

MSFS - MISSIONARIES OF ST.FRANCIS DE SALES
SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE



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SWIP Circular BK/27

March 25, 2018

... Journeying through the Doldrums of Life

... Sailing with Indomitable Spirit

... Trusting that You Alone can be Trusted

... Beloved Lord I Return for Eternal Rest



Rev. Fr. Thomas Illikattil MSFS

1945-2018

My dear Confreres,

At the outset of the Passion Week, as the Church reminds us intensely of the Mystery of Christ, that is, the passion, death, resurrection and Ascension of the Lord, we the missionaries of St. Francis de Sales are invited to dwell vividly on the meaning of the Mystery of Christ in our Congregational and province level. The sad demise of our beloved Confrere, Fr. Thomas Illikattil, has once again brought us up to the rear to dwell on the meaning of life. In resonance with the Word of God that our life span is only seventy years, Fr. Thomas Illikattil lived seventy-two years of his life here on earth with a sense of purpose, good will and surrender to the plan of God. Together with you, my dear Confreres, I raise him up to the Lord for His mercy and benevolence that our beloved Confrere enjoys eternal rest.

Since two years Fr. Thomas was a member of the Vinayalaya Community. He had not been enjoying very good health, although he never used to complain anything about his bad health. He had undergone a knee operation and was well recuperated. In the month of October 2017, while attending the annual retreat, he had a serious fall in the room and had to be admitted for a long time in the hospital. In the course of time many of the check ups revealed some of the serious damages to his internal organs. He was also diagnosed with slight symptoms of dementia. Fortunately through regular medical attention he regained his health at least for a while and was able to participate in all the common programs of the community. In the recent times he was diagnosed with high sugar and constant disability with his movements. As he was taken to the hospital check ups unearthed serious damages to his kidney and heart. He was immediately transferred to St. Martha's Hospital and was first admitted in the ICU with special heart care and later on to the MICU. His pulses drastically came down and his whole body was swelling and dialysis had to be done on him. I administered to him the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the hospital. During the course of last two weeks in the hospital ten times dialysis had to be done on him. During the last two days Fr. Thomas responded very minimal to the medical treatment. As a consequence 24th of March 2018, he had to be put on ventilator. In the given alarming condition his body was no more able to respond positively to the treatment and at 4.30pm he breathed his last.

Fr. Thomas Illikattil was born on 22nd July 1945 in Marika, Thodupuzha, Kerala. He joined the Mount Mary Minor Seminary in Arumanoor in 1965. Having completed his novitiate he made the first profession on the 4th of May 1970. After completing the

philosophical studies at Fatimagiri in Nilambur he joined Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee to do theology. He was ordained a priest on the 30th January in the year 1975.

Missionary Services:

1. Procurator at Vinayalaya, MSFS Study House Bengaluru 1975
2. Assistant Parish Priest at Church of the Risen Christ, Kowthal, Diocese of Ballary 1976
3. St. Ann's Church, Wadi 1980
4. Parish Priest of St. Mary's Church, Kolar 1981
5. Parish Priest of Holy Family Church, Chokkad 1986
6. Parish Priest of SFS Church, Hebbagodi 1989
7. Parish Priest of St. Francis de Sales Church, Malur 1992
8. Parish Priest of St. Joseph's Church, Sira 1992
9. Parish Ministry, U.S.A. 1994
10. Parish Priest of Holy Rosary Church, Yelahanka 2000
11. Parish Priest of Our Lady of Velankanni Church, Yelhanka New Town 2001
12. Priest in Charge of Singasandra, November 2002
13. Parish Priest of Our Lady Sorrows Parish, Mulbagal, 2004
14. Mission Director, Chennarayapatana 2006
15. Divine Retreat Center, Muringoor 2007
16. Parish Priest of Our Lady Sorrows Parish, Mulbagal, 2008
17. Priest in residence at St. Joseph's Church, Sagar 2015
18. Community Member at Vinayalaya from 2016 onwards

My dear Confreres, during the past two years of my stay with Fr. Thomas in Vinayalaya, it had been an inspiration for me to witness the simplicity with which he lived his priestly life. Never once did I hear him complain about any suffering that he underwent; instead, in the later times, he developed a child-like attitude with simple and innocent smile. Even at the last moment of his life in the hospital as soon as he recognized us he folded his hands and asked 'How are you, Father?' He resembled very well the innocence of a person whose simplicity, silent and smiling approach and courteous attitudes stand out as great Salesian virtues that shall inspire us in the times to come. Pioneering many of the missions of our province, often unnoticed and unappreciated by others, he has laid solid foundations to some of our missions in Sidlghatta, Malur, Kolar and other

centers. Fr. Thomas Illikattil reminds us today that greatness lies in simplicity and silent commitment. Let us today thank God for our beloved brother and raise him to the mercy seat of our God. May he intercede for us.

My dear Confreres, on the 25th of March 2018 at 4 pm there shall be the celebration of the Holy Eucharist in Vinayalaya in honour of Fr. Thomas. The mortal remains shall then be taken to Kerala to his home in Marika, near Vazhithala, Thodupuzha and thereafter to SFS Seminary Ettumanoor. The funeral rites will commence at 2.00 pm. Bishop Thomas Tharayil, Auxiliary Bishop of Changanacherry will preside over the funeral rites. I request all of you, my dear Confreres, to participate in the funeral rites and show respect to our beloved confrere Fr. Thomas Illikattil.

Fraternally



Fr. Benny Koottanal MSFS
Provincial

SALESIAN THOUGHT

“Let us die to ourselves and to all that depends on us. We ought to live only for God” - SFS