

**He
WALKED
AHEAD**

inside



**Indian Camillians pay
homage to Fr. Nidini**

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Discovering New Life

Fr. Mathew Perumpil MI

[Provincial Delegate]

After the Forty Days of Lent, a time of spiritual renewal, we have the New Life of Easter. During these forty days we have been purifying and renewing ourselves for a more abundant and fruitful life. Perhaps we became more aware of whatever is life limiting in us and began discovering ways to rejuvenate our lives.

I have been also observing these days how the nature was communicating this same message. Trees are shedding their leaves, grasses are withering and flowers are hard to be found around in our garden. There is a dry look everywhere.

For us Camillians in India, the sudden loss of our beloved Fr. Ernesto Nidini powerfully reminded the inevitability of this process of dying and waiting for new life. Most of us are still recovering from the sadness and grief of the loss of our dear Father Nidini.

As this issue of *Vartha* focuses on formation and vocation promotion, we are also looking at the empty seminaries and the lack of motivated people to join our way of life.

All these remind me gently of the need to HOPE for new life, which is also the message and assurance of Easter.

Lent will lead us to Easter Joy. Falling leaves will give way to new bud and new leaves. Dry grass will turn soon to green meadows. We can comfort ourselves by hoping that Fr. Nidini has entered a new life with the Lord.

May this Easter be a time of discovering new life around us. May the risen Lord defeat the powers of death in us. Let us welcome life in our midst in spite of our doubts and lack of faith. May the coming days fill us with new energy and vitality in our personal lives and in our communities. Let us make the world around us more alive. May the Risen Lord Bless us with abundant life.



An Unfading Memory



He has just walked ahead of us to the Lord, leaving behind a trail of unfading memories. A person who untiringly watered the Indian Delegation with his exceptionally selfless service and love, has gone back to his eternal home.

Fr. Ernesto Nidini, one of the pioneer missionaries to India, is now not just a memory, but a powerful presence within many confreres. A convinced, humane and vibrant missionary and a man of strong affections and loyalties, Fr. Nidini was indeed a shepherd to the Indian Delegation, when it needed most nurturing and care. ⇒

A man who loved the sick and the poor

Joy Inchody MI

On 8th February 2008, I found a mail in my inbox from Fr. Nidini Ernesto. It was a rather long letter. The last sentence of the letter read, “Best wishes for your apostolate among the sick.” All his letters carried this message. He practised this message in his life; at the same time he encouraged others to do the same. Nearly two years back, I substituted Fr. Nidini to do ministry as chaplain at Mestre, Venice. During my visits in the wards, many patients used to ask me about Fr. Ernesto. In spite of a short period of service in the hospital, he was almost famous among hospital staff and the patients. He loved the sick and the hospital.

During his service as a formator in India, he used to mention that he wanted to work as a chaplain in the hospital. When he got a chance, he practised it to the full. I witnessed his zeal and love for the sick at Mestre. People loved him, the sick loved him, because he was so simple, and he never considered himself as someone of importance. Now I realize that there is a space for him in my heart, or something of his qualities have touched me along the years, that is why, tears rolled down my cheek and wet my pillow on hearing his sudden death. I am sure he lives in the hearts of many simple people.

⇒ From 1984 to 1998, with some years of intervals, he had been a zealous and compassionate formator of most of the Indian Camillians. He humbly witnessed the growth of the delegation in terms of number of houses and members. During his services in formation or in ministry in various parts of the world he remained a gentle father with his unflinching determination to be a faithful Camillian.

The members of the Indian Delegation sob their hearts out in memory of this great loving father and enthusiastic missionary who had been our shepherd for more than a decade with his humble and affectionate service. Having imparted to us his own stamp of humility and service he deserves to remain in our hearts.



A Life Without Parallel

Babychan Pazhanilath MI

Fr. Nidini has influenced me so much in my journey to be a Camillian priest. I know him since 1984 (my second year of minor seminary formation). He was my formator for a long period. Much of what I am now as a Camillian I owe to him. During these 24 years of friendship I had an opportunity to be with him and support him in times of difficulties as well.

I always admire his simplicity, generosity, charity, fatherly love, dedication and commitment. The most important part of his life was spent in India and we Indian Camillians know him much more than many others in the province.

One thing that comes to my mind often is that he had suffered a lot for the mission, not only for India, but also for Thailand and Philippines. For India, he worked almost alone for years and with a heart full of love.

Indian Delegation owe so much to him, for his great sacrifices, hard work, and dedication. His contributions to the Delegation are without parallel. India grew up faster than many, if not all, other foundations. Even when Fr. Nidini had to be away, India was so much for him and he was so much for India.

I met him last in December 2007. The final communication we had over phone was on 11th February, the previous day of his departure. I called him to wish 'get well soon' and to assure him prayers. But God took him to a world where he will be very well.



(From top) Fr. Nidini with Fr. Angelo Brusco during the inauguration of Upasana; During the First profession of Babychan Pazhanilath; With Fr. Paulinose OSB; Inaugurates the house at Trichy during his last visit to India.

In Homage To A Father



Bidding him adieu: Indian confreres pay homage to Fr. Nidini as he lies in state at the chapel of civil hospital.

William Eronimoose MI

Paduva(Italy): In an atmosphere of emotional surge, the funeral Mass of Fr. Nidini was celebrated here on February 15, 2008 in the chapel of Civil Hospital, where he

spent his last few months, serving the sick as a chaplain.

The Provincial Fr. Vittorio Paleari, the main celebrant, gave a heart-touching homily remembering the fruitful life of Fr. Nidini, lived for the glory of God and for the suffering sick brethren. Pointing out the simplicity and the spirit of poverty of Fr. Nidini, the provincial recalled his ability to adapt and his readiness to be a missionary. “He was man of a few things and deep spirituality”, he added.

Fr. Paleari expressed his sadness for the early loss of Fr. Nidini. He said that it was opportune that we should feel angry towards God for having taken him away from us.

We were all moved with sadness and a deep sentiment of loss covered the whole chapel and we remained there as the children who lost their dear father.

Memorial Mass Celebrated

Bangalore: Indian Camillians remembered Fr. Nidini with fond memories on February 25. More than fifteen confreres joined the Memorial Eucharistic celebration that held at Upasana. Large number of neighbours, friends, priests and nuns expressed their love to Fr. Nidini by their presence.

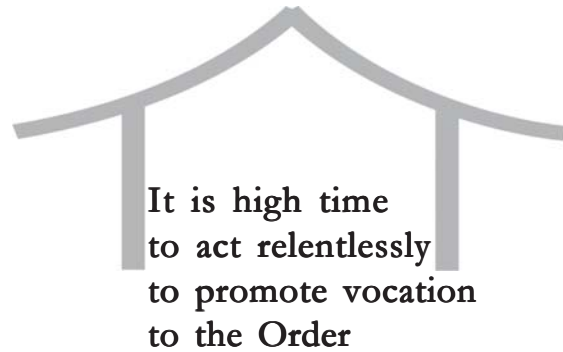
◆ The Delegate Fr. Mathew Perumpil said in homily, “Fr. Nidini, a simple man became an instrument in the hands of God to begin a great mission...”

◆ Fr. Biju Kizhakkarakattu in his introduction said, “Fr. Nidini an archetype of everything for Indian Camillians...”



◆ Fr. Raja Rao SMM said, “... A very delicate man who never wanted to hurt anybody...”

Upasana, where Fr. Nidini lived most of his time during his stay in India, breathed, smelled and sensed him. He lived in the memories of many. Again, we are compelled to believe that even in his absence we felt his presence.



Vocation Promotion - A Call for Action

- We need committed and compassionate members to continue the charism and spirituality of St. Camillus.
- Vocation promotion is everyone's responsibility. It is an urgent and important ministry (C.70,71).
- Adapt new strategies; old ones are no more effective.
- Every member brings, or at least tries to bring one candidate.

10 Commandments to Vocation Promoters/Formators

1. We need to live our Charism in a radical manner.
2. Check the danger of reducing ministries into mere work
3. Only radical ministries attract youngsters.
4. It is encouraging to note that there are still vocations from nuclear families even if small.
5. It is to be noted that very few promising young men who are imbued with religious conviction are attracted to the religious life.
6. The vocation Promoters and formators need to pay greater attention to the quality of candidates rather than quantity.
7. There exists stiff and filthy competition among Vocation Promoters; we should not succumb to it.
8. We are selecting candidates to apostolic communities not to Therapeutic community, so we need to avoid candidates who need constant professional care to deal with their personality issues.
9. Let formation be done in a climate of freedom, responsibility and accountability.
10. Let the selection of candidates, their promotion to the various stages of formation and their training, be done by **a team** always

(Extracts from the article “*Changing patterns in the recruitment and formation of candidates for priesthood and religious in India*”, presented by Fr. Joe Mathias, S.J, at the Rector’s meeting in Hyderabad in November 2007.)

Formation - A Meaningful Ministry

Johnson Vellachira MI

Formation is indeed a rewarding and meaningful ministry as I experience. An opportunity to be in touch with my own vocational journey and accompany those aspire to follow Him. Though at times the decision-making power of the formator limits openness and freedom of the formee, a living together and interaction build confidence and trust in due season. One of the main challenges I experience in this field is the misconception of the formees that to be open to the formator of the important personal struggle invites risk. Contrarily to this feeling I find the more one is open and honest the more he is trusted and helped and the inner journey becomes meaningful. The formator's realization of the Call and convictions of religious life certainly influence and inspire the candidate to commit their life better. Though at times I have to recommend taking firm decisions I believe it helps promote genuine candidates and discourage inauthentic ones. The teamwork of the formators and support and trust of the authority on me certainly played a great role to continue in this ministry. However at the end when I look back I feel content of the ministry I engage in, that helps me to say "Yes" to any further need to work in this field in a time when formators say 'no more' to this. ■

No. of candidates in various stages of formation

Pastoral Year- 2	Pre-philosophy - 8
Theology- 9	
Novitiate- 5	Minor Seminary (Mtdy)- 4
Philosophy - 12	Eluru - 8



No. of candidates recruited to our minor seminaries over the past 10 years

YEAR PLACE	MTDY	ELURU	TRICHY
1998	20	--	--
1999	24	--	--
2000	08	--	02
2001	24	--	11
2002	19	--	--
2003	17	--	--
2004	22	20	--
2005	08	15	--
2006	02	12	01
2007	01	04	00

Voyage of my Novitiate

Madanu Bhaskar

I entered the novitiate on 24th May 2007. In its beginning I crawled like a child. As days and weeks went on, life appeared punctured with lots of difficulties I faced in my spiritual life. However, God inspired, encouraged and gave me many opportunities to nourish myself in the spirit of the founder.

I am fortunate to experience novitiate as a place of love and growth and a place of formation in the charism of the order. Through personal prayer, meditation and ministry I began to realize that God has called me with a special purpose to be his true servant to serve the sick and needy. In this year of novitiate I was helped in all areas of my life by various means and sources especially by master, spiritual guide, community and companions to deepen my faith in God and to strengthen my commitment.

To be precise, the journey of my novitiate is the experience of God's love, mercy and encouragement. It helped me to realize my inner freedom where I can encounter God and live in His way. ■

Jyotidarsan ventures HIV/AIDS care

Camillians in Nagpur plan a joint venture to begin a care and support centre

Bijoy Kuliraniyil MI

Nagpur: Ground has been cleared for the Camillians here to begin its healing ministry for the people living with HIV/AIDS, as an agreement between the community and The Mure Memorial Hospital being round the corner.

The Jyotidarsan community has entered into a certain understanding with the Mure Memorial Hospital at Nagpur run by the Church of North India, in a joint venture to provide care and support to PLHA. A formal Memorandum Of Understanding is yet to be made regarding the management of the centre.

The community has been exploring all the avenues to make Camillian presence in

Nagpur meaningful and it hasn't been a cakewalk to find suitable infrastructure to provide care and support to PLHA. With the timeline to apply for a proposed project for a Care & Support Centre to be funded by KHPT running out, the community pulled out all stops to begin the ministry, and essential headway has been made in this regard. After holding necessary discussions with the director of the hospital Mr. Vilas Shende, we came to this understanding.

Though it won't be a Camillians' own ministry centre, this will be an opening for the spread of camillian healing ministry to more people especially to the people of North India.

Closer To The Altar

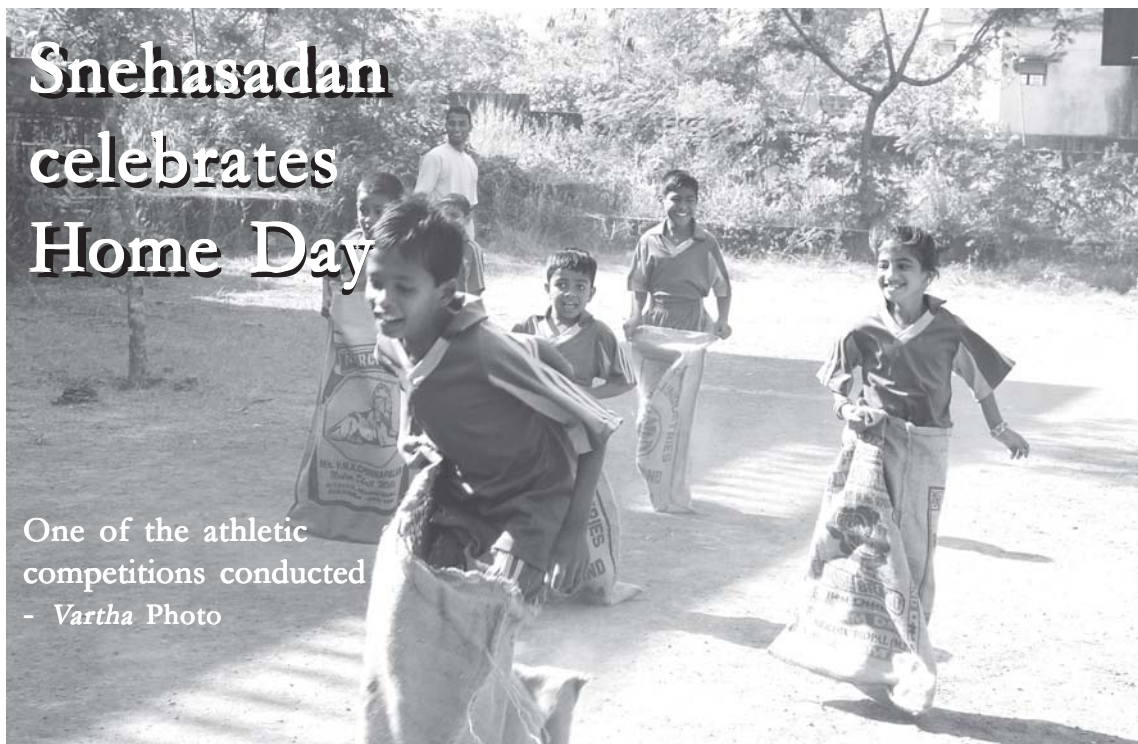
Bangalore: In a ceremony held here at Upasana on February 27, the Bishop of Bhadravathi Mar Joseph Arumachadathu conferred the ministries of Lector and Acolyte to the first and second year students of theology.

Bishop Arumachadathu, flanked by the Delegate, confers the ministries during the Mass.
-Vartha Photo



Centre of Excellence

The care and support centre for PLHA in Hyderabad is getting ready to be opened



Mangalore: Snehasadan family celebrated its 'home-day' on February 2, 2008. Curtains of week-long celebrations and various competitions came down as the patients, staff, neighbours and well-wishers of Snehasadan gathered together in a pleasant evening at its lawn-square to share the joy of the day. Various cultural items by the children of Snehasadan and Jeevadaan and

staff added colour to the day.

The event was celebrated on the Conversion Day of St. Camillus, remembering the inauguration of the centre on February 4, seven years back. As a preparation for the celebration, Snehasadan family was divided into two groups to conduct various athletic and cultural competitions.

A Classical Rhythm To Their Steps



Mangalore: Giving a new rhythm to their lives, Snehasadan took another step to introduce training in classical dance to the children of Snehasadan and Jeevadaan. The classes are conducted by Stenitha and Keerthi from SandesaKalakendra, Mangalore.

‘Out In The World’

John Kakkarakunnel MI

I am in St. Joseph’s church, a town parish of around five hundred families at Kadavanthra in Ernakulam, Kerala. For me, it is a time of break from being in the formation for the past four years. It is an altogether different experience of being with ordinary people ‘out in the world’. It is a time of Mass and Confessions, novenas and rosaries, marriages and baptisms, a life that is very much fulfilling and meaningful as a priest. The Parish priest, a hard working person, is inspiring. I am still learning many things as I have just begun this ministry

The whole parish is divided into 17 units of around 27 families each. Every month on a prefixed date all of them come together and share the Word of God, pray for each other, conduct bible quiz, discuss, decide and refresh. It is a beautiful program of fellowship and deepening of faith.

These days we are going from house to house to bless, pray and get acquainted with the family members. It is nice being there, knowing them more and praying with them. We go only in the evenings as it is convenient for them all to be there.

I go everyday to a nearby Homeopathic hospital and give communion, talk, be with them sometime. A Camillian touch in the parish.

Every Monday I go to hear confessions in a retreat centre at Chittoor. Around 500 people come for the week-long retreat there from various parts of South Kerala.

On the whole it is a good experience; lots of things being learned. Happy at being useful and available to the people in a few nice ways. By the way I forgot, I am learning the basics of life as well, cooking.

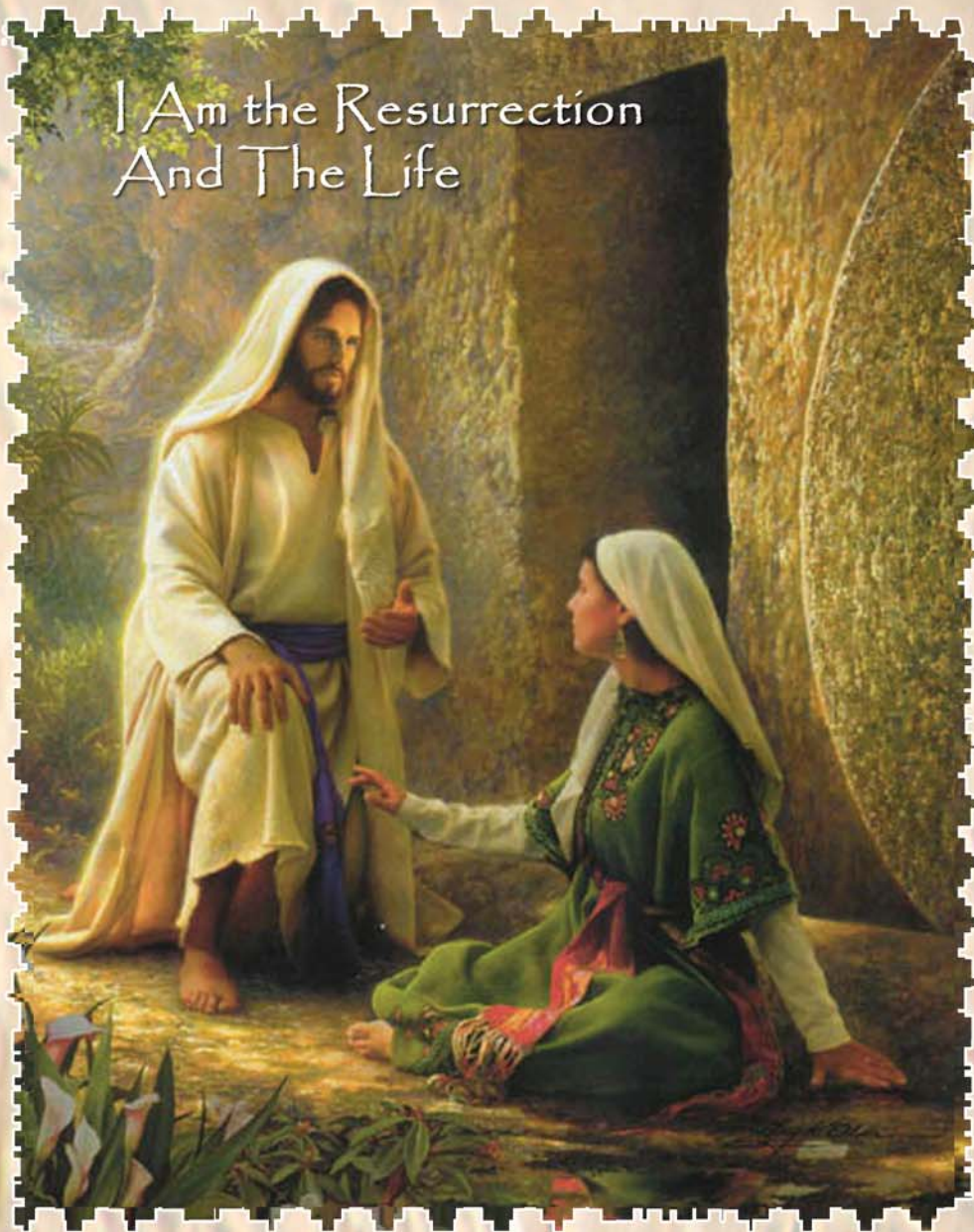
Have A Break... Have A Picnic..

The community of Upasana, Bangalore shared joyful moments as they were out for a picnic to Sravanabelgola, Bethur and Halebidu.

Vartha Photo



I Am the Resurrection
And The Life



Wish You A Happy Easter