

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

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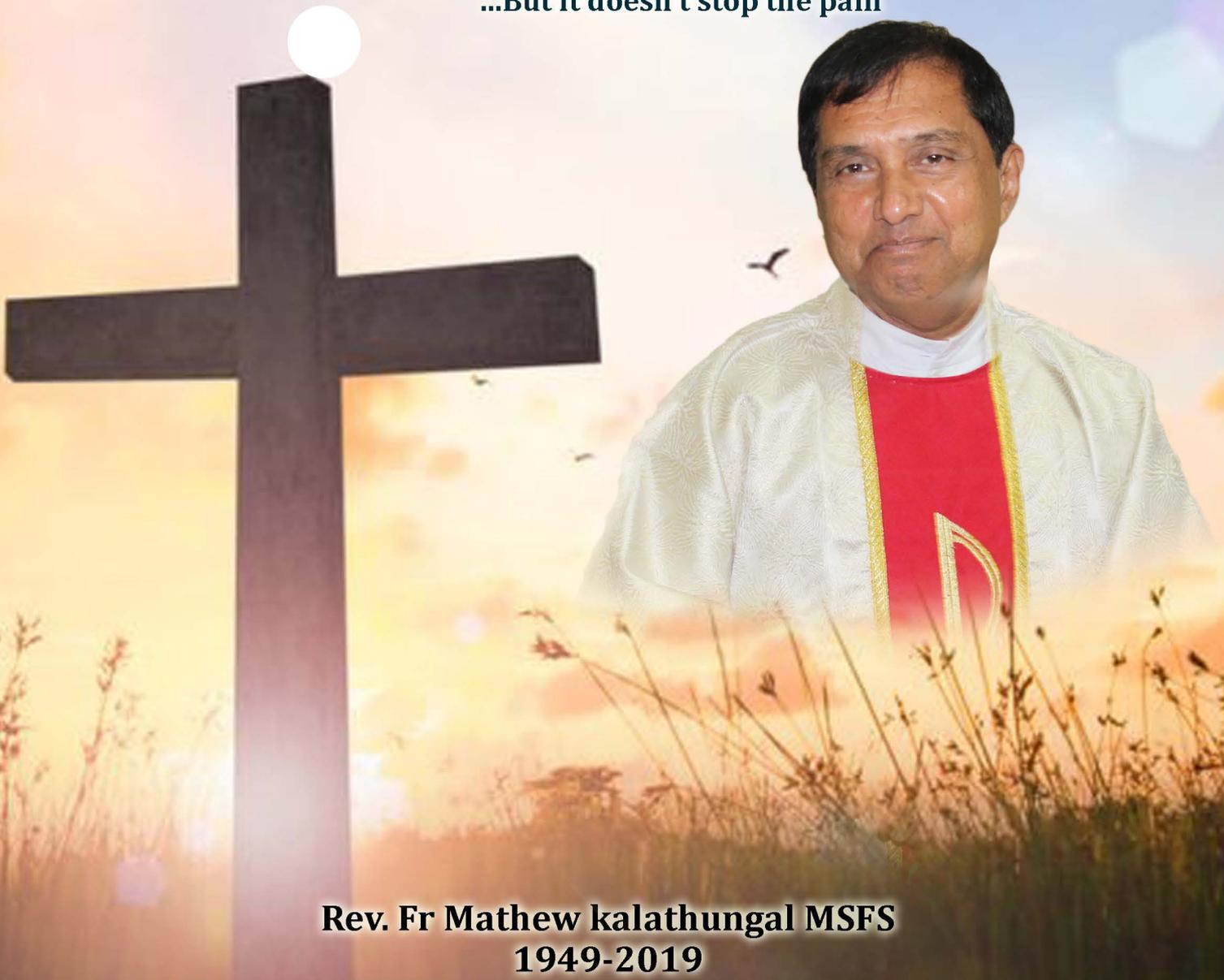
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SWIP Circular BK/51

November 23, 2019

...Oceans apart day after day
...And I slowly realise the truth
...I hear your voice on the line
...But it doesn't stop the pain



**Rev. Fr Mathew kalathungal MSFS
1949-2019**

My dear Confreres,

Words are not enough to explain the pain that heaves around the heart as we encounter death once again. **Rev. Fr Mathew Kalathungal**, our beloved Confrere, is no more! All the hopes apart, the reality of death has encountered us in a blatant manner. Still, for the valiant, death is not a defeat, but a time of realisation of the power of God and the glorious future. Fr Mathew showed me and all the Confreres who visited him during the time of his painful sickness the courage of a valiant knight who said: **I am prepared, I am ready to go.** This in fact is the last sentence he told me as I bid good bye to him to go for the Visitation to Europe. It was not easy to tell him that death is near, even to administer the sacrament of Anointing, but it was a moment of great joy to see a man **who held high his faith in God when it mattered the most.**

Fr Mathew was a very healthy man without any sign of sickness affecting him. He is someone who made sure that he held firm to his good health through manual labour, sports, academic excellence and spiritual agility. Unfortunately two and half years back he was detected with prostate cancer at the fourth stage. Even then with undying spirit he encountered all the medical treatment. He had to undergo Chemotherapy, operation, radiation and intake of very strong tablets including Morphin. Excruciating was the pain that he had to undergo. But believe me my dear Confreres, **never have any of us heard from his mouth a word of complaint or discontentment.** Each day he prepared himself for holy death. Constantly he spent time in prayer with rosary in his hand. Expressed gratitude to everyone who came to meet him and asked about their well being. It was a time of blessing for people to come to him and go back with a sense of satisfaction after meeting him. For us, the members of Vinayalaya, he was our pride and it was a privilege to take care of him. **Fr Mathew was a man of prayer, refined leader and true slave of Jesus.**

Fr Mathew Kalathungal was born on November 09, 1949 at Kadavoor, Moovattupuzha in the diocese of Kothamangalam to Chacko Kalathungal and Annamma. After Having completed his primary and Secondary school education, he joined the Seminary. He completed his minor seminary at St Joseph Mission Home, Palai and S.F.S. Seminary Ettumanoor. He completed his philosophy in MSFS Scholasticate, Fatimagiri, Nilambur from 1968 to 1971. Thereafter he entered the Novitiate at salesianam, Visakhapatnam from 1971 to 1972 and made his first profession on May 04, 1972. He did his regency at MSFS Engineering College, Ananthpur from 1972 to 1973. He completed his Theology at Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee, Madras from 1973 to 1976. He was ordained a Deacon on September 14, 1976 and was ordained a Priest on January 17, 1977.

Appointments

- Studies in Pastoral Theology and Missiology in Switzerland, 1978-83
- Studies at Edgware in England, 1985-1986
- Assistant Parish Priest at Penugonda, Eluru diocese, 1986
- Staff of Vinayalaya, 1987

- Vice Rector of MSFS Theology Study House, Vinayalaya, 1988-1993
- Acting Parish Priest of Holy Rosary Church, Yelahanka, 1991-1993
- Resident Parish Priest at Yelahanka (with additional duty of teaching at St Peter's pontifical Institute), 1993
- PSI Sevagram, Kengeri, 1994-2002
- Superior of Mermier Bhavan community and Parish Priest of SFS Church, Hebbagodi, 2002-2007
- Head of the department of Missiology at St Peter's Pontifical Institute, 2007-2015
- Superior of PSI Sevagram, Kengeri, 2007-2013
- Rector & Superior of Tejas Vidya Peetha, 2013-16
- Superior of MSFS Provincial House, Vinayalaya, 2016-19

Fr Mathew Kalathungal was a member of the Archdiocesan Council for many years. He was a Professor of Theology in St Peter's Pontifical Institute for 29 years. He was also the Head of the Department of Missiology for many years in St Peter's.

My dear Confreres, we bid good bye to a gentle man, who valued his consecration to God with a sense of surrender and valiant confidence in God. If I am asked what strikes me most through my encounter with Fr Mathew, I would say that it is **his determined commitment to God in all his sufferings**. Fr Mathew literally suffered a lot before his death. But each time he was wreathing in pain he called the name of **Jesus**. I think this quality of Fr Mathew should elevate us to new heights of our Faith especially when we encounter with difficulties of life which are beyond our reach to curb. With lots of pain in my heart I bid good bye to Fr Mathew. He taught me certain convictions of religious life through his brotherly love and advices. **He was a refined Superior of our Provincial House Community, a man of Salesian Hospitality for all who came to Vinayalaya, a man with a sense of purpose to meet Jesus in all his sufferings.**

Adieu dear Fr Mathew. Thanks for your journey with us. We certainly miss your joyful presence. Continue to pray for us...

There will be a mass at 3pm in Vinayalaya today and at 6pm in SFS Church Hebbagodi. Further details of the funeral of Fr. Mathew shall be informed to you at the earliest. Please do pray for the repose of the Soul. RIP.

SALESIAN THOUGHT

"Let us die to ourselves and to all that depends on us. We ought to live only for God."

Fraternally,



**Fr Benny Koottanal MSFS
Provincial**