thank all of them and all the Dioceses and Parishes which hosted the programs.

Reminders

I am requesting all those who hold the responsibility of finance to send the quarterly statement of accounts to the Provincial House with due signatures. First quarterly statements from majority of the Houses and Institutions have reached the Provincial House. Those who have not yet sent it are requested to send it at the earliest.

Final Greetings

Finally, let me wish each and every one of you a Very Happy Feast of our heavenly patron St. Vincent de Paul. Let us radiate the spirit of St. Vincent to all those who are around us by living his charism and observing the life of prayer.

Yours lovingly in the service of the Lord and the Community,

September 14, 2015
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Fr. Paul Puthuva VC
Provincial Superior



St. Vincent de Paul

PRAY FOR US