

*By His Wounds
We Are Healed*



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Fr. Mathew Perumpil MI

[Provincial Delegate]

Wounds That Heal

This issue of *Vartha* comes to you in conjunction with the celebration of the World Day of the Sick on February 11, which is also the feast day of our Lady of Lourdes. For us Camillians this is a very special day as it is the primary mission of the Order: to be channels of healing in the world of sickness and suffering. Through all our ministries we proclaim the healing mission of the Church in the world of suffering and keep the sick close to our heart with compassion and love.

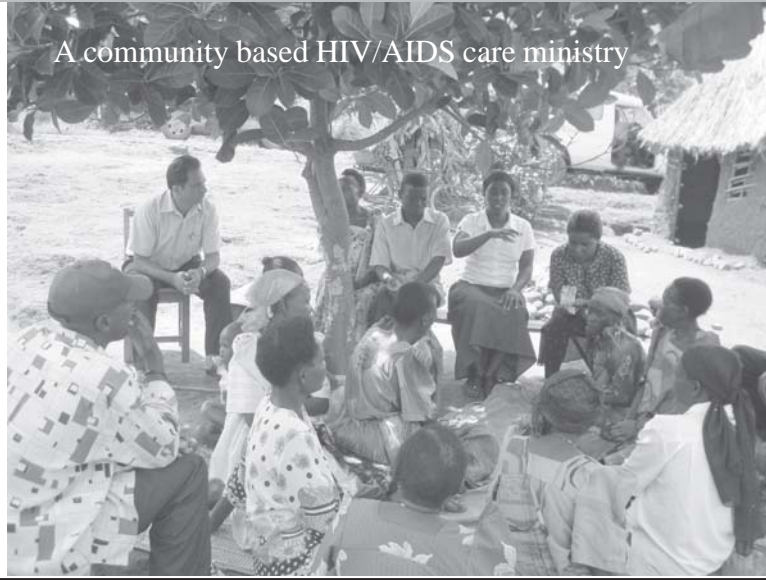
We draw the healing power for our ministry with the sick from our Lord and Master, Jesus – the wounded healer. Not only Jesus went around healing people, but also He brought us the ultimate healing (salvation) through his suffering, death and resurrection. He reminds us that we are also wounded one way or other, but that woundedness can become the source of healing when it is united to Christ. All of us who are close to the wounds of people around can truly find our healing energy from the Lord who healed us through his wounds.

This issue of *Vartha* is also capturing the story of our Delegation as it went through the Pastoral Visitation from Provincial Councilor. It was an opportunity to revitalize our life and ministry through deeper sharing at personal and community level. The celebration of final profession of the two confreres in the presence of all Camillians in India was truly a moment to celebrate and thank the Lord for blessing us abundantly with “more hearts and hands” to continue the Camillian mission in India.

Yes, we are called to continue the healing mission of Christ in the broken world today and perhaps the best way to take up this task is to recognize our own brokenness that can become source of healing for others. May the Lord fill us with His healing power to touch those who come to us with their wounds.



It is a land of contrasts that begs for some meaningful interventions to make it a rich country. Camillians can play a great role here



A community based HIV/AIDS care ministry

Mission Uganda

Mathew Perumpil MI

I was privileged to visit the Ugandan mission of Camillians on my way to the Provincial's meeting in Brazil. The Irish Provincial Fr. Stephen Forster invited me to get a first-hand experience of the mission, hopefully to begin discussions of Indian delegation reaching out to develop the mission further.

Camillians from the Irish Province started this mission in 2000 through Fr. Tom O'Connor. He developed a pastoral centre in Jinja to coordinate the pastoral health initiatives throughout Uganda. Part of this project was to train one or two priests from every diocese in Camillianum and they would work for us at the centre in Jinja for two years. At present we have three Ugandan priests working for us. Fr. Tom also started some vocation promotion activities and we have two brothers doing theology and philosophy in Nairobi.

Another ministry we are involved in is the HIV/AIDS ministry, coordinated by Fr. Tom Smith. It is a community based programme covering many villages, providing comprehensive care and support to HIV infected.

I went to Uganda with lots of presupposition. I thought it was a dry, poor country. I was pleasantly surprised to find a rich country with beautiful natural resources. The climate is near perfect (14-27 degree celsius) throughout the year. Plenty of water and sufficient rains. Fertile land. Yet plenty of poverty due to political instability (contributed by Idi Amin's dictatorship) and military rules. HIV burden is so high killing millions of people. Healthcare and education are so poor. It is a land of contrasts that begs for some meaningful interventions to make it a rich country. For sure Camillians can play a great role towards this mission.



Whispering Beds...

If THE BEDS AT KARUNYA
PAIN AND PALLIATIVE
CLINIC IN ST. CAMILLUS
HOSPITAL COULD EVER
SPEAK, IT WOULD SPEAK
UNCEASINGLY, WRITES
SANTHOSHKUMAR

February 1, 2009...I rang up to Dr. Sr. Theresina Kandathil DSC (St. Camillus Hospital, Chungakkunnu, Kerala). Even before I open up my subject she informed me, “Mr. Thomas is very weak....” and handed over the cell phone to him! (I was blessed to accompany Mr. Thomas for past ten months spiritually and mentally in his life of chronic lung cancer.)

The gasping of a dying man oozed down into my heart through the ear-piece of my telephone... and he was struggling to whisper a few words at the intervals of his gasping...: “I may pass away today, Father....! Thank you ... for all ... that ...you... have... done!” “We are with you, Thomas...” I promised. “Keep praying”.

I sat pensive for a while and moved out of the office... was on my knees... And not did I realize that I gradually was resting on my heels... like Peter and the other two in Gethsemane! And the Word resounded, “Could you not stay awake with me for an hour?”

During the canonical visit Fr. Gueseppe Rigamonti said in his homily: “In facing death, the tragedy is not just death, but *dying alone!*”

If the beds at Karunya Pain and Palliative Clinic in St. Camillus Hospital could ever speak, it would speak unceasingly!

During the past one year and a few months I have been blessed to walk along persons suffering with cancer and other palliative stage illnesses. Standing at their bedside especially at the time of their departure from this world I witness the reality of life beyond 'living'! Their spiritual dispositions at the time of their dying challenge our living here on earth, our 'belief(s)' and our approach toward God and His 'mysteries'. Some grab on to life

even while dying, some give away life for they have no

other go, some others accept life in faith and hope, still others give behind questions like "why me?"

Mr. X was on trachostomy (surgical opening up of trachea at the throat for breathing) for last couple of weeks of his life. Even when medical science was clear of his approaching death, he desperately panted for life. Even on the very morning of the day of his death he was anxiously searching for more financial assistance. As all stood helpless at the last hours of his life he crawled on to the wheel-chair and was struggling to roll it out into life!

A lady of 35 and an affectionate mother of a five-year old girl child was diagnosed of cancer in one of her ovaries only a couple of months before her death. The time I spent at her bedside was eloquent with sorrowful sighs of a young mother who has definitely not exhausted her affection for her caring young husband and their lovely child!

Mr. so-and-so, in his 80s, having been diagnosed of cancer was not till then

informed of his illness and the impending death. He was a joyful person and so his loving children wanted him to die joyful, fearing him to fall sad informed of the disease. And breaking the 'sad news' to him I found him deeply silent in the beginning... and gradually processing the fact at the core of his spirit and realizing the truth of suffering... he grew peaceful and in a few days he passed away on to the life next, not joyfully alone... but with greater peace



Suffering is the Christian twist to life's perfection. It is not a mystery but a revelation.

and trust in the Lord.

Jesus was hailed by

many... and the crowd attempted to make him a king... and shouted: "Hosanna to the Son of David...". Yet he kept whispering that he had a baptism with which he had to be baptized. And that his heart was restless until it was accomplished. To the one who denied the reality of his suffering he said, "Get behind me, Satan". His heart was at peace all-through the way of the Cross, and, on the cross he proclaimed: "Everything has been accomplished!"

The perfect accomplishment of Christian life is on the cross. **Suffering is the Christian twist to life's perfection.** My encounters with the dying seal this fact over and over again.

Where was God the Father when Jesus walked the way to Calvary and died on the Cross?! "I and the Father are one" he had already explained. Why did He let His son be brutally butchered? "God so loved the world that He sent his only son...(Jn 3:16)." Parted from the truth of the crucifix, suffering can be little understood! Our bleeding knees at the foot of the cross will tell us personally that *suffering is not a mystery but a revelation!*



The visit served to be an excellent opportunity to reflect on important aspects of community life, ministry and formation.

Fr. Rigamonti and Fr. Anselmo are given welcome drink.

Face To Face

Suneesh Memana MI

The canonical visitation of the Provincial councilor Fr. Giuseppe Rigamonti to Indian Delegation served to be an excellent opportunity to reflect together important aspects of community life, ministry and formation through individual conversations and community meetings. It took almost eighteen days to visit all the communities' activities spread throughout the vast geographical area of Indian Delegation. He arrived in Bangalore on January 10, accompanied by Fr. Anselmo Zambotti.

reserved a fraternal and hearty welcome for the visitors. They, together with the provincial delegate Fr. Mathew Perumpil, came into communities bringing greetings of the Provincial and the council. During the individual sharing and community meetings in an atmosphere of fraternal spirit and respect, Fr. Rigamonti led the discussions with the aid of translation by Fr. Anselmo and pointed out certain aspects of major importance for reflections at personal, community and delegation level.

Starting from Jyoti Darsan in Nagpur to Snehadaan in Bangalore, each community

The moments of togetherness in the participation and sharing of love of Jesus

in the Eucharist in each community were the most memorable. During the general gathering held in Bangalore on January 28 Fr. Giuseppe addressed the members of the delegation in an atmosphere of fraternity. Raising his concerns over the diminishing number of vocations to religious life he underlined the responsibility of all “not to lose any opportunity to promote vocation” and called on everyone to promote vocation with “testimony of one’s own life”. He shared with great consideration some important aspects and issues emerged during his individual conversations and community meetings. A consensus regarding the Indian Delegation becoming a Vice Province was also sought in the gathering.



Vartha Photo

Fr. Giuseppe Rigamonti MI

General gathering held at Upasana

Photo: Siby Kaitharan MI





From San Paulo..

Photo: Mathew P.

Mathew Perumpil MI

The annual meeting of the provincials, delegates and the general consulta was held this year in San Paulo, Brazil in November 2008 hosted by the Brazilian province.

This year the theme focused on the growth of the Order through emerging delegations and provinces. We heard stories of Camillian presence expanding and deepening in new soils in spite of the declining trend of vocations to religious life. It is encouraging to see the Order continuing to make its charism realized through

initiatives and in new places throughout the Order. The meeting discussed and arrived at some common criteria in developing or founding new mission.

The meeting also discussed the first draft of the revision of the Constitution and General Statutes prepared by the commission. At the end of the meeting, Indian delegation was chosen to host the next meeting in Bangalore in conjunction with our jubilee celebrations. This meeting was a 'coming together' as one family, learning each other, each province and delegation better, and building the common mission of the Order.

Solemn Profession Celebrated

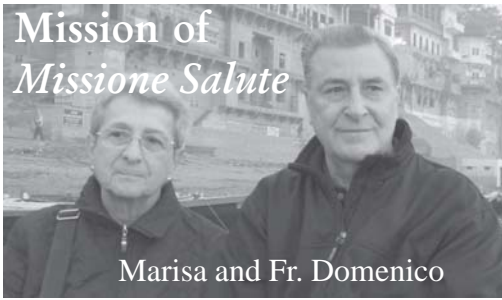
Bangalore: Chintagunda Suresh and Kureekattil Shiju made their solemn vows in a function held here at Upasana on Janaury 28. Fr. Giuseppe Rigamonti who was in India for his canonical visit, accepted their profession. Later, Shiju was ordained a deacon by bishop Sebastian Adayanthrath on February 11 at Aluva; and Suresh will be conferred deaconate on February 21 by bishop Abraham Viruthukulangara at Nagpur.



Vartha Photo



Vartha Photo



Jail Ministry Begins

Mananthavady(Kerala): Camillian ministry in India has got a shot in the arm as the community here has launched jail ministry in collaboration with *Divine Swishesha Munnani* to provide pastoral and spiritual care to the inmates. As part of the ministry the team visit Vythiri sub-jail (Wayanad, Kerala) once a month, conduct some programmes with positive messages, inspire them with sharing of experiences and provide spiritual and pastoral care. In fact, it was a dream of St. Camillus.

Bangalore: The editor-in-chief of *Missione Salute* Fr. Domenico Fantin and his assistant Ms. Marisa Sfondrini visited India from January 12 to February 7. *Missione Salute* is planning to publish a special issue on Indian Delegation as Camillians celebrate silver jubilee of their presence in India.

Literature on St. Camillus

Doise John MI

Trichy (Tamil Nadu): A long awaited dream to publish a book in Tamil on St. Camillus became a reality. *Karunai maravar. Thuya Camillus de Lellis*, a translation by Dr. Antony Cruz from the original *The Life of St. Camillus* written by Mario Pucci in Italian is the first book of Camillian publications in Tamil. The chief editor of *Missione Salute* Fr. Dominico released the book in the presence of Bro. Luca Perletti on January 25.

Dedicated



Dedication of Sneha Agnes Community care centre at Nagpur



Vartha photo

Home Day Celebrated

Mangalore: Snehasadan celebrated its home day on January 30, ending a week-long celebrations and various cultural and athletic competitions. Fr. Domenico Fantin MI and Ms. Marisa Sfondrini were the special guests and various cultural items by the children of Snehasadan and Jeevadaan were staged on the occasion.



Ground Gets Cleared

Through the Corridors of Our History...

2

Babychan Pazhanilath MI

The desire of St. Camillus for Indian mission was gradually being fulfilled when two Camillians went to China as missionaries in 1726. Fr. Giacinto Giordani and Fr. Stefano Signorini went to China as apostolic missionaries. They left Rome on November 2, 1726 and reached there in July 1727. They had to face persecution. After 10 years of missionary work Fr. Giacinto died at Beijing in June

1736. Fr. Stefano Signorini returned to Italy in 1739.

Another great attempt for a Camillian foundation in mission land was in 1781 when there came an invitation as if from the office of the Queen of Portugal to send twelve priests and two brothers for a foundation in Goa (India) which was under Portuguese regime. On getting the request, the then General Superior Fr. Bartholomeo Corella chose a group of missionaries under the leadership of Fr.

‘I will go Lord..’: Fr. Crotti (left) among the Camillian Missionaries to China in 1946



Marchetti from the province of Bologna. The group arrived in Lisbon on March 3, 1782 to go to India (Goa).

But to the dismay of the mission group, it came to light that the invitation was a personal invitation sent by a Goan priest named Gaetano De Faria who worked as a military chaplain in Lisbon but the queen and the responsible ministry was not aware of the invitation. Fr. Gaetano tried to get the approval from the Portuguese government by all means. The group waited till January 1783 and since there was no permission from the Portuguese government they returned to Italy.

A renewed attempt for mission started under the inspiration of the Provincial of Lombardo Veneta (LV) Fr. Alessandro Petroni. A group of five (Fr. Crotti



The vice provincial council of Extreme Orient entrusted Fr. Antonio Crotti as responsible for the foundation in India

Antonio, Fr. Ernesto Valdesolo, Bro. Amici, Fr. Angelo Pastro, Bro. Marcello Caon) decided to go to China for starting a mission. They started their journey in March 1946. The then Superior general Fr. Florindo Rubini supported and blessed this great initiative.

After two years there started religious persecution and so they escaped from main land. One group went to Taiwan and other to Formosa island and from there they founded the mission in Thailand, and later to Philippines. The vice provincial council of Extreme Orient accepted the request of the Provincial council of the LV to entrust Fr. Antonio Crotti as responsible for the foundation in India.

Next: Foundation in India



Fr. Crotti (centre) with the five missionaries to China.

In Loving Memory



*Passes February reminding
You are no more with us
You're gone, but not your love,
Gentleness and simplicity
So proud we are
Continuing your mission in India*

Joy Inchody MI