



# NIRMAL PROVINCE BULLETIN

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WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



My Dear Brothers, Christmas Greetings to all...

Christmas reminds us that God has become part of our human story!

God, the King of kings, the creator of the universe, sent His only Son out of LOVE to this world to save His people from the bondages of their sins.

Yes, it is an event that happened 2000 years ago. Today, he takes birth and lives in the hearts of you and me. People are searching God in you and me! It is in our pilgrimage from humanness to Godliness that Christ's taking human form finds fulfillment. We need to become an answer to the world's search for God!

**St. Augustine wrote, God became man so that we humans become like God!**

NO PLACE IN THE INN is a famous story of a 9<sup>th</sup> class student. Vales, is his name. The historical drama of Christ's birth was used to stage every year in his small village, and he had a strong desire to get a chance to act in this beautiful drama that takes place in his village among his dear and near ones. That particular year he got the chance to act in the drama. For him a very short scene that of the inn keeper was given, who has to utter just one sentence – no place in the inn – to Joseph, the husband of Mary, who is in search of a place to keep Mary for her delivery.

He learned the sentence by heart, Drama started, Joseph came tired, weary, supporting half fainting Mary helping her to sit on the ASS back! Joseph asked for a room and Vales replied NO, No place in the inn!

Joseph was about to walk out of the stage Vales cried out so spontaneously, No! No! Joseph, Come! There is little space in MY ROOM! Audience astounded, all stood up, clapped hands, they went on clapping.

People commented that this year's Christmas became meaningful! Vales uttered a sentence so spontaneous, an answer to God's intervention!

Without argument or question, simply does what is asked of him, is the character of Joseph in the Bible. This is what Vales did in the wake of God's intervention of feeling pity on Joseph!



“इम्मानुएल लफज सार्थक करार कर हमसे जुडा खुदा दीदार हो।”- धन्य चावरा

Lets us reflect, how am I to respond to God's interventions in our life, as Joseph did, as Vales did. Let our celebration of Christmas remind us to get inspired to incarnate HIS LOVE in our efforts in building up God's Family where ever we are!

As the Christmas comes and goes, let us continue to proclaim that in Jesus, God is with us, and Jesus will be with us until the end of time. May our joy and celebrations of Christmas be highlighted by deep trust in God who so loved us that he gave his only Son (Jn 3:16)



## CHRISTMAS: A MODEL FOR WELCOMING COMMUNITY

**Fr. Santhosh Kotheril CMI**



I have a dream; a dream that one day the nation will rise and judge people not by the color or complex of their skin but by the content and character of their life. This maverick dream of versatile *Martin Luther King* came true when *Barack Obama* is elevated to be the next president of US. This is a scintillating story of a *black* (African-American) marching towards the *whitehouse* proving that the content and character are the most important ingredients of a dashing personality.

God the father had a *salvific dream* – a dream for the entire human race. This redemptive dream came true in the advent of Christ Jesus into this corrupt and corrupting world. Christmas takes us back to the times and seasons when the world solemnly welcomed the Messiah. This welcoming of Jesus Christ is of paramount importance to all living in this universe. It brought forth positive, progressive and perpetual changes. His coming even divide the history into two and it was a well-coming and was welcomed by all.

Jesus has come on a December night which is considered to be the longest night. This seems to indicate he comes to expel maximum possible stretch of darkness. He is here to shatter LIGHT and delight the hearts and minds of millions of people.

His birth happened in simple, ordinary and clumsy cattle shed which is apparently less tidy and clean. But his coming made it so clean, pure and holy that, the season of Christmas does not pass by without witnessing millions of glittering, fabulous and grace filled cribs all across the nations. Hence Birth of Jesus initiates a journey from uncleanliness to CLEANLINESS- be it spiritual or physical.

The poor Shepard flock grabbed the first invaluable divine opportunity to have a glance of mesmerizing Infant

Jesus. The next was the turn of Magi. Therefore His birth which strikes a proper and fitting balance between two categories becomes an EQUALIZER.

The most important and attractive of all these is that God expresses His magnanimity in making Himself unconditionally AVAILABLE for human beings.

In short Jesus' Coming is a revelation and revolution – creating a sense of radiant light, redeeming cleanliness, rewarding equality and reliable availability. These are some of the life giving and life sustaining fruits of Christmas.

Welcoming community, one of the thrusts of the general synaxis XXXVI goes very much parallel with these fruits of Christmas.

Presence of guest sparks off LIGHT and delights us. When someone close to our hearts comes obviously we are delighted. When Blessed Mary visited Elizabeth even the child in the womb of Elizabeth leaped with joy.

The guest again indirectly invites us to develop a sense of CLEANLINESS, be it spiritual or physical. We would like to keep things in order, keep surroundings neat and clean and maintain oneself pure in their coming. In the presence of Jesus, Zacheus was made neat; Lavi became pure; and the people possessed with unclean spirit were made clean.

Coming of guest also create a sense of EQUALITY. Even if there is a difference in ability, roles or position yet there is a vision of equality which does not develop any feeling of superiority or inferiority.

Again guest's arrival has tremendous implication of total AVAILABILITY. A guest never appears to say "I don't have time", 'wait', 'later', don't bother me now etc.

Now the guest reception invariably depends on our attitudes. As it goes, the distance between the heaven and earth (or between any two) is not a matter of altitude but of

“अपने साथ बात करने केलिये खालिकने मानव को जो हुनर दिया है उसीका नाम है प्रार्थना” - धन्य चावरा

attitude. Here we are not merely looking out for the attitude of others rather one's own. Because when we think about the attitude of others we will feel bothered but when we think about our attitude we can reach higher degree of altitude. More precisely this attitude has to come from deep down with in. It is clear from what is said of an egg. When an egg is broken from outside a life is destroyed but when it is broken from within a life comes out. All good things, all vibrant lives and all positive and progressive attitudes come from within.

So, in the possession of a positive and purposive attitude one becomes capable to accommodate and assimilate the fruits of Christmas namely a real sense of illuminating light, refreshing cleanliness, soothing equality and unlimited availability which are sure to happen in the process of welcoming guest as well. Let adage 'Aditi Devo Bhava' become an attitude of our CMI identity.



## NEWS UPDATES

### Diaspora News

Jay Yesu to all...

**I would like to tell you something about myself and my work**



I was invited by Bishop William Slattery OFM, the Chairperson of the Seminary Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of South Africa in November, 2004. Before this invitation I was teaching in St. Charles Lwanga Seminary in Windhoek, Namibia from May 2002 to November 2004. After spending a month's vacation during December in our Mission

I arrived here in St. John Vianney Seminary, Pretoria, South Africa, on December 30, 2004. Since then I am teaching subjects both in Philosophy and Theology. I am the only Professor here with doctorates in both Philosophy and Comparative Religion (Theology). In 2005 I was invited to teach a post graduate course in the Catholic University of Louvain (CUL) in Comparative Theology, a course on "Buddhism and Christianity- a Dialogical Encounter" for a quarter (January-March). It was a wonderful experience for me to see the deep interest of post-graduate students of the Catholic University of Belgium, interested in inter-religious dialogical theology especially in Buddhism. Some 60 research students registered for my course and all of them performed excellently well, and scored very high marks, and the Faculty of Theology, CUL, acknowledged my academic contribution with great compliments.

The above mentioned academic record of mine was there in the Faculty of Theology of CUL, and referring to it the Faculty of Theology of CUL again invited me to be on the board of examiners of a doctoral dissertation of Fr. Thomas Joseph Keezhangatt, a priest of the Bhopal Archdiocese, who wrote a very scholarly and interesting doctoral dissertation on "Evangelization as integral Liberation in Indian Context". The Faculty of Theology offered me to meet all the travel expenses back and forth. Taking into account the official nature of the invitation offered to me by the Catholic

University of Belgium, the Belgium Embassy here in Pretoria, gave me a Visa to Belgium for a month with out any charge, as offered in their preference to VIPs and Ecclesiastical Dignitaries. The officer concerned in the Belgian Embassy specially mentioned this privileged free visa as a special offer from the Belgium Republic as a mark of recognition of being invited to such academic function by the Catholic University of Belgium. So it was all a series of honourable treats from the Belgium Government as well as from CUL.



It was another wonderful honour offered to me by the prestigious Catholic University of Louvain. As I am informed this is the first of this kind of honour offered to a CMI Professor by the CUL, Belgium. So being a member of this great fraternity of our CMI, I offer a share of this honour and its recognition to our CMI Fraternity, and especially to our Nirmal Province.

This honour offered to me by the Catholic University of Louvain was so far not published in any CMI Media. So let our Nirmal Province Bulletin carry this news for the first time.

**Fr. Thomas Manickam**

**Dear Manickam Acha Nirmal Province is very proud of you !!**

"दिन जो दूसरों की भलाई के बगैर ढल जाये, वह दिन तुम्हारी जिन्दगी से नदारत माना जायेगा"- धन्य चावरा

## BDKS News

Under the auspices of BDKS a medical camp was conducted in Sataspur village nearly 70 kilometers away from Jagdalpur. Rev. Dr. Merly DBS attended the patients. It was really a great blessing for the poor villagers as they were unable to reach out such facilities in necessity. Rev. Fr. Tiju Mankotil was the man behind such a humanitarian intervention. Hats off to Fr. Tiju.

Two days seminar was conducted for the animators at Karpawand. Rev. Fr. Thomas Muppathinchira and Rev. Fr. Sebastian Kalapurackal led the whole programme which was attended by more than thirty animators and *Balpanchayath* teachers.

Rev. Fr. Vargheese Kokkadan cmi the general councilor for social apostolate, together with Rev. Fr. Jose Thachil visited Jagdalpur and evaluated our activities. The main purpose of their Bastar expedition was to visit the riot victims of Orisa. Under the eldership of Fr. Provincial and the Department of Social apostolate, a team together with Fr. Vargheese and Fr. Jose, visited the riot affected villages and parishes and expressed our solidarity and concern for the victims.

## Prayer Request

 Our Decans Biju Mundackal and Biju Payyappilly are getting ordained on the 29<sup>th</sup> of December 2008 and the 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, respectively. Let us keep them in our prayers. 

The paternal grand-mother of Rev. Fr. Kuriakos Puthukkattukaduppil has been called to eternal rest. Let us pray for the departed soul  



### Feast Days

Placheril Jomon	Dec.03
Puthenpurackal Xavier	Dec.03
Thanmavumkal Xavier	Dec.03
Payappilly Vineeth	Dec.14
Chavarnanickal Joy	Dec.27
Edakkattuthara John	Dec.27
Nambusseril John	Dec.27
Munduvalayil Bijoy	Dec.27
Praveen Kumar Tirkey	Dec.27
Gyanendra Barman	Dec.26
Umesh Tigga	Dec.27



### Birthdays Day

Nambusseril John	Dec.01
Kuttianickal Joseph	Dec.06
Vadaparampil Thomas	Dec.08
Kaniyannadackal Thomas	Dec.12
Pulingappallil Sebastian	Dec.13
Puthumana Kurian	Dec.19
Thanath Varghese	Dec.24
Irupuzhickal T.Jaiswam	Dec.26
Nellivelil Joshy Joseph	Dec.01
Kujur Sanjai	Dec.02
Praveen Kumar Tirkey	Dec.09
Mundackal Biju	Dec.16
Gyanendra Barman	Dec.18
Prince Punnan	Dec.19
Thekkummury Regi	Dec.20
Renjith Khess	Dec.28