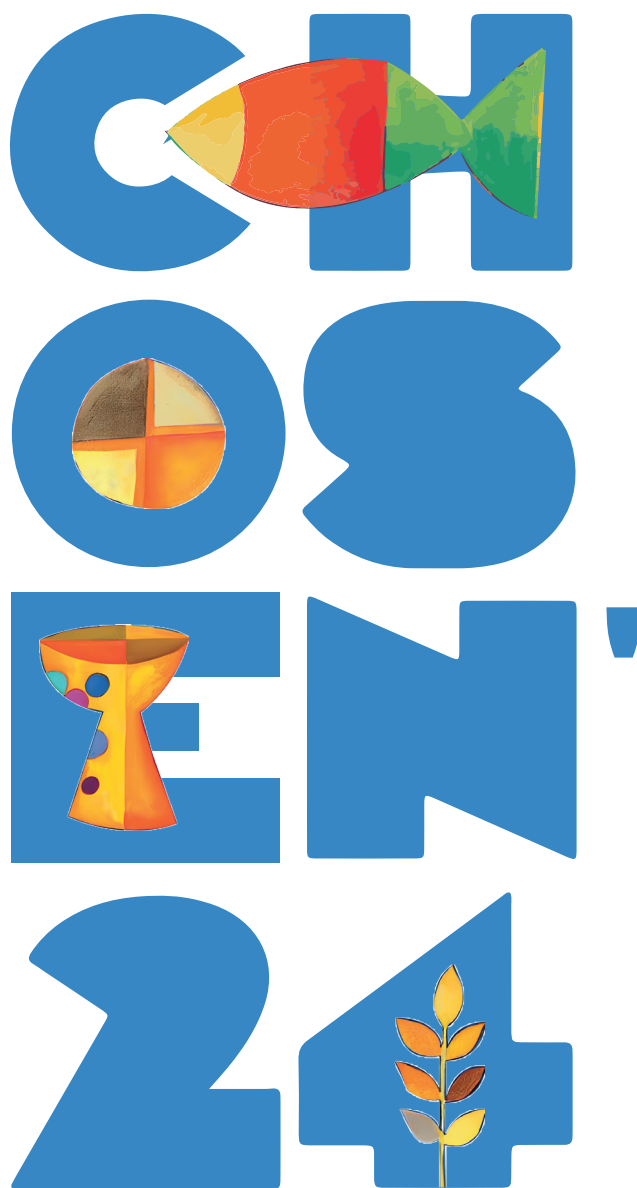


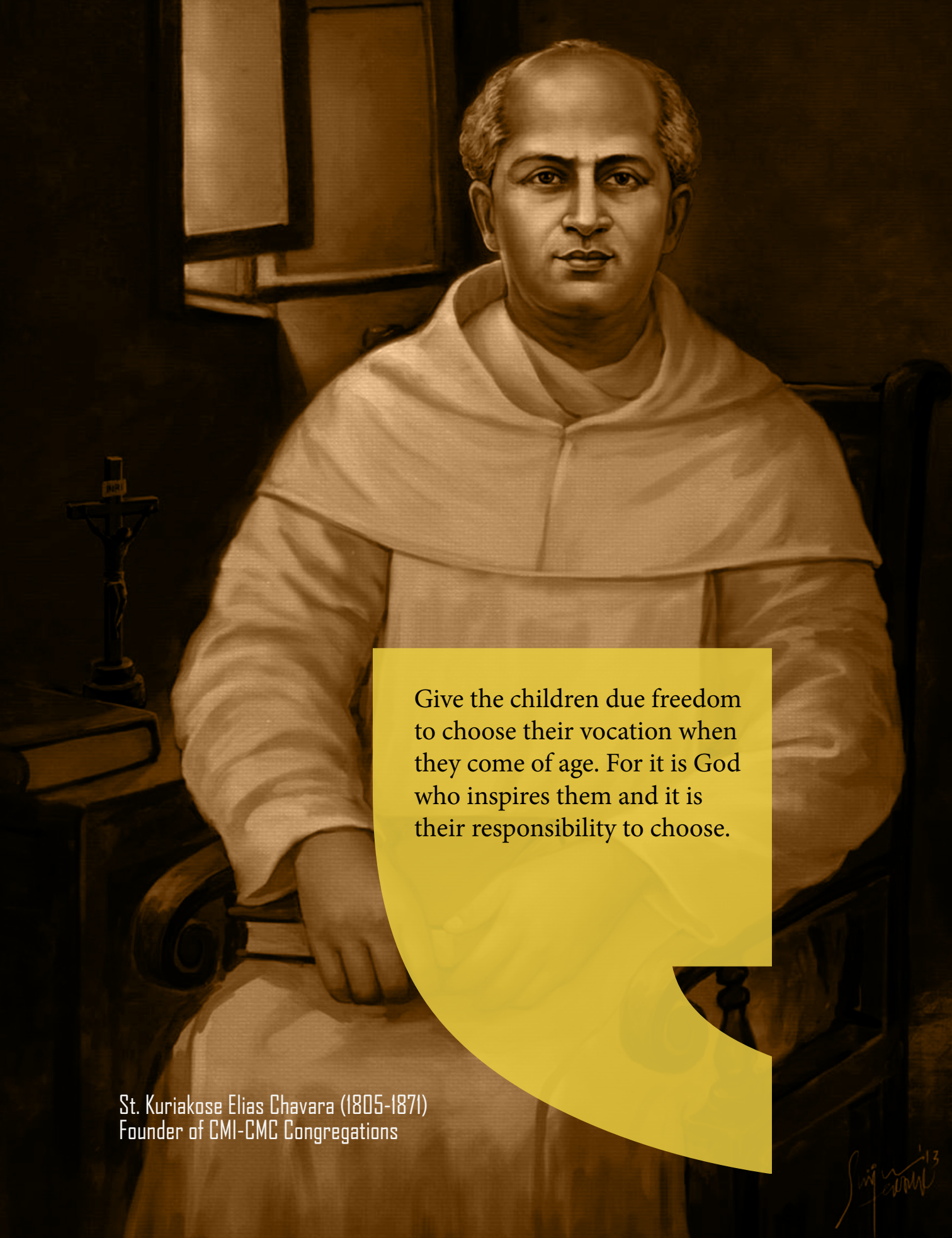
MISSION²⁴

MAGAZINE

AUG - DEC



Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation. Mk 16: 15

A sepia-toned portrait of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, a man with a high forehead and receding hair, wearing a white clerical habit. He is seated in a dark wooden chair, looking directly at the viewer with a calm expression. To his left, a small crucifix is visible on a table. A large, semi-transparent yellow speech bubble is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image, containing a quote. The background is dark and indistinct.

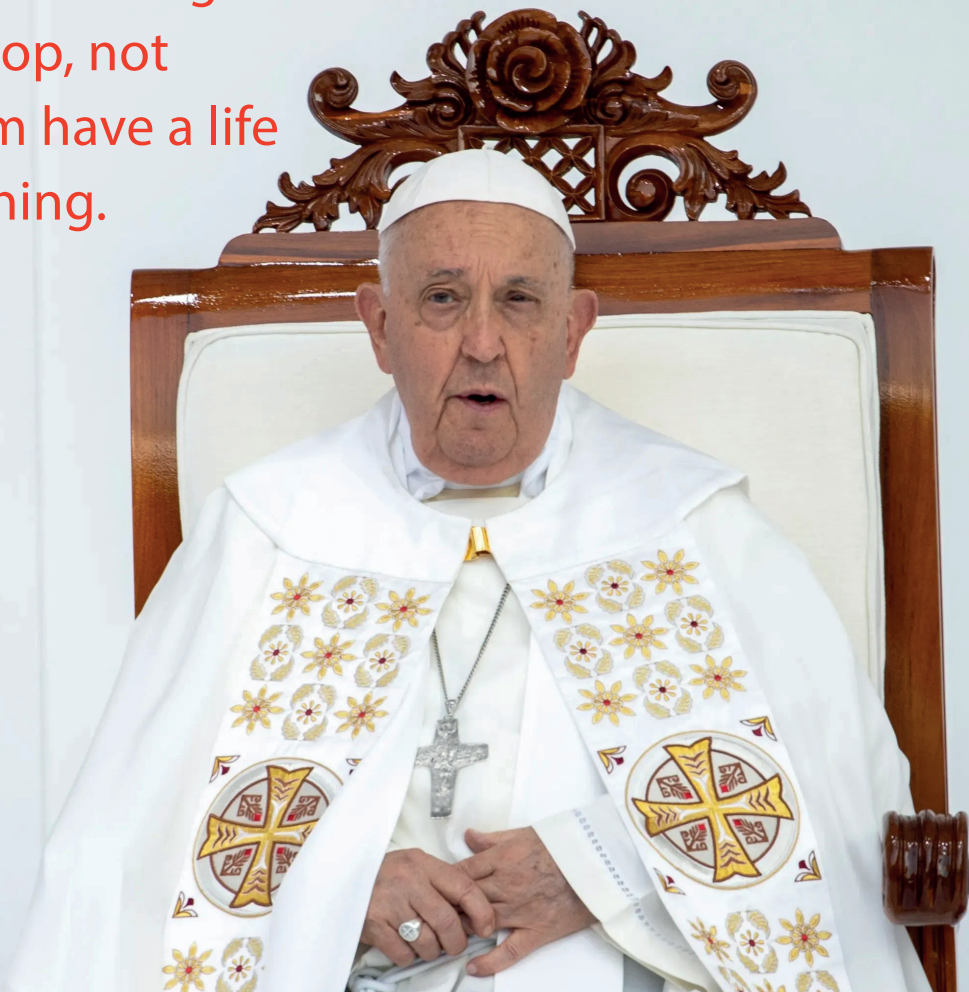
Give the children due freedom
to choose their vocation when
they come of age. For it is God
who inspires them and it is
their responsibility to choose.

St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara (1805-1871)
Founder of CMI-CMC Congregations

Signature '13



Forcing
a child from
the mother's womb
is an assassination
because there is life
there. Expelling
migrants, not letting
them develop, not
letting them have a life
is an ugly thing.



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Featuring CMI Missions

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Mission of God is ever moving, transforming and converting the hearts of many. It is an opportune time to think about our mission dynamically and creatively for the kingdom of God and His works. CMission is a publication from the Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry engaging in transmitting the views and the visions of CMI missions across the globe.

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Visiting Five Missionaries of Preshitha Province in Canada, United States of America, and Brazil



E d i t o r i a l

Josey Thamarassery CMI

Vicar General, Chief Editor

With a bit of delay CMISSION '24 reaches to your hands with a lot of enriching experiences, relevant articles and information and briefing from the mission context as we are preparing ourselves for the great feast of Christmas. The unfathomable love, forgiveness, peace and unity which are the messages being radiated during this season may fill in our hearts and lives. We apologize for the delay in bringing out the issue at the stipulated time due to technical reasons. Now this issue reaches the readers at a time when the CMI Congregation is gearing up for its Bicentennial (2031). As part of the preparation for this great event, the Congregation is observing this year as the "CMI Year of Family, Youth and Children." The focus of this year is to recapture the great legacy of the CMI Congregation inherited from the founding fathers and especially St Kuriakose Elias Chavara who composed the masterwork on Family "Nalla Appante Chavarul" (The Testament of a Loving Father). Therefore, the main feature of the current issue of CMISSION is concentrating on this theme.

In its section **Encounter**, we deal with very informative, illuminating articles by Fr Roy Palatty and Sr Jolly CHF on Building Joyful Families and "From Me Time to We Time" (Ways to Enduring the Family Bonds). Both articles try to address current trends in family life and propose very creative and practical ways to foster family life as a spiritual entity. They substantiate the view of St Chavara expressed in his Nalla Appante Chavarul that the bond existing in the family of blood and affection is promoted and nurtured through respect and devotion walking peacefully before God and people. This section also has a mission narrative of the visit undertaken by Rev Fr Saju Chackalackal through different missions of the Congregation like Brazil, Canada and America.

The section **Experience** focuses on the mega event that happened in Bangalore in the context of the CMI Year of Family, Youth and Children, named "CHOSEN '24. It was a Youth Meet organised for the selected youth representatives from all the 15 provinces of CMI Congregation. The committed and spiritually ignited youth came together undertaking a spiritual journey for three days celebrating their faith and reflecting deeply on their vocation to radiate the joy of the Gospel rooted in the rich legacy of St Kuriakose Elias Chavara. These days provided them with the insights and motivation to take ownership of their mission and to become active in the evangelizing mission of the Church.

The section **Evangelize** included a beautiful mission meditation by Fr Paulson who is pondering over the healing power of the Eucharistic presence of the Lord who invites us to remain united with him and bear much fruit. The meditation is an invitation to find joy and peace in remaining in the presence of the Lord. The article on Mardum – a mission village- exposes the challenges that the poor village people face from anti-Christian elements for accepting faith. The mission news and information appearing in this current issue of CMISSION with all the colourful photos make the magazine more colourful and attractive and thus provide sufficient materials for the readers to get enriched by various perspectives on a mission of the Church and the involvement of CMI Congregation. Once again let me wish all the readers of CMISSION a most blessed Christmas illuminating our hearts and minds with the "Hope that does not disappoint us" (Rom 5:5) so that we can be pilgrims of hope in Jubilee year 2025.



M e s s a g e

Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General

This issue of CMISSION comes at a time when the CMI Congregation is observing the year of Family, Youth and Children as part of the preparation for the Bicentennial of the Congregation. The solemn inauguration of this year at Mannanam on 11th May 2024 with the participation of the family members of the CMI members and the youth meet at Bangalore with the name “Chosen ‘24” are significant events that mark this year in a special way. Pastoral care of Family is a legacy and charism that CMI Congregation has received from its founding fathers and the forefathers. The best example is the composition of “Testament of a Loving Father” (Nalla Appante Chavarul) by St Chavara which can be considered as the best catholic vision and teaching on the family. It shows how close was the reality of the family, and the formation of youth and children remained very close to the heart of St Chavara and the Mannanam movement. Very much pastorally inspired, this writing gives vivid instructions on marriage, upbringing of children, and things needed for a healthy social and economic life of the families. The vision St Chavara tries to give in this teaching is based on the biblical vision that a good Christian family is the image of heaven on earth and a place of salvation on earth.

His teaching on family makes it very clear that family life does not consist merely living together under the same roof but transcending all the differences and inflexibilities between the family members through a bond of love.

The pastoral care of family, based on the teaching of St Chavara, is a very much relevant and important as we find a deterioration in the life of family at the spiritual, emotional and physical levels today. This awareness is reflected very much in the recent Church document *Amoris Laetitia* (AL) which highlights some of the challenges of family today like: individualism, wrong notions of freedom, weakening of faith, separation and divorce etc. However, this document reminds us that in spite of all these challenges “families are not a problem, they are first and foremost an opportunity” (AL 7).

Therefore, my wish and prayer this year of Family is that we rededicate our commitment to work for equipping the family member, youth and children to face the challenges of the modern world realizing the vision of making family a heaven on earth. Let the words of Pope Francis be an inspiration for us who said we are called “...to be protagonists and not spectators of the future.”



"The Church's mission is not optional. It is essential to her very nature."

Late Pope Benedict XVI

Let's face God in context and text



Encounter



Building Joyful Families



Roy Varghese Palatty CMI

Spirituality of Modern Families

“Where the family goes so goes our society and the world” (St. John Paul II). The family is the basic unit and foundation of society, so the state of families directly impacts society as a whole. The constitution of family is currently facing significant challenges from aggressive secularism, a technocratic culture, convenience-based marriages, and above all, a lack of mutual trust and love. In present times, we often encounter dysfunctional families are multiplying, highlighting the urgent need for proper spiritual and emotional guidance to steer families in the right direction. How can we create joyful families? A family that is sad is a family that is not thriving. The spirit of joy is the hallmark of our Christian living and witnessing. Joy is a key attribute of a genuine Christian household. Happiness and joy are not necessarily the same; happiness comes from accomplishments, while joy is experienced in relation to the other. Joy is a state of overall contentment in life. Within the family dynamic, joy is the gift that life gives you as you give away your own gifts to others. There are three important ways through which you can cultivate joy in your family and relationships: first each member must learn each other's love language and apology language; second, make your family a place of confession rather than a court-room; and third, transform your house into a home, by integrating Godly values, prioritizing family time, and promoting mutual self-giving among all family members.

Learn Each Other's Love Language

Love is the foundational principle of family life. Most parents love their children sincerely, but many of them do not know how to express their love. As St. Therese of Lisieux said, “Love must be proved.” How do you express your love? In our generation, most children are growing up emotionally empty and spiritually bankrupt due to their social environment and excessive attachment to social media cultures.

Kevin was born in India and raised in the US with two siblings. His parents, devout Catholics, work tirelessly to provide a bright future for Kevin. However, when Kevin turned fourteen, he started excessive drinking and engaging in bad relationships which adversely affected his studies and behavior. He did not like being micromanaged by his parents and wanted to get away from home. Despite their prayers and efforts to seek counseling, Kevin felt misunderstood and unloved by his parents. The parents had migrated to the US to make a great future for Kevin and his siblings, but Kevin felt unloved and understand.

Kevin once told me, “I never felt loved by my parents. I first got involved in drinking because I wanted my friends to like me.” He wanted to justify himself and blame his parents. Kevin's parents, like others, love their children and want them to feel loved, but they don't know how to adequately convey this feeling. It is only when they learn how to love that they can let their children know how much they are truly loved. Kevin's parents failed to communicate love in a way that he understands.

Raising emotionally healthy children is increasingly difficult task, so parents need to learn the love languages of children. In their popular book, “The Five Love Languages,” Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell discuss five important love languages: physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, sharing gifts, and

acts of service. Each child expresses and wants to receive love uniquely. Don't assume that they are just like you and have the same needs. While physical needs are easier to recognize and fulfill, emotional and spiritual needs require time and reflection. Kevin had an emotionally empty tank as his parents were not ready to spend quality time with him the way he needed. Once they identified this, they prioritized spending quality time with their children over their jobs.

They have now gotten their joy back. The same principle applies to spousal relationships. Husbands must learn their wives' primary love language to effectively communicate love. Many people start each day with the mistakes of yesterday. Intimacy between spouses is impossible without words of affirmation and encouragement. Love is not our only emotional need. It has been observed that among our basic needs are the need for security, self-worth, and significance. Love, however, interacts with all of these. In the context of marriage and family, if people do not feel loved, the differences are magnified and relationships weaken. This does not mean spouses must agree on everything. But in a meaningful relationship they find ways to handle the differences so that differences do not alienate.

Make Your Family a Confessional rather than a Courtroom

A senior Judge of the Supreme Court in the US recently congratulated a bride and groom on their marriage with a pertinent piece of advice: “See that you never turn your family into a courtroom; instead let it be a confessional. If the husband and wife begin arguing like attorneys in an attempt to justify their behavior, their family becomes a court of law where nobody wins. On the other hand, if the husband and wife, as in a confessional, are willing to

admit their faults and work to correct them, the family becomes a heavenly one.” We can avoid the pitfalls seen in dysfunctional families. Ecclesiastes 7: 29 states: “God made us plain and simple, but we have made ourselves complicated.” This is so true. Some people, for instance, are chronic complainers. They find reasons to complain about anything and everything. Instead if they were to count their blessings each day, they would likely find fewer things to complain about. Rather, they would be thanking God and others for the blessings they have.

To my knowledge, families resembling a courtroom dynamic are more common among professionals than agricultural villagers. Manju is a medical doctor and Roy is a software engineer in Bengaluru. They got married about four years ago and still working on starting a family. Not a day goes by their household without some arguments about each other's responsibilities and lack of understanding. Although they are both independent individuals, they are living with high levels of stress and anxiety. Love should make requests, not demands. This requires humility of heart and understanding. When Roy demands things from Manju, she feels belittled, leading to arguments between them. They regret their battles every day, but they fail to understand each other's apology language. To cultivate genuine love between spouses, they must learn how to express regret, accepting responsibility, and ask forgiveness. The Holy Family of Nazareth was a model family not because they were free from problems like confusion, doubt, poverty, wanderings, pain, and sorrow, but because they never asked the foolish question of who was the greatest among them. When you ask such questions within your family, you lose the beauty of life and the good surprises the future has in store for you to enjoy. The members of the Holy Family helped each other. To develop an intimate relationship, one needs to know other person's desires. The lovely partnership of building a joyful family should never be

sacrificed on the altar of egoism and selfishness. Manju and Roy realized their mistakes, confessed to each other, and began building an authentic family. True that love doesn't erase the past, but it does make the future different.


Make Your House a Home

In his popular book, “Family and Civilization,” Harvard Professor Carle Zimmerman discusses three types of families: Trustee families, Domestic families, and Atomistic families. In trustee families, marriage is seen as a covenantal or divine act emphasizing unity and indissolubility. The father acts as a priestly figure, and children are viewed a blessings. These families have a strong support network of relatives and friends.

In domestic families, marriage is more of a contract-based relationship. The father takes on the role of a CEO, and children are seen as economic agents. While some sacredness is attributed to marriage, it is viewed as a civil matter that can be formed and dissolved. Relationships are limited to a small circle. Atomistic families are formed out of convenience-based marriages where children are seen as burdens. Parents have little control over their children, and the family maintains micro-relationships. In these families, marriage is a private secular agreement, and divorce is considered an easy solution to problems. The dysfunctional family systems seen today are a result of the atomistic families in which we live. I believe that atomistic families are found in houses, not in homes. In order to turn houses into homes, we need a few essential elements that are seriously lacking in atomistic families.

First and foremost, we must value the institution of marriage and family. You cannot truly live for something that you do not value. Marriage is a sacred covenant or sacrament, and an institution ordained by God where two people are united before God and his people. They recognize that marriage is not ultimately about them, but is about God about serving God's





“Love is willing the good of the other” (St. Thomas Aquinas). Life finds more meaning and purpose as one extends the boundaries of one’s interest.

Fourthly, in home, you prioritize God and His values. Divine grace is very important for joyful and thriving families. As we see in the story of the wedding in Cana, even if we have planned, certain things may go wrong. At Cana the family had invited important guests like Jesus, Mary, and others. They had arranged for sufficient food and drink, but at some point, the wine ran out. Family life is similar in that regard. Despite all your efforts and planning, things often go wrong. In those moments, you need to be able to call on the help of God.


Encounter and Witnessing

As St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara puts it, “a good Christian family is the image of heaven, where members live together by the bond of blood and affection, duly respecting and obeying the parents, walking peacefully before God and people, seeking eternal salvation according to each one’s proper state of life”

Parents have a responsibility to (Testament, Introduction) share the joy and beauty of Christian life with their children. The present generation seeks a personal encounter with Christ. Many don’t want to follow the customs of their parents just for the sake of it. They are looking for meaning and purpose. To help them understand, it is vital to facilitate their experience of the living God. You cannot share what you don’t have. Spiritual life is not a boring business; it is a joyful activity. Remember what St. Augustine said about the joy of spiritual life: “Love God and do whatever you want; for the soul trained to love God will do nothing to offend the One who is beloved.” Love makes everything beautiful because love never fails. So, too, does the spirit of joy. purposes. This is a vocation, a sacred calling. This basic understanding is distorted by the popular secular culture of today.

Secondly, it is important to prioritize quality time together. Make a dens and joys. Engage in activities that promote bonding and creating

conscious effort to spend quality time as a family, sharing both bur-memories. When the older genera-tion shares their stories the younger ones gain a wealth of experiences of history and tradition that are invaluable for their future. When family members come together with a shared purpose, they find reasons for joy. A family that listens to each other will never break. As Leo Tolstoy once said, “All happy families are alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” There are common elements in happy families and lives, such as sharing meals, praying together, spending time with one’s spouse, and listening to each other. In a technocratic culture, we are getting more and more isolated with the internet and social media. Thirdly, in a home environment each one views their life not as revolving just around themselves but including their loved ones. Many things and persons involved to make our life beautiful. In a home you have someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for because you live just not for yourself, but for others also.



Marriage is a sacred covenant or sacrament, and an institution ordained by God where two people are united before God and his people.



From “Me Time” to “We Time”

Be the Architect of Enduring Family Bonds



**Jolly Vasupurathukaran CHF
Delhi**

Our world pulsates with “Me Time.” It refers to dedicated time for oneself, focusing on personal needs and interests. It’s a time to unwind, recharge, and engage in activities one enjoys outside of work, family obligations, or other responsibilities. It prioritizes one’s own well-being. It’s a chance to relax, de-stress, and do things that bring one joy or fulfilment. However, while “me time” is essential for one’s well-being, there can be downsides if it becomes excessive or unbalanced, very specially neglecting quality time with loved ones in the context of marriage and family. Families find it difficult to carve out meaningful “We Time” due to busy schedules, demanding occupations, and personal interests. Relationships are strained and many feelings are left isolated as a result of this alienation, which penetrates deeper into families’ emotional cores than just the pragmatics of day-to-day existence. As a result, this disconnection isn’t just a matter of convenience; it erodes the very foundation of society – strong family bonds. In other words, “Me Time” culture, while promoting individual needs, can inadvertently erode family

the constant pull of individual pursuits weakens communication and connection. This disconnection can extend to faith, leaving families unsure how to integrate religious values into their daily lives. It raises the question: how can one bridge the gap between “Me Time” and “We Time” and how family ministry be the architect, transforming “Me Time” into opportunities for connection and building enduring family bonds.

The Importance of Family Connections Strong families are the building blocks of a healthy society. When families are connected, they offer each other love, support, and a sense of belonging. This foundation fosters resilience, allows individuals to thrive, and provides a space to navigate life challenges. However, strained relationships within families can create feelings of loneliness, resentment and hinder the development of healthy coping mechanisms. This disconnection extends beyond the practicalities of daily life, leaving families of feeling isolated and unsure how to nurture their faith together. Imagine a majestic oak tree, its roots entwined, offering support and sustenance. Solid family ties resemble these roots. They provide a feeling of

community, unwavering support, and a common past that moulds their identities. This foundation provides a fertile ground for faith to flourish. Shared values, traditions, and religious practices passed down through generations become the guiding light as families navigate life’s challenges. Connected families also offer a safety net. When faced with adversity, individuals can draw strength and comfort from the love and support of their family, promoting resilience and overall wellbeing. Children raised in loving, supportive environments experience better emotional control, stronger social skills and a greater sense of self-esteem.

Shared experiences, creative positive memories, laughter and a sense of togetherness are needed to strengthen the families. Shared experiences that build happy memories, laughter, and a sense of unity that fortifies the family are provided by meaningful “We Time.” Along with exploring principles of forgiveness, compassion, and service, it also connects with a variety of religious traditions and helps families feel like they have a common goal. Furthermore, it establishes a legacy that will persist across generations.

However, maintaining these relationships can be difficult in the fast-paced world of today, when “Me Time” frequently takes precedence. Families have little time to spend together due to hectic schedules, never-ending activity, and the attraction of separate interests. The increasing prevalence of smartphones and tablets has led to a concerning trend of children becoming overly reliant on mobile devices and electronic gadgets. Children deeply immersed in the

digital world often face significant difficulties when encouraged to spend more time in their own individual space. This addiction can have significant negative impacts on their physical, mental, and social development. Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted approach involving parents, schools, and the tech industry.

Bridging the “Me Time” Gap
Making the shift from “Me Time” to “We Time” entails planning special occasions and customs that strengthen family ties over time. It might be difficult for families to retain a solid religious basis in the fast-paced world of today. Parents may find it difficult to find the time and resources to support their children’s spiritual development while balancing employment and other responsibilities. Family ministry can help in this situation by offering essential guidance and encouragement. Programs for the holiness and wholeness of families offer a welcoming space for families to learn and grow together. Through engaging activities, interactive discussions, and shared experiences, families explore their faith, build connections with other like-minded families, and create lasting memories. This strengthens families’ sense of shared traditions and values, enabling them to face life’s obstacles using their faith as a compass. Family ministry is still very important, even in this hectic world. It creates a space for spiritual development among family members and deepens ties to one another. The following are some methods to become the architect of these connections:

Create New Traditions: Help people to create regular family activities such as weekly game nights, Sunday brunches, or evening walks that the whole family looks forward to. These activities provide a predictable framework for bonding.

Share Responsibilities: Involve each family member in shared responsibilities, whether it’s cooking meals together, gardening, or organizing family outings. This fosters a sense of teamwork and togetherness.

Open Communication: Create an environment where everyone feels safe expressing themselves. Encourage open discussions about feelings, ideas, and even conflicts, promoting understanding and empathy among family members.

Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge and celebrate each other’s accomplishments, both big and small. This cultivates a supportive atmosphere and strengthens family unity.

Disconnect to Connect: Emphasize the need to dedicate specific times to disconnect from screens and technology and to use this time for face-to-face interactions, storytelling, or engaging in hobbies together.

Explore New Experiences: Try new activities or hobbies as a family. This could be anything from learning a new sport to exploring nature trails or trying out a new recipe together.

Generate Memories: Be intentional about creating lasting memories. It may involve in taking photos, keeping a family journal, or creating scrapbooks that capture significant moments and experiences.

Respect Individuality: While fostering “We Time,” also respect each family member’s individual interests and needs. Balance collective activities with oppor-

tunities for personal growth and reflection.

Adapt and Evolve: Recognize that family dynamics change over time. Be flexible and willing to adapt your rituals and activities to accommodate everyone’s evolving schedules and interests.

Lead by Example: As custodians of families explore the value of family time through our own actions. Show enthusiasm, patience, and a genuine interest in spending quality time together with the families through family apostolate.

Strong family bonds are not a luxury; they are the cornerstone of a thriving society. Family ministry is the architect, providing the space and resources for families to connect, communicate, and build enduring bonds. We secure a future where love, support, and a solid foundation in faith are passed down through generations by creating a nurturing environment where faith and family grow together. It can also explore themes of compassion, forgiveness, and service, aligning with many faith traditions and fostering a sense of shared purpose within the family. Let’s answer the call to be architects of enduring family bonds, shaping a brighter future, one family at a time. To put it briefly, family ministers are essential in sowing the seeds of religion that will influence next generations. A vibrant church community is based upon the basis of solid, faith-centered families, which family ministry fosters. Let’s keep planting these seeds by providing creative programming, making good use of technology, and creating an environment that is kind and inclusive to all families. By working together, we can make sure that our church community has a bright future where families prosper and faith grows.



We Having seen
the positive trans-
formation in the
parishes managed
by CMI mission-
aries, there are
standing invitations
from other dioceses
in Brazil.

FACE TO FACE

WITH PRESBITHERS IN THE AMERICAS

Visiting Five Missionaries of Presbitha Province in Canada, United States of America, and Brazil

Saju Chackalakkal CMI
Coimbatore



Setting Out on a Mission

As I am set to board my return flight from Brazil to Coimbatore, after my visits to Preshitha's missionaries in Canada, United States, and Brazil, I am overwhelmed by joy and gratitude to all those who made my trips comfortable and fruitful, especially the inscrutable Divine Providence. It was a journey that was almost five weeks long, covering parts of both North and South Americas, with frequent changes of the time zones and weather conditions, it was not easy to remain hale and hearty all through these journeys: but the Lord was exceptionally gracious and Preshithites and other CMIs I met these days were generous beyond expectations.

Canadian Mission

My first destination was Canada, where three of our missionaries - Fathers Paulson Kannanaikal, Xaviour Mulakkampilli, and Biju Antony Vadakkumchery - are engaged in mission in two different dioceses, namely, the Diocese of Saint Paul and the Diocese of Nelson, located in the Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, respectively. I was received by Fr. Xaviour Mulakkampilli and Fr. Biju Vadakkumchery at Kelowna airport, which is situated in British Columbia in Canada. This province is unique for its mountainous regions as well as extensive lakes, both of which are beautiful and inviting.

After a night at a parish rectory in Kelowna city, where I was received by Fr. Sebastian Puthenpurackal (Vicar General of the Diocese of Nelson) and Fr. Paul John (Parish Priest). I was also happy that on the next day, we could meet with His Excellency Gregory Bittman, Bishop of Nelson, who expressed his gratitude to the CMI Congregation and Preshitha Province for providing committed priests for pastoral services in his diocese. He informed me that considering the dedication and capabilities of our priests, both of them will be transferred to new parishes with new but additional responsibilities. Bishop has promised to plan for a visit to

India in near future. The same day, I had the opportunity to meet with Fr. Cerlouie Jimenez, Chancellor of the Diocese of Nelson and the former mentor of Fr. Biju, who recalled that Fr. Cerlouie accompanied him with care and compassion during the initial months of his stay and ministry in Canada.

Kootenay Days with Fr. Xaviour
My first stop was at the parish of Fr. Xaviour Mulakkampilli, namely, at Saint Rita's Parish, Fruitvale. He also manages two more parishes such as Sacred Heart Parish, Rossland, and Sacred Heart Mission, Salmo. Fr. Xaviour is well accepted in these parishes and his services are well recognised. Apart from the usual celebration of the Holy Mass, Fr. Xaviour has initiated periodic Eucharistic Adoration in all parishes. Apart from visiting the neighbouring churches and communities, he took me around British Columbia, especially to give me a feel of the imposing mountains (some of which are still covered with snow, although it is already summer season in Canada) and large lakes, some of which are spread over more than one hundred kilometres in length.

As I interacted with the faithful of different parishes, all them echoed their joy in having Fr. Xaviour as their own priest and the care that he takes in reaching out to them and fulfilling their pastoral needs. Considering the excellence with which Fr. Xaviour offers his ministry and his exceptional record of having administered educational institutions, Fr. Xaviour will be transferred to a new parish in Trail, which is the neighbouring parish of his present assignment. He is expected to assume this new responsibility in the month of August, that is, as soon as he returns from his home visit.

'Fruit-full' Land of Fr. Biju

After my extensive tour in the Kootenay region of Fr. Xaviour's mission, my next stop was with Fr. Biju Antony Vadakkumchery, who is appointed the Associate Pastor at Saint Edward Parish, Lake Country, Winfield (only four kilometres from Kelowna airport). His Pastor

and current mentor, Fr. Sylvester Obi Ibekwe (Pastor at Saint Pious X Church, Gordon), organised two meetings with the parishioners in which I had the opportunity to speak about Indian Catholic Church, the CMI Congregation, and the missions we have undertaken in different parts of the world. Apart from assisting his mentor and Pastor at another parish, Fr. Biju has the additional responsibilities of youth animation in the parish and of offering pastoral care to the Syro-Malabar Catholics of Kelowna for whom he celebrates Holy Qurbana on Sundays. Being placed at a semi-city parish context and being the youngest priest in the Diocese of Nelson, Fr. Biju is loved and cared by his parishioners. As Fr. Biju has to shuttle between his parish and that of his Pastor, Fr. Biju keeps himself busy; as he has just completed one year in Canada, he has become more conversant with the Canadian culture and people; he is well accepted in the parish communities and he makes himself available to the people as much as possible. With the responsibility for the Syro-Malabar faithful, his pastoral field is quite extensive. The locality of Fr. Biju's parish is hilly, but has quite extensive fruit gardens that grow, for example apples, pears, peaches, etc. At least a few of such gardens are said to be owned by Sikhs from India. There are also extensive vineyards and a number of famous wineries. Fr. Biju organised visits to such interesting places.

A better experienced Associate Pastor, Fr. Biju is asked by the Bishop to assume independent charge as a Pastor of three parishes, which is not far from the region of Fr. Xaviour Mulakkampilli's pastoral assignment. However, with three communities, that too with independent charge, Fr. Biju's assignment will be more demanding as well as promising. As driving through this mountainous region, especially during winter season, both Fr. Xaviour and Fr. Biju will find their mission more challenging and adventurous.

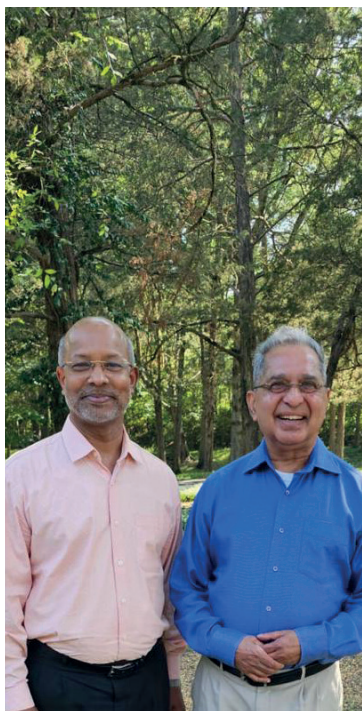
Through the Plains of Alberta with Fr. Paulson

Having experienced the imposing snow-clad mountains and ever-inviting lakes of British Columbia, on 7 June 2024, I moved to my next destination in the Diocese of Saint Paul in Alberta Province, where Fr. Paulson Kannanaikal has been working for last sixteen years. As soon as I arrived at Edmonton airport, Fr. Paulson took me to the Bishop's House of the Diocese of Saint Paul, where we had dinner with Gary Anthony Franken, Bishop of Saint Paul; this gave an opportunity to know from the bishop himself the appreciation for the presence of and contributions made by Fr. Paulson to the Diocese of Saint Paul during his sixteen years of pastoral engagement in the Diocese. As there are more CMIs working in the diocese, the bishop expressed his gratitude for the excellent contributions made by the CMI confreres in his diocese.

Later, we proceeded to the Renewal Centre of the Diocese cum CMI Carmel Monastery at St. Edouard, where the first CMI community was established with two members from Carmel Province, Muvattupuzha. Fr. Jose Thaliparambil and Fr. Jerish Arackal administer this renewal centre for the Diocese; they also assist in the neighbouring parishes for sacramental administration. Having stayed overnight at the CMI Monastery, and having visited Fr. Croteau (a senior priest in the diocese) at Smoky Lake, together with Fr. Paulson, I concelebrated a Holy Mass in the morning at Roseville, Boyle and another Holy Mass at St. Gabriel's, Athabasca, where Fr. Paulson is the Pastor and has his rectory. In the next couple of days, I accompanied Fr. Paulson for administering various sacraments, house blessings, etc., at Athabasca Parish Church and other communities entrusted to his pastoral care. Apart from visiting lakes and farms in and around Athabasca, Fr. Paulson had arranged a dinner with the members of his Parish Council; together with the delicious dinner I had the opportunity to share with them about our CMI fraternity and our pastoral engagements in differ-

ent parts of the world. This meeting also gave me an opportunity to see the closely knit relationship and cordiality among the Parish Council members (with more than a dozen of them). I also joined Fr. Paulson in his reaching out to care homes where elderly people are cared for: Holy Masses were celebrated at Extendicare and Pleasant Valley Lodge, Athabasca.

Later, after visiting the former parish church of Fr. Sebastian Chittilappilly, who had served the Diocese of Saint Paul for over four years, and spending some time with Mr. George Areekadan's family



(relation of Fr. George Hadrian Ambookan and Fr. Sebastian Parayil), we had a get-together with CMI confreres working in the Diocese of Edmonton together with a few other Indian priests at the rectory of Fr. Mathew Kunnel from Jagdalpur Province at Leduc, Edmonton. After the night's rest at Leduc, as my mission was completed in Canada, I headed to the Edmonton airport to take my flight to Nashville, USA.

In the Land of Liberty with Pastor George Mariadoss

At Nashville airport, though certainly not a surprise, I was pleasantly taken up by the presence of Fr. Thomas Kalam, my first registrar at DVK, while I was a student, and a longtime benefactor and friend, to receive me and to drive me to the rectory of Fr. Titus, whose parish was just ten minutes drive from Nashville airport. But, then, at the rectory there was a great surprise for me as a number of CMI confreres, including a few of my former students, and other priests working in the Diocese of Nashville had assembled to welcome me to the US and to have dinner together. Fr. Titus and Fr. James Panackal had already set up a sumptuous dinner - with Indian taste, but set to the North American feel and look - and we all enjoyed it. To top it all, Fr. George Mariadoss Panthanickal, the sole Preshithite in the USA, had brought with him flowers and cake to extend a cordial welcome.

Having spent the evening together and having had some conversation with everyone, together with Fr. George and Fr. Reji MSFS, I was heading to the rectory of Fr. George attached to Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Fayetteville, in the Diocese of Nashville. During next few days, I had the opportunity to closely watch and involve in the pastoral activities of Fr. George, who is the Pastor of two parishes, the second being Immaculate Conception Church, Pulaski. Fr. George Mariadoss is said to enjoy the unique privilege of having two rectories attached to both parish churches. Apart from participating in the regular services in the churches entrusted to him, I could participate in a marriage blessing between a young couple hailing from Spanish and Black families; from among the special attractions of the wedding, I recall the ceremonies being conducted in Spanish and English and the beautiful floral decoration made in the church. As the bishop was away for a conference, the Vicar General and Fr. Thomas Kalam joined us at Fr. George's rectory for a festive

dinner, which was organised by a group of ladies from the parish. The Vicar General coming all the way from Nashville to Fayetteville was a symbolic gesture, I believe, of the appreciation for the pastoral and administrative engagement of Fr. George Mariadoss in the parishes entrusted to him.

It was noteworthy that Fr. George had made extensive arrangements for all liturgical celebrations and other meetings. I was also happy to see the transformation that Fr. George could bring about in both parishes both in the community formation and in the enhancement and additions of infrastructure that include the interior of the church, facilities at the parish hall and rectory. During the weekend Masses, I had the opportunity to speak to the parishioners about the missions of Preshitha Province and to thank them for the support they extend to our missions in India and Kenya. The finale of my meetings with the parishioners was the meal shared with all those who participated in the Holy Mass at Immaculate Conception Church, Pulaski. This gave me a feel of the close bonding that the families have made in the parish; during this meal many expressed their joy in having Fr. George as their beloved Pastor; the President of the Parish Council affirmed that the communion in the parish and the new developments are made possible only with the active involvement of Fr. George Mariadoss. Among the visits made in this area was the unique tour through the extensive facilities of Jack Daniel's, a world famous whiskey brewery, that has only one central production centre with distribution network all over the world.

Missional Dynamism on the Banks of the Amazon

In my trip to the Americas, my last destination was the Diocese of Santarem, where Fr. John Elavathinkal has been working for last seven years. As I had an opportunity to visit the Amazon mission of the CMI while I was at the Prior Gen-

eral's House, I could visualise some of the dynamics of the visit through our missions where CMI confreres are engaged in. Since 2016, when the Amazon mission was opened under the auspices of the Generalate, a lot of developments have taken place, especially in establishing each of the centres entrusted to our care as pastorally dynamic and financially stable, making CMI presence pastorally and administratively preferable among the faithful as well as the diocesan authorities. It is interesting to note that, in the Diocese of Santarem, the three parishes entrusted to our care are close to the banks of River Amazon, which makes the mission more challenging and demanding. Two of these parishes have sixty-four and twenty-one interior stations, access to which is possible either through River Amazon or through Amazon Forest. The only parish that has a boat and a full-time boat driver is the parish CMIs run at Almeirim, where one of the priests would be gone for almost two weeks to reach out to interior stations and to offer Holy Masses and to administer other sacraments for the faithful. Although Fr. John Elavathinkal had moved out of the office of the Coordinator of CMI Brazil Mission and from the office of the Parish Priest of Aparecida Church, Santarem, a year ago, seven years of his services have made a significant impact in the overall growth of the parish and he is fondly remembered and loved by the faithful. As the airport is at Santarem, after having spent a day there with Fathers Joby Virippamattathil (Coordinator of CMI Brazil Mission) and Tomy Pothanappara, who are now residing at the rectory of Aparicida Church, I accompanied Fr. John Elavathinkal on our way to Monte Dourado; this trip was almost twenty-four hours long: eighteen hours of overnight boat trip and five hours of drive by mud road through the Amazon Forest, with one hour lunch break at another parish entrusted to CMI care, namely, Nossa Senhora de Conceição at Almeirim, on the banks of Amazon River.

Another parish church, namely, Nossa Senhora de Nazaré, Monte

Dourado, where Fr. John Elavathinkal had assumed the office of the Parish Priest is inside the Amazon Forest, but developed around a huge wood pulp factory, Jari, which is said to have occupied about 600,000 square kilometres of Amazon Forest to grow and process eucalyptus trees; it is reported that they export the wooden pulp to China. Although the factory had employed a lot of people from this town and from elsewhere and many had made better prospects from their involvement in the factory, it has been closed down for unknown reasons; due to serious financial setbacks many have already moved out of this town and, thus, the membership in the parish is on the decline. Yet, as I joined the parish for their weekend Holy Masses, I found that the faith of the parishioners is quite solid and they continue to attend the services in large numbers. I was also pleased to note that more than half of the members attending the church are young couples and children.

Fr. John also manages twenty-one interior stations; some of these communities are small in size, but all of them are located in the interior forest areas. Apart from Nossa Senhora de Nazaré, Monte Dourado (main parish church, where Fr. John is the Parish Priest), the local communities that I could visit with Fr. John Elavathinkal are the following: (1) São Francisco de Assis, Gatos, (2) Perpétua Socorro, Munguba, (3) São João Batista, Paleita, (4) São Francisco, Santa Maria, and (5) Santo Cyriac Elias Chavara, Militão.

There are a couple of these communities with well-built small churches, but most of them are small makeshift wooden structures, of which some of them are already in bad shape. Hence, Fr. John has started building new solid structures for these churches with local as well as external support. In fact, I had the opportunity to visit two of such churches, which are nearing completion. I happily recall that Preshitha Province could make a small contribution, its 'widow's might', to this project.

The plan of Fr. John is to build up at least a dozen such churches in the next couple of years; he hopes that some generous hearts and institutions would come out with contributions to offer better worship facilities for these small communities located in the interior of the Amazon Forest.

I am happy that I could visit two more communities, which are located in the interior, but having accessibility only through the small tributaries of the Amazon River (even these tributaries are said to be thirty meters deep). We had to travel by a small boat for almost ninety minutes to reach the farthest of these stations, where Fr. John celebrated the feast of Saint John the Baptist, the patron's feast of the community. It was very inspiring to see that apart from the local faithful, two groups of people joined the Holy Mass from their neighbouring communities, which had to travel at least for one and half hours by boat: their mutual support in strengthening their faith and liturgical celebration seemed to be laudable and significantly Christian. Having visited the parish at Monte Dourado and other interior communities that are pastorally administered by Fr. John Elavathinkal, and having personally witnessed the way Fr. John manages these communities and their pastoral needs, I understand why, after having served in a city parish in Santarem itself, he personally chose to be in the farthest and the most interior of the parishes entrusted to the CMIs in the Diocese of Santarem: his pastoral satisfaction is quite commendable and the acceptance of his services among the faithful is great and unparalleled. As a climax of my days at Monte Dourado, one surprise item was a traditional Brazilian dance programme with about sixty people, which was organised with dinner soon after the evening Sunday Holy Mass. The variety of steps used and the perfect synchronisation among the dancers made it quite enjoyable and entertaining: it was a great Brazilian cultural treat. Compared to my first visit to Amazon Mission in 2017, when first CMI missionaries in Brazil were

apprehensive about their ability to handle Portuguese language as well as the heavy financial burdens of all the parishes entrusted to their care, this time, in 2024, I could watch the ease with which they conduct themselves in each parish and interior communities as well as their pastoral and linguistic agility and the confidence in efficiently managing the finances and all other matters of the parishes; indeed, not only had they made their parishes financially self-reliant but have also purchased a new house in Santarem city - close to the parish where we work - for the CMI Congregation mainly with the earnings they have put together from their pastoral engagement during the last seven years (incidentally, a happy note to be added here is about the fact that the remaining fund for the purchase of the CMI House was made available by the Prior General's House). This is a significant step in the growth of the CMI mission in Brazil.

Another notable development in this mission was the expansion of our missionary services to yet another diocese, namely, the Diocese of Teixeira, where two of our priests are currently working. Having seen the positive transformation in the parishes managed by CMI missionaries, there are standing invitations from other dioceses in Brazil itself and from Suriname, a small Dutch-speaking country situated on the northern boundary of Brazil. If we could spare more missionaries to this part of the world, as a testimony to the reiterated commitment of the CMI Congregation to take the Good News "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), there are greater prospects to see that this mission in Brazil grows further and the Catholic Church is made more vibrant in the coming years through the unique missionary involvement of the CMIs.

My visit to the Archbishop of Santarem, His Grace Irineu Roman CSI, was the highlight of last day in Brazil. He is a religious belonging to the Congregation of Saint Joseph, which also has members from India. As he came into the office (he





has his office at the Bishop's House, but resides in the seminary), we could greet him and have a very warm and cordial conversation, although Fr. Joby and Fr. John had to translate our conversations - he spoke in Portuguese and I spoke in English. Bishop expressed his appreciation and gratitude for the commendable mission undertaken by the CMI priests in the Diocese of Santarem. As he had already met our Fathers when they arrived in Brazil in 2016 and were doing their initiation into Portuguese language at Belém City, where he was then the Auxiliary Bishop, he recognised the great effort our Fathers have put in to reach the present status in their life and ministry in Brazil. He told me that he looks forward to receive more CMIs to work in Santarem and other parts of Brazil. In addition, he has also shown keen interest to visit India in the next couple of years; considering his lack of expertise in English, he plans to join our Fathers during their biennial home visits.

On the last but one day of my visit to Brazil, Fr. John and Fr. Joby took me to Alter do Chão, one of the famous freshwater beaches in Brazil, located beside the Amazon

River, as one of its shallow bays. After almost a month-long journey through Americas, this was indeed a welcome break for relaxation. We spent a couple of hours under the hot sun, but immersed in the fresh and clear water on the sandy beaches of the Amazon.

CMI Mission Mode: A Reason for Ecclesial Exultation

As I, finally, flew back from Brazil, although I was anticipating long two days of tedious flying (five flights in all, from Santarem to Coimbatore), I felt very fresh, brimming with joy, excitement, and gratitude. It was time for me to relive wonderful moments I spent with five of our veteran missionaries in the Americas. Although the contexts of each differed from the other, their commitment to the entrusted mission was commendable and inspiring; at the same time, their sense of sacrifice and missionary zeal, especially in taking up these missions for and in the name of Preshitha Province, Coimbatore, are of great value.

In general, I must underscore the fact that a large majority of the CMIs working in our overseas missions are appreciated and

distinguished for their generous availability for sacramental administration and the needs of the faithful, unparalleled dedication to the missions entrusted, unassuming ways of reaching out to the people around, their ability for cultural adaptation and learning new languages, excellent team work with the officials and ministers of the parishes: the list can still go on endlessly. They are also appreciated for their immense contributions to the domestic and foreign missions (especially in the developing countries) of the CMI Provinces. It adds greater value as they live alone in alien lands, deprived of the usual comforts of community life; in this living on the mission-mode, each missionary has to balance between taking care of his personal needs and meeting the increasing demands of pastoral engagements in multiple communities at the same time. Indeed, each of them continues to contribute to the overall enhancement of the global mission perspectives within the CMI Congregation as well as in each Province and expand the ever-widening horizons of global mission, ensuring that the Good News is taken "to the ends of the world" (Acts 1:8).





Young people are
the main agents of renewal.

Cardinal Kevin Farrell,
Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life

Experience is shared and transmitted
to the next generation in Mission



Experience



CMI National Youth Meet
Dharmaram, Christ School,
Bengaluru



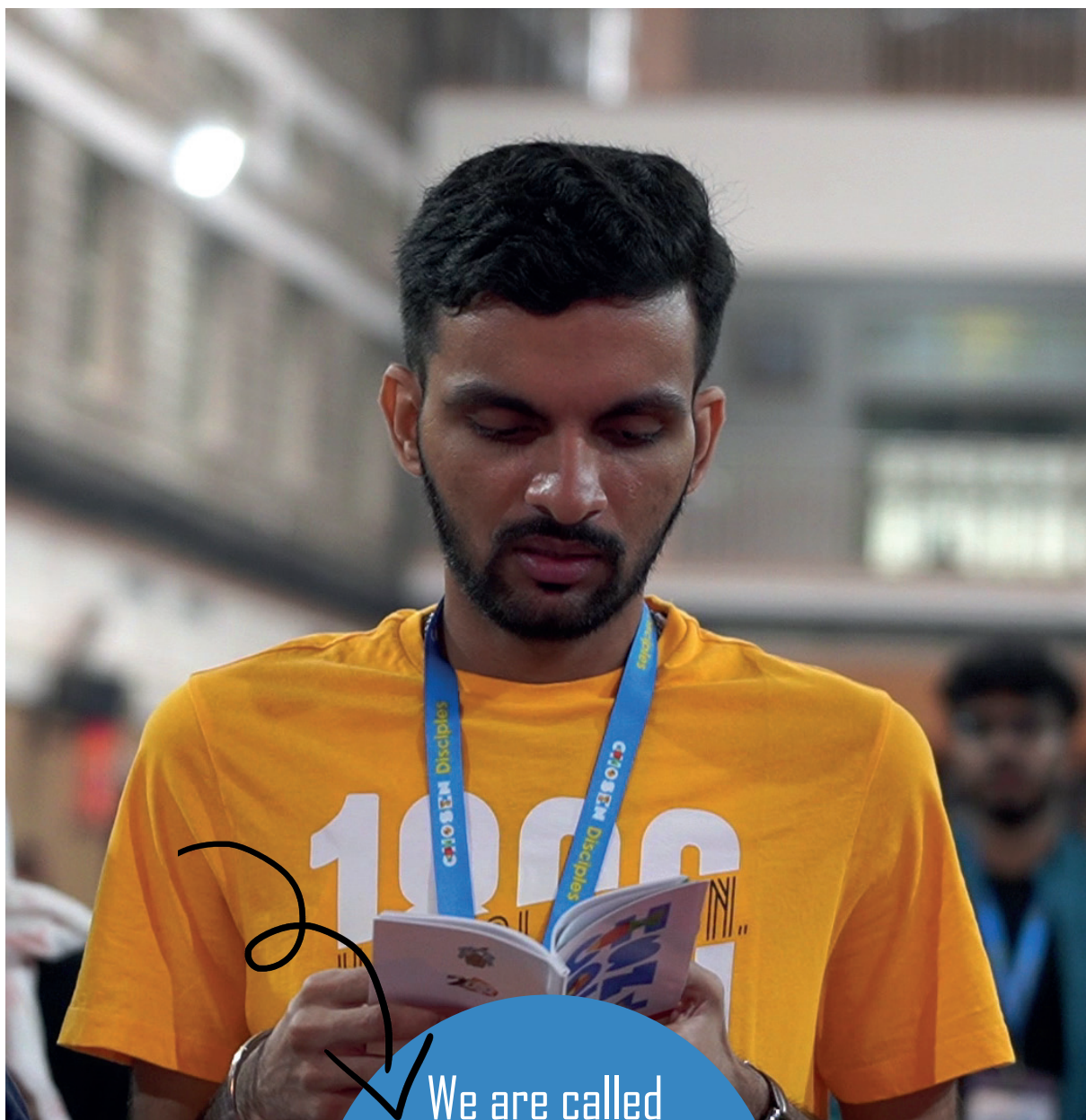


Jerin P Joju
Bengaluru

We are called to be instruments of God's divine peace and boundless love in this world, living as His faithful disciples and radiant witnesses of His eternal glory. As we gather for CHOSEN 24, we celebrate not only a transformative conference but also the Decennial Jubilee of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) and the Year of Family, Children and Youth inspired by the teachings of our venerable founder, Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara.

Following the footsteps of St Chavara, whose rule of life emphasised devotion to God, service to the community, and a deep commitment to the education and spiritual formation of families and youth, we come together to renew our dedication to these principles. St Chavara taught us to be "committed to the care of the people of God—with children, youth, and family," recognizing them as the cornerstone of the Church's mission.

In today's rapidly changing world, the call to be missionaries is more urgent than ever. We are challenged to be modern-day evangelizers, boldly carrying the Gospel into every aspect of our lives. As we face the complexities and distractions of contemporary society, we must remember our sacred duty to be living testimonies of God's grace and truth. We are called not just to follow the faith but to actively share it—to become missionaries who illuminate the world with the light of Christ's love.



We are called
to be instru-
ments of God's
divine peace
and boundless
love in this
world.

Key Features of the Conference:

Interactive conference format:

Thought-provoking group discussions and workshops will challenge participants to work in teams, discuss relevant topics, and present their insights. These activities foster community-building and encourage collective growth.

A unique feature of this conference is the Bible Writing Activity, where participants will engage in the profound act of transcribing passages from the Holy Scriptures particularly the New Testament. Reflecting on the scriptures as they are being written. Creative Expressions of Faith:

Participants will enjoy artistic expressions of faith through events like the Vox Cristi Band Performance and HEY Theatre, which use music, drama, and art to convey powerful messages of faith. Rosary Procession and Prayer: • A beautiful Rosary Procession on Day 2 invites all participants to join in communal prayer, walking in faith together. The conference integrates prayer throughout.

Elder-Led Guidance:

To ensure a more participatory and enriching experience, each group of participants will be guided by a RAFA - an Elder who are experienced and spiritually 3 mature members of the community, will offer personalized guidance and support throughout the conference. They will lead discussions, offer wisdom, and help participants reflect on the day's sessions and activities, fostering personal growth and deeper spiritual engagement.

Praise and Worship: Praise and worship is an integral part of our communion with God, a time to lift our hearts and voices in adoration of the Almighty. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2639), "Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for His own sake and

gives Him glory, quite beyond what He does, but simply because HE IS." Through song, prayer, and thanksgiving, we express our deep gratitude and love for God's greatness, joining in a long tradition of worship that spans the history of the Church.

During praise and worship, we come together as a community to declare the goodness of God, creating an atmosphere where hearts can be opened to His presence. As Vatican II's Sacrosanctum Concilium reminds us, "The Church, in the course of the centuries, has introduced into her liturgical celebrations elements taken from the culture of different ages and peoples. Insofar as these elements are not bound up with superstitions and errors, she has preserved them as part of a rich and harmonious heritage" (SC 37).

Adoration: Adoration is a time of profound reverence and intimate communion with Jesus Christ, who is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasises, "Adoration is the first attitude of man

tion of Christ's real presence. The Second Vatican Council's declares, "The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.' The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ Himself" (LG 11). This sacred time allows us to rest in God's presence, reflecting on His love and offering ourselves completely to Him in adoration and thanksgiving.

The Holy Mass is the highest form of worship in the Catholic Church. It is through the Eucharistic celebration that the sacrifice of Christ is made present, uniting heaven and earth in a profound mystery of faith. As the Catechism of the 5 Catholic Church teaches, "The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action" (CCC 1409).

The Mass is not just a remembrance, but a participation in the very act of redemption, as outlined in the Council of Trent: "The Mass is truly propitiatory... The sacrifice of the Mass, therefore, applies the fruit of Christ's sacrifice on the cross to the faithful, and through it, we receive the grace of forgiveness and reconciliation with God" (Session XXII). During the Mass, we are fed by both the Word of God and the Body and Blood of Christ, as Jesus instructed at the Last Supper: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). Vatican II further elaborates on this in Sacrosanctum Concilium, stating, "The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows" (SC 10). Therefore, the Holy Mass is central to the life of every Catholic, drawing us closer to God and renewing our spiritual strength.



acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil" (CCC 2628). During Adoration, the Holy Eucharist is exposed, and we are invited into deep contempla-



Chosen 2024: Empowering the Youth for Christ's Mission



**Agnel Maria
Bengaluru**

As the youth of India gathered, they were led through a journey of personal and communal reflection, faith formation, and missionary discipleship, all rooted in the enduring legacy of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara.

Over 600 youth from across India came together for Chosen 2024, an event that was both a spiritual gathering and a call to mission. Orchestrated under the spiritual guidance of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI), the event marked a significant milestone in the Church's efforts to foster a deep, abiding commitment to Christ among the younger generation. With the overarching theme of "Committed to the Care of the People of God – With Children, Youth, and Family", the event was a part of the CMI Year of Family, Children, and Youth, celebrating the Decennial Jubilee of the CMI Congregation, which has dedicated the last ten years to evangelizing, nurturing, and building the faith of many across India.

As the youth of India gathered, they were led through a journey of personal and communal reflection, faith formation, and missionary discipleship, all rooted in the enduring legacy of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara. Chavara, the founder of the CMI Congregation, was deeply committed to empowering families, children, and youth, and this event was a continuation of that mission. The Carmelites' efforts to develop holistic, well-rounded individuals who could evangelize and serve the Church were reflected in every aspect of Chosen 2024. This gathering provided an important opportunity for young people to understand their place in the Church's mission and how they, too, can live out their vocation as missionaries of Christ.

The Spiritual and Missionary Vision of CMI

The Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) are renowned for their strong missionary presence across India and abroad. Rooted in the vision of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara, the congregation has long emphasized the importance of youth in the Church's mission. Chavara, who was deeply concerned with the education of children and the formation of youth, believed that a spiritually grounded youth was

central to the future of the Church. This vision is evident in the CMI's ongoing youth outreach programs, schools, and institutions that aim to nurture young people not only in academics but in faith and service. The theme for Chosen 2024, "Committed to the Care of the People of God – With Children, Youth, and Family", aligns perfectly with this long-standing emphasis on the spiritual and pastoral care of young people. It highlights the significance of the youth not only as the future of the Church but as vital members of the Body of Christ in the present. The theme emphasizes that youth ministry is not just about preparing the young for the future but about empowering them now to take on roles of leadership, evangelization, and care for the larger community of believers. The event itself was structured to challenge and inspire youth to become agents of transformation in their families, communities, and the wider Church.

The Logo of Chosen 2024:

A Symbol of Unity and Mission
The logo of Chosen 2024 encapsulated the essence of the gathering. The fish symbolized Christian unity, a key element in the mission of evangelization. The fish, an early Christian symbol, represented the call to the world to be united in Christ. The bread and chalice represented the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life, and a reminder that any true evangelization begins with a personal encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. The imagery was powerful: the gathering was not just about learning and formation, but about preparing the youth to go out as missionaries, to share Christ's love and truth with the world.

Day 1 Theme : Explore – Understanding the Context and Challenges of Christian Youth

The first day of Chosen 2024 set the tone for the event by addressing the challenges and opportunities that Christian youth face today. The keynote speaker, George Devassy, a former national coordinator of

Jesus Youth, spoke on the Context and Challenges of Christian Youth. His insights were both timely and necessary, as he highlighted the growing challenges that young people face in today's secular world, particularly in relation to their faith.

Devassy's experience as a leader in the Jesus Youth movement provided him with a unique perspective on the evolving needs of young people. He shared his own journey and the ways in which the Jesus Youth movement has tried to respond to these needs by fostering a deep spiritual life among young people, especially through personal encounters with Christ. His message resonated deeply with the participants, as he encouraged them to reflect on their personal relationship with Christ and the ways in which they could strengthen their faith amidst the challenges of modern life.

The group discussion that followed the session allowed the participants to share their thoughts and insights, creating a space for dialogue and reflection. The first day concluded with a powerful performance by the Vox Cristi Band, whose music captured the spirit of the event, inviting the youth to engage with their faith through song and worship. The performance was not merely a musical interlude but a deeply reflective moment that helped participants engage spiritually, connecting the theme of the day to their personal experience. The power of their music was not just in the lyrics but in the raw emotion and commitment the band brought to the performance.

As the youth participated in the performance, they were not just passive observers; they were actively engaging in worship, allowing the music to shape their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes. The music reinforced the message of the day that Christian youth are called to live out their faith in the world, to encounter Christ personally, and to be strong and steadfast in their mission.

Day 2 Theme: Experience – Encountering Christ in the Eucharist and the Word of God

The Day 2 of Chosen 2024 focused on Experience—the personal encounter with Christ through the Eucharist and the Word of God. Jose Elangical and Sharu Jose led a session that encouraged the youth to experience the deep transformative power of Christ's presence. For many, this day was a highlight of the gathering, as it provided the space for an intimate encounter with Christ in the Eucharist. The Rosary procession that followed was a moving moment of prayer and reflection, as the youth joined together to pray for the strength to live out their mission as disciples of Christ. The Hey Theatre performance that evening was an innovative way of conveying the message of the day. Using drama and creativity, the performance spoke to the challenges and joys of encountering Christ and how such an encounter changes one's life.


The drama sought to capture the essence of encountering Christ not just in grand moments but in the small, everyday actions that make up our lives. Through a narrative that weaved together real-world struggles with moments of spiritual clarity, the performance helped the youth reflect on how the presence of Christ is not limited to physical encounters or extraordinary events, but is woven into the fabric of our daily lives. One of the most impactful scenes in the drama was when a character, struggling with feelings of loneliness and sadness, was shown engaging in an act of service offering medical aid to someone injured. This simple gesture, done with love that the character received from God, became the moment where the character experienced a powerful healing encounter in their life with Christ.

The second day emphasized that the foundation of any true missionary work is a personal, transformative encounter with Christ. It was a reminder that evangelization is not just about words or actions but

about living out the encounter with Christ and sharing that love with others.

Day 3 Theme: Evangelize – Preparing Youth Missionaries for the Future

The final day of Chosen 2024 focused on Evangelize—preparing youth for the mission of spreading the Gospel to the world. Dr. Thomas Mathew, a renowned theologian and educator, led a session on preparing youth for the mission of evangelization. His talk was insightful and practical, equipping the youth with the knowledge and tools necessary for effective evangelization.



He called upon
the youth to take
ownership of the
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spreading the
Good News.





Dr. Mathew emphasized that the mission of evangelization is not reserved for a select few but is the call of every baptized Christian. He called upon the youth to take ownership of the mission, to be active participants in the Church's work of spreading the Good News. The day concluded with a beautiful Biblical dance performance, which underscored the theme of evangelization in a creative and impactful way. In this performance, the dancers did not merely interpret the story of the Bible; they embodied the essence of the Gospel message — the love of Christ, His sacrifice, and the call to spread His message to the world.

The choreography conveyed the idea that the message of Christ is meant to be shared with the world, and that evangelization is not just about speaking words but living them through action. As the dancers performed, they invited the youth to reflect on how they, too, can live out the Gospel message in creative ways through their own talents, whether that be music, art, theatre, writing, or any other form of expression.

Missionary Movements and the Role of the Youth

The CMI Congregation has long been involved in missionary work, both within India and abroad. From its early days, the Carmelites have emphasized the importance of youth in the Church's missionary endeavors. The CMI has sought to engage young people in the mission of the Church. These movements focus on prayer, formation, and service, with an emphasis on fostering a deep spiritual life and a strong commitment to evangelization.

The CMI's approach to youth ministry is holistic, combining prayer, education, and social action. This approach is reflected in the way Chosen 2024 was structured. The event encouraged youth to not only grow in

their relationship with Christ but also to consider how they could serve others, particularly through evangelization and social outreach. The event highlighted that the call to evangelize is not just a distant ideal but a present reality, a mission to be lived out here and now.

Call to Action - Empowered for Mission

Chosen 2024 was a meaningful experience for the youth who participated. It was an event that not only deepened their faith but also encouraged them to live out their calling as missionaries of Christ. Through the sessions, workshops, performances, and personal encounters with Christ, the youth gained the tools and inspiration to go forth and evangelize. The legacy of Saint Kuria-kose Elias Chavara lives on in the lives of these young people, who are now prepared to continue building the Church and spreading the love of Christ. Many participants shared how Chosen 2024 impacted their lives. A 20-year-old participant, expressed how the sessions helped her reconnect with her faith and understand her mission more clearly. Also shared how the group discussions taught her practical ways to serve and share Christ with others in her community. A 19-year old, reflected on how the event showed him that he is not alone in his journey and that everyone is part of something greater. These personal experiences highlight how Chosen 2024 empowered the youth to live their faith with renewed vigor.

As the youth returned to their communities, they carried a renewed sense of purpose, a deeper understanding of their mission, and the conviction that they are chosen to continue Christ's work in the world. To the youth who participated: You have encountered Christ, and now you are called to share that encounter with others. Use the gifts you

have received to bring hope, love, and faith to those around you. The Church needs your energy, your ideas, and your courage to spread the Gospel. Go forward with confidence, knowing that Christ walks with you. Let us continue to support and pray for one another as we take up this mission together.



I am a mission, always;
you are a mission, always;
every baptized man
and woman is a mission.



Dear,

Every baptized
is a missionary.
We can become
a missionary in different ways,
in whatever situation you are.
St Therese of Child Jesus,
Patron of missionaries
had never been to a mission yet
was a missionary to the core of
her heart. She became a mis-
sionary
by praying for
the mission and the missionaries.
So CMission offers
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tres- can adopt missionaries and
pray for them.

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Please be a voice of hope,
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Antonio G. Cardinal Tagle
Pro-Prefect Dicastery for Evangelization

Chosen ones are ready for it.
Let's always do it together.



Evangelize



Mission Meditation



Paulson Muthupeedika CMI
Bhopal

Ms Laxmi Tamut of Riga village in Siang district in Arunachal Pradesh was reading in class tenth. She used to get a lot of attacks from the evil spirits making her unconscious even for couple of days. She was found to be quite normal in all the medical check-ups. Once when she had this attack the family requested the Catholic Community in her village to pray for her. The members of the community prayed for her and she was relieved of the evil attack. Later she expressed her desire to receive baptism and accept Jesus Christ. She was baptized and became a Catholic with the name Rose. She did not go again to the residential school in which she was reading but she along with sister started to live in a rented house in Boleng town. After a few months she again started to get attacks from the evil spirits. Again she was taken to the hospital to find out if she has any medical issues. But the doctors said she was perfectly normal. The Catholic community at Boleng continued to pray for her. We, the fathers also used to go to pray for her. Once we prayed for two three hours and yet she was not getting any relief. She was very aggressive and violent and could not be controlled even by ten youth. Then I asked her relative who gathered in her room, to bring her to our chapel to be prayed for. They waited till next day morning thinking that she will be alright. But since she was not relieved, they brought her to

our church. We had the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and we prayed for her. After a few minutes became calm and fell into deep sleep in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament. After an hour or so she was quite normal and she did not remember what was happening to her for last 12 hours. But in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament she was alright. Later after a month or so she again had this attack from the evil one. The family called us and we asked them to bring to our chapel. We had exposed the Blessed Sacrament and prayed for her and after while she became calm and she fell into a deep sleep for an hour and more. Then she was quite normal and started praying.

We read in John 15:4 -10 "Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. Matthew 28: 20b reads, "And remember I am with you always, to the end of the age." Jesus had promise us to be with us to the end of the age. He does this through the Blessed Sacrament. He is ever present in the Blessed Sacrament. When we come into his presence we experience his power, his love, peace and joy. When Ms. Laxmy Rose was being attacked by the evil powers we prayed for relief at her room. But we were not successful. When she came to the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament she became very calm and normal. The presence of the Lord

in the Blessed Sacrament gives us peace, joy and power. The more we are in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the more we will experience peace, joy and his power. Earlier there was a lot importance given to the Blessed Sacrament. The faithful were encouraged to spend more time to be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Later the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was diminished and our devotion got limited to holy mass and some prayers only. Jesus clearly tells us that if we abide in him we will produce much fruit. We can do nothing without him. - John 15:5. When we prayed for Ms. Rose in her room she was not getting any relief. But when she came to the presence of the Blessed Sacrament she was relieved and became calm and quite.

Do we find time to be with the Eucharistic Lord? Do we think it is waste of time or that we have so many other real things to do for the betterment of the world that we cannot waste our time before the Blessed Sacrament? Do we really believe that Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament?

Are we able to enjoy the time we spent in the church / chapel before the Blessed Sacrament? Do we have a thirst, a desire to be with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament? Do we consider that being with the Lord before the Blessed Sacrament is old fashioned and it is only for showing off our spirituality or devotion? Is it possible that the rosary we do, the Bible we read, and other prayers we do, all these could be done in the church / chapel in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord?



Mission Villages



Linto Francis Kuttikattil CMI
Bhopal

A random visit to various village houses in mardum and sataspur was conducted in a single day. This visit provided insights into the daily lives and challenges faced by the villagers. The villagers' livelihoods primarily depend on agriculture and cattle rearing, with additional resources sourced from the forest, such as mouwa and beedipatha. Recently, outsiders have been purchasing land from the villagers. These outsiders are introducing modern agricultural techniques, leading to a shift in roles. As a result, local villagers, once the primary landowners and cultivators, are becoming "outsiders," while the newcomers are taking their place as "insiders."

The village has one government school that provides education up to the 10th grade. After completing their studies there, students often move to cities for further education, highlighting the limited educational opportunities available locally.

Outsiders are increasingly purchasing land from local villagers. These new landowners are employing modern agricultural techniques that differ significantly from traditional methods. As a result, the original inhabitants, who once owned and cultivated the land, are being displaced, effectively becoming "outsiders" in their own community. Meanwhile, the newcomers, or "outsiders," are becoming the new "insiders."

The Christian community within the village is facing severe persecution from other villagers. This discrimination takes several forms: Christians are not allowed to travel in common vehicles, they are prohibited from drawing water from communal pipes, and they are denied burial rights in local graveyards. In response to these challenges, Christians have taken steps to become more self-reliant by purchasing their own vehicles and digging borewells for water. Many in the community view these achievements as divine blessings, which strengthens their faith.

There have been instances of violence against Christians in the village. One particularly brutal incident involved a man who was beaten so severely that he lost an eye and suffered a broken eardrum. These acts of violence contribute to a climate of fear and hostility. When Christians are threatened or abused, they often respond with a verbal curse, wishing misfortune upon their aggressors, such as saying, "let him face an accident." Despite these tensions, the faith of the Christian community remains strong, and they continue to practice their beliefs with resilience. Christians in the village frequently organize protests to draw attention to the injustices they face and to demand fair treatment. These demonstrations are a testament to their courage and determination to fight against persecution.

Following the village visit, time was spent at a novitiate house, where assistance was provided to help stage a drama. This activity offered an opportunity for creative expression and community bonding, helping to uplift spirits and foster a sense of solidarity among bothers. The Christian community's ability to maintain strong faith despite persecution highlights the concept of resilience in faith. This reflects a theological understanding of faith as a source of strength and perseverance in the face of adversity.

The community's perception of their achievements (such as acquiring vehicles and borewells) as blessings from God illustrates a theological belief in divine providence. This suggests a worldview where God's favor and support manifest in tangible ways, especially in challenging circumstances. The Christians' willingness to protest against injustices aligns with theological teachings on social justice and the importance of standing up for one's rights. This reflects a commitment to advocate for fairness and equality, which is a central tenet in many theological frameworks.

SMRC: Annual Gathering

The CMI Prior General's House hosted the annual gathering of the Syro-Malabar Religious Conference on April 5, 2024. His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, inaugurated the conference, which saw the participation of 181 religious priests, brothers, and nuns.



Quinquennial 2024 - Batch 2022-2023

Priests ordained in the years 2022-23 gathered at the Prior General's House for the Quinquennial Program from February 9 to 11, 2024. The event included various input sessions and opportunities for the priests to share their first-year experiences. Fr. Anto Alappattu spoke on "Prudence in Priestly Ministry: The Do's and Don'ts,"



Degree Students' Meet 2024

The CMI Prior General's House organized a meeting for scholastics pursuing undergraduate degrees from February 2 to 4, 2024. Around 77 scholastics participated in the event. The sessions featured inputs from Fr. Francis Manavalan, Mr. Mathew Moses, and Fr. Jerin Thuruthel.



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Walk the Talk 2024 - Youth Animation Workshop for CMI Deacons

The Department of Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry organized a three-day animation program for our CMI deacons from April 7 to 10, 2024. Twenty-eight deacons attended the workshop, which included several sessions aimed at enhancing their youth ministry efforts. Key topics included "Understanding the Landscape of Youth Today" by Dr. Jiju Arakathara, "Models of Youth Ministry" by Fr. Stephen Thomas Chalakara, and "How to Understand and Address the Addiction Epidemic Among Youth" by Mr. Geo P. George.



CFI (Carmelite Family of India) at our Prior General's House.

A seminar on the life and spirituality of St Therese of Lisieux was organised from 8-10 November 2024 by CFI (Carmelite Family of India) at our Prior General's House. We were privileged to host this Conference which was attended by members of the Carmelite Family of India. The 187 Participants of the Seminar hailed from 14 Religious Congregations who share the Carmelite Spirituality. It was a remarkable time of sharing and knowing each other who are in one way or other belong one Family under the name Carmelite Family of India.



Reception for Bishop Antony Valumkal, Auxiliary Bishop of Varapuzha Archdiocese

A reception was held at the Prior General's House on July 27, 2024, for the newly ordained Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Varapuzha, His Excellency Mar Antony Valumkal.



Orientation for Young CMI Educators

The General Department of Education and Media conducted an orientation for young educators of the congregation on June 29 and 30, 2024. Fifty-two participants attended the event, which focused on effectively carrying out the education ministry while upholding Christian values. Sessions included "Social Transformation Through Education" by Fr. Francis Manavalan, "CMI Education Vision for Integral and Human Development of Children" by Fr. Isaac Poochamkulam, "Networking and Delegation for Educational Leadership" by Fr. Augustine Paimpally, "Education and Media" by Dr. Asha Joseph, "Green CMI Campus" by Fr. Joy Peenickaparampil, and "Legacy of CMI Education" by Fr. John Mannarathara. A panel discussion titled "Learn From the Elders" was moderated by Fr. Jaison Mulerickal, with panelists Fr. Luka Chavara, Fr. Charles Korothe, and Fr. Joice Aryassery.



Image Gallery

Renewal Programme in Germany

The CMI Renewal Programme for priests serving in Germany and other countries in Europe took place from July 7-10, 2024. The event was attended by 138 priests along with major superiors from different provinces. This gathering provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen the bonds of CMI Koinonia, allowing participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and spiritual insights. It was a time of renewal, reflection, and fraternity for all involved. Along with the renewal program, 10th anniversary of the canonization of St Chavara and St Euphrasia was celebrated with Pontifical Solemn Eucharistic celebration at Köln Cathedral on 9 July. It was presided over by the Archbishop of Köln Cardinal Reiner Maria Woelki. In his homily he spoke on the deep faith life of St Chavara which made him a social reformer and to initiate various steps to renew the life of the Church.



Inauguration of the Golden Jubilee year of Peru Mission



On 24 November 2024, the Feast of Christ the King, Carmel Province formally inaugurated a new house in Kigarama, located in the Fort Portal Diocese, Uganda, named Carmel CMI House. The first Carmelite Monastery was blessed by Bishop Robert Muhiirwa in the presence of Provincial Fr. Mathew Manjakunnel CMI, Fr. Benny Karuvelil CMI (Secretary General of the Namibian Catholic Bishops' Conference), and the founding members of the house, Fr. Rinoj Vattakkanayil and Fr. Biju Pulimthanathu. Fathers, Sisters, and laity working in the diocese also joined the ceremony. This marks a great blessing and a humble beginning for our mission here.





Chosen 24 Participants in Christ ICSE School, Dharmaram, Bengaluru.



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