



MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE

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SWIP Circular TK/24

March 2025



**Rev. Fr. Siby Manickathan, MSFS
1970-2025**

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IN MEMORIAM REV. FR. SIBY MANICKATHAN, MSFS

With heavy hearts and still struggling to absorb the totally unexpected and shocking news of the sudden passing away of our beloved confrere and friend Fr. Siby Manickathan, on your behalf, my dear Confreres, I want to pay our respectful final tribute to him. As all of you would wholeheartedly vouch for, his life, though cut short, was a beacon of faith, a testament to the power of God's grace, and a shining example of what it means to live a Fransalian missionary life, dedicated to Christ and His Church. We remember Fr. Siby's unwavering commitment to his priestly vocation, his tireless efforts in serving the needs of the community wherever he was, and the countless persons he touched with his kindness, compassion, and unwavering faith. He was a shepherd who tirelessly cared for his flock, an administrator who diligently and meticulously carried out the responsibility of a faithful steward, and a friend who offered a listening ear, a cheerful countenance, a warm heart, and a generous hand to all who sought his companionship.

Whenever we are confronted with death in all its raw power as in the case of Fr. Siby's, it is a terrible experience in our life. Our life comes to a standstill for moments, days and weeks, it becomes slower and jittery. Our thoughts no longer go forward, but backwards to the life of the departed. And that life of Fr. Siby that stands out before our eyes today saw the light of this world as the third child of M.V. Joseph and Eleswa Joseph was on January 10, 1970 at Cheranalloor East, Kerala. He completed his schooling at St. Xavier's Primary School, East Cheranalloor and High school at G.V.H.S, Koovappady, Kerala. Having completing his SSLC, Fr Siby joined SFS Seminary, Ettumanoor in the year 1985, made his First Profession on July 16, 1989 at Salesianum, Visakhapatnam, did his philosophical studies at Suvidya College, Bangalore, from 1989 to 1992, had his regency at Tenning, Nagaland, from 1992 to 1993, and completed his theological formation at St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore from 1993 to 1997. He made his Perpetual Profession on May 30, 1995, at Vinayalaya, Bengaluru and was ordained a deacon on May 30, 1996, at Vinayalaya, Bengaluru. He was ordained a priest on May 15, 1997, at Holy Family Church, Mankuzhy, East Cheranalloor.

Appointments

- 1997 – 1998 : Assistant in SFS Parish, SFS School and PSI, Malur.
- 1999 – 2001 : Socius at Sannidhi, Mysore.
- 1999 – 2001 : MA in Sociology at Mysore.
- 2001 : Language Studies at Max-Müller Bhavan, Pune.
- 2001 – 2012 : Pastoral Ministry in the Diocese of Eichstätt, Germany.
- 2013 – 2017 : Administrator of SFS Public School & Junior College, Ettumanoor.
- 2017 -2025 : Pastoral Ministry in the Diocese of Regensburg, Germany.
- 2020-2023 : Delegation Superior of GA Delegation.
- 2022-2025 : President of the Registered Society of the Congregation of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales in Germany.

Though his earthly journey that took him around the globe has now ended, his spirit lives on in the hearts of those he loved and the lives he touched. Father Siby's departure for his eternal abode should provoke in us sentiments of gratitude for the 55 years we were privileged to share

his life. We want to thank him for all that he gave us in that time. We are also called today to celebrate, truly celebrate, the culmination of a rich life, a life cut short as it may appear, but unimaginably large in virtue and in merit, a life admirably long in selfless love, indeed a successful life in its true sense. Unassuming as he was, he, with his ever cheerful and gentle presence, did indeed write lengthy and solid stories in the hearts of all of us in the language of God's love.

St. Francis de Sales has something apt to say to those of us who mourn his untimely departure: "Friendships begun in this world will be taken up again, never to be broken off." Those we love don't go away; they walk beside us everyday unseen, unheard, but always near, still loved, still missed, still very dear. Gabriel Marcel said once: to love a person means saying, you shall not die. In tune with the words of these two great men we want to tell Fr Siby today: you shall not die; for, various are the ways in which you touched our hearts that you can never die to our hearts.

As we bid adieu to Fr. Siby, we could perhaps ask: what would be his parting words? He would perhaps borrow the famous words of Canon Henry Scott-Holland uttered in 1910 while the body of King Edward VII lay in state at Westminster Abbey: ***"Death is nothing at all. It does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room. Everything remains exactly as it was. I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by the old familiar name. Speak of me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into your tone. Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me."*** In unison, let's us all, my dear Confreres, pray to our God Almighty to grant His servant and priest, Fr. Siby Manickathan, the grace to rejoice forever in the vision of the mysteries which he faithfully ministered here on earth.

VOICE OF SFS



"Pray to God and cast yourself into His arms. O my God, take me into Thy care on that terrible day; may all other days be sad if only that single day will be a happy one!"

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Kalariparambil'.

**Fr Thomas Kalariparambil, MSFS
Provincial Superior**