

In this Issue... October

- September 2020 Round Up
- Glimpses Around Us
- Random Remembrances- Br Eleazar(Contd.)...
- A descriptive box!
- Customer quotation
- Experience Sharing - Emmanuel Pathil...
- Br Charles Garnier...
- October Events...
- From Thailand...
- Br Berchmans...

Highlights!

The ideation process which took place during September Zoom Meet brought forth many initiatives:

MGA Global Meet 2022

To hold the next MGA Global Meet in 2022. In addition to India, South Africa, USA and Thailand emerged as prominent locations for the meet. Subject to the acceptance by Thailand Singapore MGA, Thailand emerged as a prospective reality. Matter to be pursued.

MGA Registration

To expedite the process of MGA Registration. MGAs Dominic and George Nellimattam volunteered to explore the possibility of a hassle free Registration of MGA like the Rotarian International or Knights of Columbus. Matter to be pursued.

MGA Monthly Zoom Meet

To continue the MGA Monthly Zoom Meet every Second Saturday at 1800 Hrs IST to strengthen the MGAs across all countries.

MGA Thailand

Annual Meeting of MGA Thailand held on 8.Aug.20

September 20 Round Up

MGAs from different places kept up their promise to hold their pre-decided Zoom Meeting on 12th September 2020. There were 19 participants 25 percent lesser than earlier meet in August.

Farewell to MGA Sunil Soreng who passed away on 10 September 2020.

Late Bro Donald (D1994) and Late Bro Joseph Vetticaud (D2005) remembered on their Heavenly Birthday -18 September.

MGA BO Sebastian's Tribute Poem to The Teacher was a main feature of MGA Snippet September 20.

Late Bro.Thomas More was on his way to Rabagri for the blessing and inauguration of the Parish Church on 29th September 1996 around 7am when he met an accident and died. The accident took place at a village called Kamaria near Tikrikala.



Brother Thomas Moore who was qualified in teaching of the hearing impaired, worked in Tura from 1993 to start a school for children with and without disabilities. School/classes for children without disabilities commenced in 1995. Bro. Thomas More doubled up as the Construction Engineer of the buildings. He was assisted by Brother Joy along with the Sisters and other lay staff. Louis school for the intellectually impaired became operational later on.

Br Charles Garnier features prominently in this issue.His death anniversary falls on 22 September and feast falls on 26 September.An exclusive section set apart for our Charlie Darling with thoughtful memories and love.

Br Berchmans left us two years ago on 17 September. Expressions of love and endearment abound profusely from everyone near dear and far. Read these too.

Congratulations to Veronica and Emmanuel Pathil who celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary on 14 September 1998. And we have some pictures each of which would tell you the story of those times and persons while taking you through memories.

MGA Thailand

MA THAI General Meeting held on 8.8.20 at BSG Foundation, Bangkok with a Montfortian Mass Offering for our departed MAs, BSG and those affected/died of COVID-19 worldwide.

Rev Bro Thinnarat was with us from the beginning and gracious enough to preside over the Holy Mass to close our meeting at around 5 p.m.

Prior to our meeting some members visited Rev Bro Leonard and Rev Bro Prasit at the Camillian Hospital next door. The meeting was filled with joy and brotherly love and sharing. At the end of the meeting we paid respect to our beloved St Louis Marie De Montfort by laying roses at his statue.

Random Remembrances-Br Eleazar (Contd.)

(Continued from September- Jo Pathyil)

Bro. Corentin, a French ascetic, was our director in Loyola. His two concerns were to be present for the prayers and insist that we play every day. For all the rest, Bro. Eleazar was virtually in charge. After my two years of Intermediate studies, Bro. Eleazar wanted me to go for B.A. (Hon), the same degree that he had taken. Unfortunately his plan to send me for it was taken rather late. Till then he could persuade the principals of Loyola who were his friends to do such things.

But the new principal would not hear of late admission into the prestigious program even though Fr. Murphy, the most influential person in the University promised he would get special exemption from the University for my admission. The principal was adamant. I was very disappointed. But Bro. Eleazar consoled me and said that I could go for M.A after I completed my B.A. But I was not interested in staying another two years in Loyola.

In 1956, as soon as I completed my B.A. Bro. Eleazar made arrangements for me to go to St. Xavier's Teachers Training College, Palayamkottai. Bro. Frederick was my companion.

I had spent a few years studying under some of the finest Jesuit minds. Bro. Eleazar spent a week with us. His purpose was to assess my readiness to take on major tasks. I was hardly 23 years old when he asked me to be the headmaster of St. Antony's High School, Coonoor, from where I had graduated only seven years earlier. But he was confident I would do well directing the affairs of such a big institution. I did not let him down. Work in Coonoor was interesting and challenging. But I was young, and ignorant enough to be confident. I had good advisers and great helpers. Bro. Charles, my former director in the Juniorate was my most dedicated cheerleader. He encouraged me and gave me freedom to pursue my paths in school. Other brothers helped wholeheartedly. The teachers, some of whom had taught me, were very cooperative. But it was Bro. Eleazar who gave me full and unconditional vote of confidence. I would write to him regularly detailing my hopes, worries and dreams. He would promptly reply with pertinent suggestion, letting me choose among alternatives ... *I learned administration, and how to manage people under his tutelage.* (To Continue-Jo Pathyil)

[Back to Contents](#)

Out of The Box

Initiate action to remain happy and foster a Happy Group of MGA

1. Discover the Diamonds in us, amidst us
2. Expedite the MGA Registration
3. Start working on the Aims and Objectives and Byelaws of Global nature
4. Reach out to MGAs who are not in the whatsapp groups and email.
5. Update MGA Information, Address, Contact Numbers
6. Get pictures of all MGAs and their family .
7. Plan to bring out a MGA Directory of Members.
8. Reach out to One or Two MGAs every month, speak to him to make him happy and pray for him.

[Back to Contents](#)

Ideas for Action

Say Yes to Action:

1. Telling Experiential Stories from Brothers and MGAs to share, care and nurture.
2. Inspiring Brothers and MGAs to bring out their talents for greater use.
3. Continuing to remain connected digitally through regular News Snippets
4. Reaching out to all MGAs scattered across countries and provinces:
Each One Bring One for the Next MGA Zoom Meetings. *Share Joys and Sorrows* Birthdays, Anniversaries etc to greet and be greeted. *Tincidunt ut id est metus, non pharetra leo.*
5. November Issue of MGA Snippets to figure a new feature of *Experience Sharing from MGA L Jeyaraj from Chennai* while the *Jo Pathyil Story Telling* continues its journey through the times.
6. It is hoped that Emmanuel Pathil's Inspiring Experiences spread Ideas for Action far and wide to enable action, movement and support

[Back to Contents](#)

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Quotes of Significance

"A Man is a Man when He is Alone. . . !!!!" —
Br Paulose Mekkunel - those Juniorate Days

Experience Sharing-Emmanuel Pathil. . .

0.1 The Exodus - A Journey Most Unlikely

(Continued from September- Emmanuel Pathil)

On 12/12/1985 the then Collector (a strong RSS supporter) called me and gave me the Societies Registration Certificate of "SAMAJIK SEVA SADAN". I wrote this good piece of news to Bro. C M Joseph and also to the Administrator when my problems began to accumulate - thanks to this letter, my exodus from the Congregation began with the roadblock of denial funds by Fr. Scaria the Administrator. He sent back the Grant sanctioned by IGSSS, Delhi for the Vocational cum academic school building at Banjhikusum, stopped the funds SSS was receiving from Action Aid, Bangalore for the 8 schools through sponsorship program because the funds were received for the work through the dioceses.

Fr Scaria stopped all funds from February to July 1986. With Rs.10,000 that was given to me by the Provincial for making a two room Kacha building for the Brothers to stay at Banjhikusum (we were to form a community - me as the superior, Bro Mark and 2 Candidates and stay at Banjhikusum), we had constructed a thatched house on 12 pillars with that money. I was left with no money and I had 14 teachers teaching in 8 Non-formal schools (all in Adivasi and Dalit Hamlets) in the project area with 165 students.

After coming to know my plight, some of our friends from Town and through them some RSS people supported me by giving Rs. 65000/- in three installments to carry on the work in these 8 schools from February to June 1986. (I paid them back that money subsequently).

I applied for FCRA Registration on 28th of December 1985 and got the Certificate signed on 7th March 1986. I wrote to both IGSSS and Action Aid with the copy of the FCRA Certificate and the funds started coming from April 1987. Mean while in August 1986, I had been to my home in Kerala and sold one plot of 17 Cents land (that was left by my Father in his Will - if Emmanuel comes back from Religious life, it will be his share otherwise the one who looks after the mother will have it) to my brother for Rs. 84,000/- and came back to Banjhikusum to meet the expenses of the Organization.

Several Funding Agencies came forward for supporting this new Society, SSS from 1987. Action Aid started supporting us directly; IGSSS sent us the funds for the building, Oxfam supported for training of 2 workers on "Community Development Non Formal Education", Swiss Aid for agriculture and environment protection, Community Aid Abroad (CAA) Australia for Community Health, NORAD of Norway Embassy for Adult Education for women etc.

During the period between 1988 and 2001 we received

200 Non-formal Centers from the Ministry of Human Resource Development for 200 Adivasi and Dalit Hamlets/villages with which we covered the whole of Sadar Block of Dhenkanal District. With this activity, Samajik Seva Sadan surged to the lime light in Dhenkanal District and in the State of Orissa. We have educated more than 25000 Adivasi and Dalit children up to 5th standard. We were the first one to receive the State Award from Odisha State Youth Culture Department in the year 1988 as the "Best Voluntary Organization of Odisha."

0.2 A Nest for the Rest of My Journey

From February 1988 began the exercise for starting a family life as an individual with a commitment to work for the poor. Three proposals (arranged by my brothers from Kerala) got fizzled because no Bsc. Nurses wanted to live a hard life in the villages of Odisha.

So I returned to Dhenkanal and proposed to Veronica Dung Dung first among the 13 lady teachers we had in these 8 schools, because she had the attitude and determination to take up challenges and hardship. After getting the consent of Veronica's father, I completed all the formalities in Sundargarh with Khadia Samaj and got no objection certificate. In the meanwhile, I got permission letter from the Vicar of St. George Church Kaipuzha to marry in the Latin Rite Church by paying the stipulated Rs 500.

Veronica and I got married on 14th September 1988 at Banjhikusum on a Mandap made under the same Kusum tree (where she had began the education program for the 28 Juanga Tribal Children in 1982), officiated by two priests, attended by 14 close relatives including my mother, one bus load people Veronica's relatives from Sundargarh and 1500 people of 10 villages, many friends from Dhenkanal Town and the entire community of Montfort School.

0.3 Life in the Promised Land of the Poor

We propagated Ferro-Cement Technology in Odisha through the support of Capart from 1988 to 1990. Action Aid came in a big way with 500 sponsorships during the period from 1993 to 2002. 48 villages became self reliant with this program. NORAD too came to support us to fight against Pollution in Angul, Talcher Dhenkanal from 1993 to 1996. This project was executed in association with a Network of 22 Organizations in the District.

The period from 1994 to 2008 saw the birth of another meaningful project of rehabilitating the Leprosy affected people of Dhenkanal supported by Andheri Hilfe, Germany.

On a four acres of land purchased near the Dhenkanal Railway Station, we built 62 family quarters with attached bathroom with 24 hours water supply. Water supply was made from a deep bore well which we had dug. A 18000 liter water tank was constructed for supplies to kitchen, bath room and latrine.

A community centre and a Health centre too were constructed in the colony which was christened as “Navajeevan Nagar (NN)”. To prevent the inhabitants of Navajeevan Nagar from begging, 3 Self Help Group (SHG) were formed and with a funding of Rs. 50,000/- each for Income Generating Activity. Thanks to our efforts and God’s mercy, there are no more beggars in NN since 2010 till today.

“A Flagship program of SSS” Extention:

In 2003 we shifted our activity to Subdega Block of Sundargarh District. Caritas supported us for 2 years. With support from the Ministry of HRD, we conducted a Girls Hostel for Adivasi girls of High school and Plus Two College of Subdega for 3 years.

Andheri Hilfe, being thrilled by our activity at Dhenkanal of Rehabilitating the Leprosy affected people, volunteered to support us in our Mission Station at Subdega from 2006 onwards till now.

We have formed 4 Self Help Cooperatives with 2300 Adivasi women as its members from 2006 to 2014, who has Rs. 1,58,000,00/- as their running capital. It is unbelievable – from not having any saving with them when we started now each women/family has own saving of any amount between Rs. 20,000/- to Rs One Lakh and above! We have no control or stake in this program, The Board of Directors (BOD) who have appointed their own Managers who are managing it independently from 2015.

“Another Flagship program of SSS”.

From 2010 onwards, we began a project for 68 villages/Hamlets of 4 Gram Panchayat (GPs) with programme titled “Integrated Sustainable Village Development” (ISVD). All the wells in the villages are being repaired/reconstructed, getting Lift Irrigation points operational by providing pump sets, pump house and water tanks to divert water for irrigation.

Next allied activity consists of growing Fruit tree plantation along with Kitchen Garden, Trenching Bonding to stop land erosion, Gully plugging, Water Harvesting Structures, Pond digging and developing old ponds, Land development for cultivation with an idea of allowing the water to seep in to the earth to raise the water table, for better agricultural activities. The project is run in a

Watershed model – Treating the land, saving the water, better agriculture, protect the forest environment for a better living caring for 6 Js = Jal (Water), Jungle (Forest), Jantu (Animals) Jevan (Life) Jameen (Land) Jal-vayu (Environment). This project is expected to be completed in 2020.

0.4 Gangapur Industirial Training Institute And Anubhuti Ashraya Sthali - Two Projects with No funding

“ GITI Expected to be another Milestone in our existence as a Montfortian”.

In 2010, we started an ITI named “Gangpur Industrial Training Institute” at Subdega Sundargarh. We have 2 trades: Fitter Electrician with a total intake is 42 students per year. Every year we get 25 to 35 students. This institution is for the development of the Adivasi and Dalit youth with skill development so that after completion of their schooling, they become employable in Big Cities such as Gove for Fishing industry, Suret to Chemical/Fabric Industries etc for sustainable livelihood.

The running of the GITI is a huge challenge because, the because the students are unable to pay their annual fee of Rs. 15000/- Out of the 224 students passed out, they are yet to pay Rs.13,0000/- as fees to GITI. Of course these are credit on us.

We started a new activity at Banjhikusum, Dhenkanal - It is an Old Age Home named “Anubhuti Ashraya Sthali” set for Old Ladies of Juanga Tribes. They are one of the primitive Tribes of Odisha. We started it at Banjhikusum in April 2017 with the approval of the Governing Body of the Society with 5 inmates. The Old Age Home was officially inaugurated on 18th April 2018 by Officers from District Administration and local MLA with 10 Old Ladies.

Today, like the GITI, "Anubhuti Ashraya Sthali " do not have any source of funding is managed by whatever possible by the Founders of SSS (Emmanuel and Veronica)- who started with nothing except Divine Providence -

who spent whatever Divine Providence showered along the way with their added love and dedication till now and continue to be the conduit of Divine Providence to needy around.

And while looking forward to a sustainable means of operations for these two projects to get roots to grow and wings to fly through Angels on the journey, the exodus continues to where the Divine Providence takes us both and manifests..

(Thank You - Veronica and Emmanuel. Concluded)

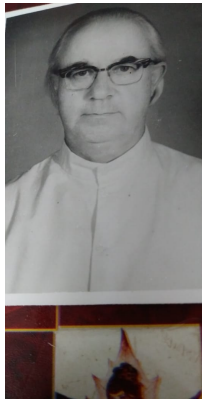
[Back to Contents](#)

Br Charles Garnier...

Recalls Br Paulose Mekkunel SG ...

Charlie Darling Continues to inspire...

Charlie Darling, self translation of the French name, Charles garner. He was my Novice Master. His commitment to his vocation to be a Montfortian Gabrielite was complete. More than half his 62 years of missionary life in India was spend in the formation houses. He transcended the ways and values of this world and lived by the values of the Kingdom of God; that was his spirituality, holiness and greatness. While remembering him let us pray to him for a share of that holiness.



Writes MGA Wilson... On 22 September we fondly remembre one of the great souls ,who have touched us, in one way or the other. Most of us would have had the privilege to have met him, some would have had the privilege to live with him...and so on...Bro. CHARLIE DARLING

On this day, 1998, as he had already prepared many to take over the tasks he was shouldering, left us to join his Mother and Master.

Please pay your homage to this great soul... .

Reminisces MGA Crysothem... Charliedarling was my role model.From the time i entered juniorate.He trusted me and gave me small responsibilities.He developed my self confidence and trust.i had the privilege of living with him for morethan years in Santhome.i had the previlige to take care of him.In his lastdaysto arrange last journey to Eachankkadu.His memory is alwaysin my heart. I arranged for telecasting his demise and his profile in Doordharshan.

In the Words of Br Jose Thottiyil... I remember Bro. Charlie Darling with lots of love, respect and veneration. He is one of the finest human beings I ever came across.I consider him as a true Montfortian and a spiritual leader for he was true to himself , to others and to God and he put into practice what he preached. I had the privilege of being guided for three years in the Juniorate at Coonoor and one year in Eachinkadu -A noble person far beyond the ordinary. He has touched the hearts of all those people, particularly the formees. I cannot forget him..writes Br Jose Thottiyil SG.

Br Mani Mekkunel Muses... Charlie Darling! I remember him fondly. He was my mentor, my model who guided me not only in the juniorate but even later. He was highly spiritual , at the same time fully human and alive to the needs of others. He has left indelible influence on me, on all who came into contact with him..writes Br Mani VJ SG

Br Jose MT tells ... I loved and adored Br Charlie Darling. He loved me too. He gave each of us so much. He was a devout man who loved the Congregation. His spirit was truly, purely Monfortan. He helped everybody. He was generous with his time, advice, prayer and friendship. All those he helped were stronger because of him. "Welldone, good and faithful servant " writes Jose MT

And Finally, the crowning glory of endearment from the one and only inimitable Joe Pathyil... .

Bro. Charles Garnier...!

Brother Charles Garnier Remembered on His Centenary Year 2015 (Joseph Pathyil)

MG Jacob, a former student of mine in Kazipet wrote to me: "Today I am writing to share an old memory - Bro Charles Garnier...whose feast falls today 26 September and who was born on Dec 15,1915 - 2015 being the Centenary of Bro Charles Garnier. Bro. Charles Garnier - whom you knew very well.

His handwriting was inspirational and aspirational on young minds to achieve. His smile and hale and hearty laughter rained emotions of joy, love and acceptance. His systematic approach to doing things calmly instilled courage and confidence in others. I recall the bubbly manner in which his feast day used to be celebrated.

The words of Jacob set me thinking of Bro. Charles. In 1947 when I came to Coonoor to join the Juniorate (it was then called Juvenate and we were called Juvenists), Bro. Charles was the assistant director under Bro. Mickael (Thatha as we knew him).

Bro. Charles impressed the youngsters with his punctuality, meticulous bearing , pleasant demeanour and personal spirituality. He was the organist in the chapel where Thatha was the choir master. Bro. Charles was a musiciand a composer. He taught us the new National Anthem of India " Jana Gana Mana". Sometime during the school year of 1947-48, Bro. Rembert Marie, the Assistant to Superior General visited Coonoor. Bro. Charles composed a song for the occasion.I still remember a few lines:

Our banner of freedom waving in the breeze;

It's the gold, and the white, and the green ever so bright,

Of a people contented and bles'd. !

In 1948 Bro. Charles was made the director of the Juniorate. He remained in that capacity for almost twenty

years. He trained hundreds of youngsters, taught them good manners, English, palmer method of handwriting, basics of religion and encouraged each one to grow in his own unique fashion. He was always with the youngsters; he never showed fatigue or ennui; he never complained; he never spoke ill of anyone. As he supervised the juniors in the study, he read and wrote. Numerous are the books that he absorbed and he always had a copy book and pen to write down important passages and his own reflections. From time to time he would re-read the copious notes and rearrange them by subject and topics. That was his education. Denied formal education in a college, Bro. Charles more than made up for it, by his voracious reading and personal learning. Of course spirituality was his primary subject of study. Theology and Philosophy, as also psychology and metaphysics were his self-imposed curriculum.

In 1950 when my batch moved on to the Novitiate which was in the same premises, Bro. Charles taught us French. He continued to keep an affectionate eye on us and we were free to go and chat with him. Seven years later, on my graduation from Teachers college, Bro. Charles, who in addition was the director of the community of Coonoor, asked that I be appointed headmaster of the school. As an untested youngster of less than twenty three, I had my fears and doubts. But Bro. Charles instilled confidence in me, and encouraged me to undertake bold and risky reforms in the school. He was the anager and correspondent of the school. He made it known to all that he had full confidence in the new headmaster.

My tenure as headmaster for five years was successful certainly with the blessing and backing of Bro. Charles. I consulted him and the community on every aspect of the school. It was his unwavering support that I remember to this day with gratitude. He was the also the director of the community of which I was a member. Our relationship was ever cordial. We spent many hours in conversation about every conceivable topic. His learning and well-grounded conviction after a lapse of seven years, was evident. Bro. Charles learned on the job. He matured in his thinking. He constantly examined and re-examined every aspect of life and was willing to hear other points of view.

I would call the years up to 1960 his period of piety and devotion. In addition to his responsibility as director of the Juniorate he established branches of The Legion of Mary in the parishes of Ootty diocese. Bishop Padyara appointed him the animator of Legion of Mary activities. By 1957 Bro. Charles was a member of the provincial council. Therefore he could at least persuade the Provincial Superior and those in authority to think out of the box. Also he did everything possible to ensure that St. Antony's was well served.

There were at least two times when I was to be transferred to other schools where there were emergencies. But Bro. Charles fought tooth and nail against such moves, saying that St. Antony's required a steady hand. In 1962 when I was asked to assume responsibility of St. Gabriel's, Kazipet, Bro. Charles could not very well protest. He let

me go with his blessings. I still kept in touch with him.

In 1960, after a lapse of 27 years or so, he went back to Canada for a brief visit. He also spent a few months in Belgium where he attended the second novitiate. This was the time when Pope John XXIII had called the Council of Vatican II. Catholic world, especially in Europe and America, was agog. There were great expectations, loud debates, and hopes for modernizing the church. Bro. Charles was in Canada and Europe during that period and absorbed much. When he returned to India, he was a changed person in his thinking and outlook. We could call this the period of enquiry. He studied the documents of Vatican II and hoped for its implementation in the congregation and in the church. In 1965 he was appointed the Master of Novices in which position he served for several years. Later he was appointed animator of communities in India. Bro. Charles spent time in communities to observe, advise, and give talks. He was also invited by other religious communities and priests for talks. He advocated for priesthood in the congregation, though he himself declined the invitation to be ordained.

In 1967 when I immigrated to Canada, the immigration officer asked me where in Canada I wanted to go to. Unhesitatingly I said "Montreal" as I had heard so much about that city from Bro. Charles. He was born in the suburbs of Montreal, grew up in the city. He used to describe the climate of the place, the geography, the institutions, his beloved St. Joseph's Oratory etc. Etc. Therefore when I landed in Montreal it was as if I had known the place since boyhood. I kept in correspondence with him almost till the very last.

In 1982 I, along with a few of his former students, invited him to Canada and volunteered to pay his entire trip. He accepted. Bro. Charles had his brothers and sisters in and around Montreal. But he preferred to stay with us. He also spent many days with the communities of the brothers. He was asked to give conferences to various groups. When we took him to attend holy Mass in the local church, the priest invariably asked him to deliver the homily. The few months Bro. Charles spent among us were memorable.

In 1997 a few of us who had joined the juniorate in 1947, decided to meet again in Coonoor to reminisce over the fifty years. We invited Bro. Charles to join and preside over the week-long retreat. By this time Bro. Charles had doubts about the possibilities of change and transformation according to the desires of Vatican II. I would call this the period of resignation. He was involved in Basic Christian communities- an idea that was borrowed from South American countries. Chennai where he spent the last few years was his field of apostolate. He did not involve himself in the communities of Brothers, though he followed with interest and some misgiving the changes taking place in India. But he concentrated in this field of apostolate in which he found some satisfaction.

Bro. Charles was one who lived what he preached. But he did not parade his spirit of poverty. He was a deeply spiritual person, always seeking, always ready for the Spirit (as he often remarked), willing to listen, ready to embrace all, and believing in Divine Providence. I cherish

his memory.

I have written about Bro. Charles Garner (I preferred Charles to Charlie Darling, though his last name being Ladouceaur, meant darling) and it was published in his obituary booklet. Suffice it to restate that he was one of the truly religious, sincere, faithful religious whom I have met in my life. He was a self-taught person. He was constantly learning. After he returned from his second novitiate his attitude to piety and devotions evolved. Bro. Charles was immersed in the study of the documents of Vatican II. He was invited to become a priest for the congregation. But he refused for very personal reasons. Instead he became a councilor to priests and bishops.

Incidentally Bro. Charles taught all his students palmer method of handwriting.

A version of that method is the unique handwriting of the brothers. There is much more to describe Bro. Charles.



If there is a person who has certainly gone to his heavenly reward, it is Bro. Charles.

[Back to Contents](#)

October Events . . .

Several events are celebrated during the month of October around the world. These listed to invite the interest of the readers and stimulate their cerebral prowess.

- 1 October International day of the Older person
- 2 October Mahatma Gandhi birthday, International day of non-violence
- 3 October World Habitat Day, World nature day
- 4 October World Animal Welfare Day
- 5 October World Teacher's day
- 8 October Indian Air Force Day
- 9 October World Post Office day
- 10 October National Post Day
- 11 October International girl child day
- 12 October World Arthritis day
- 13 October UN International Day for National disaster reduction
- 14 October World Standards Day
- 15 October World White Cane Day (guiding the Blind)
- 16 October World Food Day
- 17 October International day for the eradication of poverty
- 20 October World statistics day
- 24 October UN Day, World development information Day
- 30 October World Thrift Day

MGAs may like to write on any of them to demonstrate how these events have benefited human kind. Such writings would inspire others to nurture the humanity around us to demonstrate the Divinity that drives us on.

[Back to Contents](#)

From Thailand . . .

MA Brothers and Sisters -13 May Deeply saddened to be informed by President Dr. Damrong that Mr. Praphotrak emotion, former MA chairman, has left us back to the Father this afternoon with congestive heart failure. Details will notify the MA brothers again. Asking for prayers from everyone that God may have mercy on your soul. Entering into heaven soon. Mourning poem Mr. Praphot loves emotion. *****

Like a thunderbolt

Hit in the heart.

Among the friends.

Sad. The soul.

Just think about it.

It's appalling

The fiber is coming quickly.

Lost.

Leaving us.

So cool. My mind is done.

I can only be sad.

Keep an eye on one person.

Be the president.

The good one.

I only give.

Physical and mental breakdown

Fight and endure.

A person who understands me.

Love both monks.

And human beings.

So deeply.

It's my place.

Poor kid.

Sincerely.

Be a leader.

Nava

Wind, waves.

Not smooth.

The boat is acting like a pose

I thought I would go down.

He took his teeth.

Keep going.

Not abandoning.
 And everything else.
 Results come out
 Admirable
 Take a rest.
 Sleep well.
 In God.
 Along with the guys
 Thewa.
 On the clear sky.

Our MA
 I will walk.
 Heading to the head
 Let's meet again
 In heaven.
 That day.
 ***** GOD ALONE Rest in Peace
 Mr.President Praphot.
 Several events are celebrated during the month of October
 around the world.These listed to invite the interest of the
 readers and stimulate their cerebral prowesses.



Praphotrak Past MA Chairman . . .



MA Thailand Recent Pictures . . .



1963 newly professed undergoing Post novitiate in Tindi and other scholastics: Sitting: 1. James 2. Corentin 3. T. Tolentino 4. John of the Cross (Provincial) 5. Gabriel Marie (S. General) 6. Philip (Superior) 7. M. Paul 8. Oliver 9. Andrew Standing 1st row: Xavier Montfort 2. Aloysius 3. Joseph Montfort 4. M.P. Antony 5. Peter Verona 6. K.A. Thomas 7. Thomas Montfort 8. Joseph Louis 9. P.L. Paul 10. Philip 2nd row: 1. Bosco Raphael 2. Chacko 3. Louis Minj 4. Jacob Parayanilam 5. Jebamalaiddoss 6. Vincent of Sienna 7. George Arackathottam 3rd row: 1. Promod 2. P.J. Abraham 3. Philip 4. Lechai 5. Edmund 6. Kannung 7. Amnuay 8. Prabho 9. Antony G

1964 profession group



Sitting: 1. Berchmans 2. Stephen 3. Chaplain 4. Amance 5. Stanislaus 6. Maurille Standing 1st row: 1. Punoose 2. Linus Kerketta 3. Carlos Minj 4. Paul Arome 5. Albert Selvaraj 6. Mathew Panamthanath 7. BO Sebastian 8. Selvanathan 9. KV Paul 10. MM Francis 11. Varghese 2nd row: 1. Antony Kizhakel 2. Davis Vadassery 3. Jacob Pynadeth 4. Thomas Madapallikunnel 5. Jacob Mathalikunnel 6. Michael Thinarathna 7. Joseph Regis 8. AV Thomas 9. Thomas Tharavil 10. Mani OT 11. Jose Daniel



To Nurture Care and Share ...



MA Annual Meet August 20 ...



MA Annual Meet August 20 . . .



MA Annual Meet August 20 . . .



New Gen Montfortans 1980s ...



Visiting Br Mathias ...

[Back to Contents](#)

Br Berchmans ...

1.Bro. John Kallarackal Superior General :BRO. BERCHMANS – AN ICON OF SIMPLICITY AND FAITH
As I recall the memory of Bro. Berchmans, I am reminded of the oft quoted verse from H. W. Longfellow: “Lives of great men all remind us that we can make our lives sublime, and departing leave behind us footprints on the

sands of time”! How fast time flies!

It does not feel like it has been nearly a year since our dear Bro. Berchmans left us to return to the house of his Father. The grief is still fresh. The tears on the cheeks have dried, but not the tears in our hearts! The memory of Bro. Berchmans teaches us the greatness of his simplicity.

His memory is a sterling lesson of a living faith in God and an unconditional trust in His divine Providence. All those who have lived with Bro. Berchmans will vouch for the fact that his life was a story of full and unconditional dependence on the power of God and the strength of prayer. I had the privilege of being acquainted with Bro. Berchmans since I joined the Eachinkadu Novitiate in 1964, where he was our Socius. What has impressed us most since those days was his striking simplicity, unquestioned integrity, unparalleled enthusiasm, and a positive attitude towards life and people. Bro. Berchmans was also my Director when I began my teaching in Mattampally. There is no doubt that Bro. Berchmans appeared to be a taskmaster as a teacher or as a head of an institution, but as Oliver Goldsmith humorously put it, "If severe in ought, the love that he bore for learning was at fault"!

Bro. Berchmans' life as a missionary in Tanzania

Bro. Berchmans' life as a missionary in Tanzania was a period when he was able to bring out the best in him; his Montfortian missionary dynamism, his Deshayen audacity in mission, his persuasive skills and his unwavering love for the Congregation. Even during the evening time of his life spent in St. Paul's High School, Hyderabad, he used to seriously propose to me, during my visits, his desire to go back to East Africa once again!

The classical statement of Leonardo da Vinci, truly characterizes his missionary sojourn: "I love those who can smile in trouble, who can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection. It is the business of little minds to shrink, but they whose heart is firm and whose conscience approves their conduct will pursue their principles unto death".

Apparent failures or occasional criticisms did not deter Bro. Berchmans from pursuing his goal with steadfast devotion and absolute trust in God. Those of us, who were witnesses of the last stage of his life here on earth, will recall how calm and serene he appeared, and that he had only one deep desire, and that was 'to dwell in the house of the Lord'.

He was a typical example of the kind of a just and courageous person that Mark Twain describes: "The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time". Therefore, as we recall the beautiful life of our dear Brother Berchmans today, let us draw inspiration from his life and labors, let us console ourselves with the words of Lord Jesus himself: "Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in ME. In my Father's house there are many mansions; if it were not so, I would not have told that I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn. 14: 1-2). Bro. John Kallarackal Superior general Rome

2.The Funeral Oration by BRO. PRATAP REDDY PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR ON 20-09-2016

Death, the last sleep – No, it is the final awakening – Walter Scott. We have lost a passionate missionary, an ardent religious who lived his life for others in God.

Your grace Most Rt. Rev. Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro diocese in Tanzania, Rev. Bro. Franky

Noronha, the Provincial Superior of the Province of Pune, Rev. Bro. Mariannan, Provincial Superior of Province of Trichy, Rev. Bro. K.K. Thomas, representative of the Provincial Superior and Brothers of Yercaud, bereaved family members of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, bereaved family members of Bro. Berchmans, Brothers from other Provinces, Staff and Mr. Surinder Singh Sahani, his beloved student from St. Mathew's Public School, Vijayawada and other students from various Institutions, friends and well-wishers, I express my heartfelt condolences to each one of you.

We have come in large numbers from far and wide to pay our last homage to our Bro. Berchmans. We have come to accompany him on his last journey. The family that nurtured him and loved him; the family of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel into which God called him to be a brother to all; teachers, former students and others from where that Bro. Berchmans was called by God to serve His people – from Mattampally which was his first love, from Kazipet and Vijayawada, from Repalle, Nalgonda, Kurnool, Hyderabad...

We are fortunate to have Most Rev. Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro diocese in Tanzania, and Bro. Jimmy, the District Superior of East Africa, the mission that Bro. Berchmans pioneered.

Bro. Berchmans had a fall in the toilet on 17.8.2016. He had a normal day. After the school hours he rested a while and then went to the toilet before coming for a cup of tea. Since there was no response after repeated calls by Bro. Rayappa, the Local Superior, his door had to be broken open and he was found lying on the floor of the toilet. Immediately he was taken to Apollo Hospital. Tests revealed that he had seizures in the brain on account of which a part of the brain has been affected severely due to lack of oxygen supply.

Doctors in Apollo and other specialists from other hospitals tried to revive the condition but still unable to do it.. From then on Bro. Berchmans was in a semi unconscious state. He opened his eyes for a while but was unable to focus or recognize anything or anyone. He was then shifted to Vijaya Marie Hospital for nursing care. There was no improvement in his health condition. Later shifted to the Provincial house. As he was not responding, he had to be shifted to Global hospitals. There it was found that kidney was not functioning.

Since he was not responding to medication, he was shifted to St. Ann's hospital, Jahanuma where he breathed his last on 17.9.2016 at 4.45pm.

I was on my visitation of communities in Tanzania. It was difficult for me to leave him and go for the visitation. On 17.9.2016 I and Bro. Jimmy, the Dist. Superior were on the way to Rujewa, a pioneering place of Bro. Berchmans. A few days before that I had a feeling that Bro. Berchmans may not allow me to reach Rujewa. It was after having lunch at St. Ann's, CSA, convent, in Mafinga, another 3 hrs journey to Rujewa, that we received this painful news that Bro. Berchmans was no more.

To remember Bro. Berchmans at a moment like this is to let his loving warmth, the joy, the passion, the commitment, the Godliness, the grit, the obstinacy, the hope ... All these and more that we have experienced in him resonate within us. He was a man without any guile, who had smiles to brighten up our days who always made us to feel good with his warm words of praise and encouragement. He was a person solid in his convictions. He had no complaints, never grumbled, always cheerful and energetic. His sheer energy and commitment always surprised many.

His life was simple and uncomplicated. He lived for the poor. For him 'service' is the rent he paid for being a tenant on the Earth. The utter simplicity of his person, his deep spirituality, his unalloyed love for the Church, for the Congregation, the mission entrusted to him wherever, and whenever he was called to serve... We remember it all with deep gratitude.

Thomas as Bro. Berchmans was named at Baptism was born on 22 January, 1935 to Mr. Kurian and Mrs. Annamma of Elakodickal family at Kidangoor in the Kottayam Diocese of Kerala. His vocation was encouraged and promoted by late Bro. Stanislaus Joseph and joined as a Candidate at Connor in May 1950. After the initial formation at Yercaud, he committed himself with his first vows in May 1956 at Eachinkadu. His final profession was on the Christmas day of 1961 at Yercaud.

He completed his undergraduate studies as well as Post-graduation in course of time. He obtained his professional qualification in Education in 1960. Even as he studied, he also gave himself to the education mission first at All Saints under the tutelage of Bro. John of God from 1956 to 1960. The Superiors searching for inspiring formators found one in him. He was appointed to teach and form young novices at Yercaud in 1960 where he would remain till 1965 when he was transferred to the Scholasticate for young Brothers as their Local Superior at Kazipet. Formation of young Brothers was a mission that he would be repeatedly called to during his years of Religious Life. Almost till the end. Many of us have been the beneficiaries of his wise guidance and compassionate accompaniment. Perhaps the most memorable of his mission was his seven years tenure at VV High School, Mattampally, a hard to reach village in Nalgonda District. He along with his small band of Brothers transformed the village. Thanks to his leadership, the village received not only education, but road, bus service, electricity, water...

He had this rare quality to love people unconditionally. And people loved him in return... There are numerous stories of how he touched the lives of people and how they found a promising future for themselves. It is a story that will be repeatedly repeated at every place he served whether it is at St. Gabriel's, Kazipet, St. Mathew's, Vijayawada or elsewhere. He worked for the welfare of everyone. It is when he was at his prime of success as an able educationist and administrator that he received the call to be a missionary in the far off Tanzania in East

Africa.

It was exactly on this day, 20.9. 1985 he set his foot in Tanzania as a passionate Missionary. He became something of a legend in this far off land. Rujewa, a remote village in the Rift Valley itself has become something of a landmark in evolving a model of education that was not confined to mere class room teaching, but one that was a beautiful mixture of agriculture and other related vocations.

The place still reverberates with the loving and yet firm gaze of their 'Babu' as he was affectionately called by his students, parents, teachers, villagers and the government officials he befriended alike. At the same time he was also the Mission Superior of the Montfort Brothers in East Africa, seeking new opportunities in new dioceses, nurturing vocations, guiding the Brothers. Thanks to the strong foundations he laid to this important mission, it has flourished and is at the threshold to become a brand new Province in the Congregation.

Thanks to the patronage he provided for the CSA Sisters congregation by inviting them to work in Tanzania and he cared for them. Sr. Rose Linda, Mother General of CSA congregation and her Council and the cities in Tanzania acknowledge his patronage and guidance with deep sense of gratitude.

He came back to India a bit tired and frail from his long years of toil and sweat in his newly adopted home land that he loved immensely and was always ready to go back to. But He was called on to shoulder other pioneering responsibilities in the Province. The first was the new school at Repalle, then St. Mary's Junior College at Kurnool, Montfort School for the Savara Tribal children at Gopalapuram... yes he was always prepared for more, in the most remote of places.

His mind was always alert and willing to serve God in his people. But his body was beginning to take the toll of his years of toil even harder. His superiors insisted that he slows down a little. He was sent to St. Paul's High School, Hyderabad. He would spend the last 11 years of his life there, incessantly working almost till the last.

Bro. Berchmans was frail in body, but stout hearted with passion for life and for God's mission. He seldom lived for himself, but always for others. He could be obstinate and even stubborn. But not for his self-interest, but for what he saw was right and truthful, and usher in a greater good. Province of Hyderabad. What is it that sustained him through all these years of his commitment as a Religious Brother? A deep faith in God supported by uncompromising faithfulness to his spiritual exercises. In many ways he was of the old school in his religious convictions and loyalties. But he found in it the creative energy necessary to tide through the many transitional periods he had to live through – the privations of the Great War, the freshness of a free country, the effervescence of the Second Vatican Council, the period of post-modernism, the internet, the affluence, wealth and corruption that the current generation lives through...

But he had his compass turned always in the right direction, never deviating, always searching for what God willed for him. And he obeyed. And he prayed. He loved the Church, his Congregation, his brothers, and the mission entrusted to him. He had tremendous love for Blessed Virgin Mary and remained a faithful disciple of St. Montfort. He gave his everything to these fundamentals of his calling. And these sustained him till the very end. He was the first Brother who inspired and made a great impact in my life. He always cared for me like his son. I'm sure all of us had experienced his love. He was my spiritual guide right from the time I joined as a candidate. He always guided me.

In these times of lack of role models 'Bro. Berchmans stood out as a bright star with his striking simplicity and dependence on the Providence of God. He always touched my life and reminded me of my Spiritual life, particularly praying the Rosary and being generous with everyone. His prayer life, penance and mortifications ever inspiring and motivating for me. He was truly a holy person. We who were touched by him even remotely found him a blessing that multiplied many fold. We will miss his mischievous and contagious smile, his child like simplicity, his enthusiasm for new things to do, his words of encouragement. But we know these are blessings his memory will continue to nurture in us.

As we lay him to rest with immense love and commend him to God who was the reason of his life, we pray that God accepts the oblation of his life. And make him a continued blessing for all of us. Dear Loving Bro. Berchmans, Those we love don't go away, You walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near, Still loved, still missed and very dear.

In the words of Irvin Berlin, 'The song is ended, but the melody lingers on...' May the soul of Bro. Berchmans rest in peace. God bless us all. (Bro. Pratap Reddy, Provincial Superior).

3. Bro. Jimmy Kalapurayil SG District Superior

Bro. Berchmans is one of the Pioneers of the East African Mission, who is fondly remembered by one and all. His missionary dynamism coupled with Iron will, deep faith, strong commitment, utter simplicity, champion of the poor are qualities that we continue to cherish even after his missionary life in East Africa.

He was truly a model and a missionary par excellence, for the budding mission as he always placed his trust in the Providence of God like our founder St. Montfort. He was a brother for all, true to his call and he made a difference in the life of the people for he touched the hearts of many. It is with a heavy heart that I pay rich tribute to this great Brother of ours but with a firm believe that he is interceding for us in heaven.

It was on the 20th September 1985, 31 years ago, that Bro. Berchmans along with Bro. N. F. Joseph, took the flight to Tanzania to Join Bro. Lambert. He was the first Mission Superior, founder Director of the first Community

at Rujewa and a Second Community at Dar Es Salaam. He worked in Tanzania till the year 2000 thus completing 15 committed years of service in the Mission Land.

He was truly a missionary with a vision. He captured the mind and heart of all by his total commitment and hard work. I had the opportunity to be with him in 1991 at Rujewa when I joined the mission immediately after my first profession along with Bro. Sudhakar and Bro. Peter Ekka.

A Loving Tribute to a Great Pioneering Missionary

I always admired his exemplary life and committed service to the people. He was truly an inspiration for me in my missionary life. People affectionately and respectfully called him in Kiswahili, 'Babu' which meant a man of wisdom.

Once he was convinced of doing something, nothing could deter him. He could walk into any office and present his case convincingly to get the work done. He also had the special gift of writing projects and getting money at the initial stages of our mission. I was happy and privileged to represent my Brothers, collaborators and former students from the District of East Africa for the funeral service.

My renewed heartfelt condolences to the Montfortian family, especially to the Province of Hyderabad, to the bereaved members of his loving family, old students and others. Bro. Berchmans, we are going to miss you but your life and example will continue to manifest among us, inspiring us always to give ourselves entirely to God. We pray that the merciful God welcome you to his Kingdom, where one day we too shall join you.

It was God's Providence that the funeral Mass was led by Rt. Rev. Telesphore Mkude, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Morogoro, Tanzania, who is a friend and a father to us. I take this opportunity to thank his Lordship, Bishop Mkude for this blessing to us and it was truly a rich and powerful tribute to our great Brother. Ningependa kuchukua fursa hii kutoa shukrani zetu za dhati kwa Mhashamu Baba Askofu, Telesphore Mkude kuongoza Misa Takatifu kwa Mpendwa wetu, Bro. Berchmans.

May the departed soul of Bro. Berchmans through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen. (Bro. Jimmy Kalapurayil sg District Superior)

4. BRO. BERCHMANS, I MISS YOU By Bro. James NA

Bro. Berchmans and I had association of last 40 years. He recruited me as a young boy of 13 years. He brought me to Kazipet by train in the year 1975 from Kerala. He was my Principal till 9th class in 1977 at St. Gabriel's High School Kazipet. Then I lost contact with him till 1982 when I came to study my College in Patamata, Vijayawada as a young Brother. Then he, apparently, saw me changed from an innocent boy whom he brought, to a rebellious young man. Well that is history.

Even today when Brothers in the Province of Hyder-

abad associate Bro. James N.A and Bro. Berchmans, it is mischievously as someone who was sent to exile to Mattampally for bunking exam. Brothers think that I hold that exile against Bro. Berchmans. But today when I think of that one year I can say that, that one year made me tough in my conviction to continue as a Religious and I still hold Bro. Berchmans as one of my mentors in Religious life.

Very recently when I visited him in St. Pauls during one of my holidays in India from Tanzania I told him that I considered him as one of my mentors. It is only then that even Bro. Berchmans started thinking that I did not hold that exile experience against him. I remember with a tinge of mischief the numerous occasions we Scholastics used to play innocent pranks on Bro. Berchmans and remember fondly what a great person he was to have tolerated all such instances.

In the same breath I say that he was one of the Brothers who cared for the young Brothers, the future of the Congregation. He mentored them. I am sure many Brothers will vouch for it though all will remember him as belonging to the Old school of spirituality. Whether old or new he was a deeply spiritual person. I salute him for his missionary dynamism.

At an age when ordinary mortals would have been concerned with their health and security, an asthmatic, at 50 years of age dared to come to Tanzania in 1985 and he was here till year 2000. Every stone here in Rujewa will tell the tale of sheer tenacity and grit of Bro. Berchmans, like writing to funding agencies, going to the educational departments and offices of Ministry of education, getting the necessary permissions for starting Montfort Agricultural School in Rujewa and getting the land for our Head Quarters in Dar-es-Salaam etc...

The way he managed to get electricity in Dar-es-Salaam campus is oft repeated by Brothers who know him at close quarters. Bro. Berchmans has a penchant for getting electricity connection in rural areas. Mattampally is a standing example for it in India. The Catechist Sisters of St. Ann's Congregation will remember Bro. Berchmans as the one who gave a missionary opening to them in the African Continent.

Coming back to India from Tanzania at the age of 65 in the year 2000 after spending his prime age of Religious Life, he was again going to Kurnool and other such places for the pioneering missions. These acts of him tell the amount of trust and confidence he had in His Lord.

Though wiry in looks he was nourished with the spiritual energy of his Master the Christ and Montfort who dared to take risk for if we did not, we did not do great things for God. After so many years of association, today I think of Bro. Berchmans with moisture in my eyes and a sigh in my heart.

It is painful to digest the fact that when in December this year, when I will be visiting Hyderabad on my holidays from Tanzania, I will miss meeting Bro. Berchmans and sharing memories of my mischievous pranks of the past and having a hearty laughter with him, but surely I will meet him at Boy's Town with a consoling thought that

he has gone before us to pray for us from proximity to his Lord and Master. *Dear Bro. Berchmans. Your Life was a Blessing Your memory a treasure You are loved beyond words You are missed beyond measure.*

5. Tribute by Br Joseph John Pannarakumnel

The richest man is not he who has the most, but he who needs the least.

Dear friends, we are commemorating the 1st death anniversary of our beloved Bro. Berchmans and this magazine is brought out as a souvenir in his honour. I am happy to scribble a few lines about this great Personality, inspiration to many and champion of the race! I too have some experiences that touched my life with this great Personality.

As we recall the memory of Bro. Berchmans who passed away to his Father's home on 17th September 2016, I remember many incidents of funs and frolics and touching events I had with him during those past years. I met Bro. Berchmans in 1989 when he visited the Pre-novitiate house at Uppal, Hyderabad. He came to visit the pre-novices here when he had come from Tanzania for his home leave and holidays. He was a simple and an unassuming person. We, pre-novices had an inspiring talk and interaction with him about our mission in Tanzania. He encouraged and welcomed us to join the Tanzanian Mission. This was an inspiration for me to join the Tanzania Mission.

After completing the pre-noviciate, as a candidate I landed here in Tanzania on August 11, 1990 to do my community experience as part of the Formation programme we had during those days. My first community was at Rujewa where Bro. Berchmans was the Local Superior and Headmaster. The school and community were in its inception stage. Now I can recall the experiences, the hard life and the struggles Brothers underwent during those days to bring up the institution.

Community life was very joyful with lots of fun and frolics. More than this, it was a praying community. I remember the regular spiritual exercises, Mass, praying the Rosary after the supper, walking in the courtyard of our community under the leadership of Bro. Berchmans... all these events are very vivid in my memory.

Bro. Berchmans had a firm determination and commitment in his words and action. No one could deter or change his mind in doing what he had decided. Even if someone tried to deter him, he would listen to the opinions with a smile and he would continue to execute his own plans and ideas!

Bro. Berchmans had special interest in me as I was interested in agricultural activities. The farm at Rujewa was in its beginning stage. I used to move around with the tractor drivers wherever they took the tractor either for ploughing or carrying loads. One day when he returned from Dar es Salaam, he gave me a pair of sunglass and gumboot, telling this would be very good help when I move around in the farm.

As time passed, the then Mission Superior decided to transfer me to Musoma community. This decision of the

Mission Superior saddened Bro. Berchmans.

One day I was coming from the field with the tractor accompanied by the driver, Bro. Berchmans was on a walk to the fields, seeing me on the tractor, showed hand and asked the driver to stop the tractor and asked me to get down from the tractor, instantly he told me in front of the driver and others you are going to be a teacher and not a driver, hereafter don't drive the tractor or go with the driver"...

He maintained good relations with the public, with the Government Officials and stakeholders. One day at his invitation, the then Mbeya Regional Commissioner with his officials visited the school. A warm reception was accorded to them. He had invited and insisted all the community members to be present in the reception accorded to the Regional Commissioner. I also went to see the programme and the function as it was new to me. I sat behind, in the corner of the hall.

He introduced all the Brothers who were present there to the Regional Commissioner and his officials, Praising the Brothers with their high academic qualifications and about the reputed institutions in India in which they worked to the sky high.

Seeing me sitting in the corner of the hall, he pointed the finger at me and he introduced to the Regional Commissioner and his officials "he is not a Brother, he is a candidate living with us."...

He also had a sense of 'innocent' humour that could make others to laugh till the stomach would get pain. One day we all were having our lunch. The telephone in the parlour rang and the kitchen boy went to attend it. The boy came back and told Bro. Berchmans, 'somebody is calling you from Mbeya' (Capital city of the Region). He told the kitchen boy, "give him a soda and ask him to sit there till I come."...

He was also a kind hearted, compassionate and a generous man. He had a special inborn knack to help others especially who were in trouble and in need. He went out of the way to help them. One day as Mission Superior, he visited Musoma community. There was an ex Brother of some congregation who was a staff meanwhile in our school and was struggling with life to meet the ends. Hearing his conditions from the Brothers, he instantly offered him some financial help. I too have benefitted from his generosity.

As a candidate I got a chance to visit Nairobi, Kenya. As Mission Superior, when he visited Musoma community along with his friend late Fr. Stephen (a priest from Meerut Diocese who was working as a missionary in Tanzania). Since Fr. Stephen wished to visit Kenya, Bro. Berchmans requested me to accompany him. That was an opportunity for me to visit Kenya. Similarly, I have heard

from many priests and religious who had experienced his kindness, compassion and benefitted a lot from his generosity... He was a man of God! His austere, unassuming and simple life styles were good examples for anyone to notice him as a man of God.

He was a man who moved around in simple dress... on a journey, with a cloth bag on his shoulder with millions of money in it... showing the toes of his leg through the torn socks...wishing everybody on the way with a broad smile... a man who least of bothered about himself... never spent anything extra on himself...found real happiness and joy in the welfare of others... a man with conviction and firm determination... dedicated and committed to do something for the congregation... friends of many people, officers and other stake holders...a man of sincerity, commitment, and simplicity...surely he was a man of God and who lived his life for others... Some of the actions of his simplicity, sincerity and commitment are very clear and vivid in my memory...

As other human beings, he was also a man with his strength and limitations. As a superior he was very strict with the religious values and principles, with himself and with other Brothers. He did not budge or compromise with any of these principles and values...consequently due to the human frailty or weakness, knowingly or unknowingly he might have hurt others.

I also have experienced some deep hurt feelings caused by his human weakness... But now as a matured person, when I look back and analyse those bitter incidents, I can ruminate those incidents as sweet memories of the past... If we believe in faith, nothing happens accidentally in life. Everything that happens in our life has a plan and purposes for God. I am not 'spiritualising' the bitter incidents that I had experienced from Bro. Berchmans. But these incidents of bitter feelings have strengthened me, guided me and taught me much in my religious life... Strong winds will strengthen a growing tree...

Bro. Berchmans has gone ahead of us to get his heavenly reward. He has left behind a great legacy and good memories to cherish. We are enjoying the fruit of his hard labour.

Thank you dear Bro. Berchmans for your committed and dedicated services you have done for the congregation and for the people in Tanzania. You were a hero and forerunner to many; you were the Champion of the race. Above all you were an inspiration to all. Your committed, dedicated services and the hard work, have contributed a lot for the Montfortian flag fly high in Tanzania. It is a fact and an open truth. And no one can deny this fact!

May the Almighty God reward you for your committed, dedicated and selfless services you have done for the Congregation and to the humanity. Along with St. Paul, you can also boldly say, "I have done my best in the race, I have run the full distance, and I have kept the faith. And now there is waiting for me the victory prize of being put right with God, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day – and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for him to appear." (2 Timothy 4: 7-8) We are sure that, you are in your heavenly abode. We earnestly request you to

continue to intercede to the Heavenly Father for each one of us!

Till we meet again with you in our heavenly home that has been prepared for each one of us, you may enjoy the eternal bliss and Rest In Peace (BRO. JOSEPH JOHN PANNARAKUM-NEL)

6.A LOVING TRIBUTE TO MY UNCLE Rev Bro. Berchmans Joseph SG By Cyriac Lukose A Champion of the Needy.

Bro. Berchmans Joseph is my maternal uncle and my role model. He lived dedicated religious life, and worked mostly in the impoverished villages in Andhra Pradesh, empowering the rural youth and later on, he volunteered to be a missionary and was given the assignment to build educational institutions in Mbeya, Rujewa, Tanzania. He enjoyed his work and did a yeomen service in his mission field.

I have vivid memory of him as a child. When I was at the age of 7, I got my first toy from him and I was very excited. Later in the evening I saw him walking up and down with a rosary in front of our house while I was saying rosary with my dad, mom, grandmother and my siblings. I noticed that he was different from my other uncles and so I wanted to be like him. Few years later at age 12, he recruited me to join the Montfort Brothers. Although I left the congregation at age 29, I still carry the Montfortian Spirit within me and I am serving as a Montfort Associate helping the brothers in Fiji mission, at Montfort Boys Town.

As a young Brother, I had visited him in Hyderabad few times and was so happy to see him always cheerful with a godly smile.

If you ask him a question, *How are you?* His answer always was, *I am superfine* He was a man of action. He bloomed where he was planted, whether it is in the remote village of Andhra Pradesh or in the poor section of Africa. He was a true follower of Montfort and always trusted in the divine providence.

The government of Tanzania gave him plenty of land and told him that they have no money but offered any support he needs. He would burn midnight oil typing letters to various funding agencies for help.

In 1991, I was able to get him to USA for a mission appeal and came to Chicago with a simple bag made of cloth. While examining I saw rusted blades which was good enough for him to do shaving. This explains how he truly practiced the vow of poverty. He taught Brothers in the novitiate and his students have great admiration for him. He touched everyone who came in contact with him.

While he visited Chicago, I was able to arrange for a two minutes talk about his mission, addressing Chicago Transport Workers Union at Plumbers Union Hall. He talked for 20 minutes and they want hear more about

his work in Africa. The employees were mostly African Americans and they wanted to hear about his mission in Africa and told, *This is our brother man* and opened their valet and contributed generously.

Late Cardinal of Chicago His Excellency Francis George was very impressed after meeting my uncle and requested the service of the Montfort Brothers in Chicago diocese to take up failing catholic high schools in Chicago. We still got a standing invitation to work in the educational field in Chicago.

Bro. Berchmans was a charismatic leader and a man of prayer. I never saw him get angry or boast about his work as he was a humble religious. He was a missionary with a vision and until he achieved his goal he never rested.

At his funeral, I was surprised to see a large number old people, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs besides Christians. The ladies were crying as they lost a champion of the poor. If he gets some money from us he will give it away to the poor and suffering and never spend for any of his needs.

This tribute is to pay respect and admiration for an unsung hero in the field of educational empowerment in a mission field both in India and Africa. He was fondly known as *Uncle Berchmans* by most people. He was a bright star, was mentor and a tireless missionary.

We thank you for all you have given us. We have been enriched by your ideas and inspired by your missionary spirit. We will miss you dearly and will always carry you in our hearts and minds. We will honor your spirit, compassion, kindness and dedication in all that we do and in all we come into contact. Uncle Berchmans, you are a leader, a blessing and a shining example not only to Montfort family but our family too. Continue to intercede for us in heave. May your soul rest in peace. (MR. CYRIAC LUCOSE)

7. BRO. BERCHMANS, A STAND-OUT MISSIONARY - Br NF Joseph SG

I pen these few lines in recalling the loving memory of Bro. Berchmans Joseph, a personality who through his life and work stood out as a religious and missionary and drew the attention of everyone wherever he was placed.

His achievements as a builder and head of institutions in India and as the founding superior of the Brothers' mission in Tanzania are notable. It may even be said that, if the District of East Africa has developed to the extent that it has and in comparably such a short time, it is because of the impetus he gave to it.

Therefore it is but right and just that the District of East Africa is bringing out a memoir on this great person and I am happy to be contributing my mite to it.

My first association with Bro. Berchmans was during my pre-novitiate days when he was in charge of the pre-novitiate camp of our batch. My need to look up to him for leadership and guidance continued to be there all through our association and lives together, even to the time when age and health had forced him to be not so

very active.

Living and working together for the many years that we did, especially in the mission land of Tanzania, made us grow fonder of each other. Bro. Berchmans came across sometimes as a man of many contradictions. Yet, the goodness in him outweighed by far whatever were his shortcomings.

In the year 1985 when the Province of Central India decided to open the mission in Tanzania by setting up a community of Brothers there, Bro. Berchmans was among its first volunteers. He was then also the automatic choice for heading the mission. It was the first foreign mission of the Indian Brothers. With all the uncertainties about life in an African land, not many would choose to go on this mission. And when I was asked if I would go to be a third member of the first community, I accepted knowing that the committed and ever reliable Bro. Berchmans was going to be there too. I thank God for this choice that I made, for the many years that I spent there were very fulfilling years.

Two centres of the Brothers in Tanzania that Bro. Berchmans is credited with for their founding and development are Montfort Sec. School, Rujewa and Montfort Technical Training Centre, Dar es Salaam. Both these centres developed well and fast. One could only marvel at his capacity for hard work, fund-raising, influence with people, numerous long and adventurous journeys, and the like which were needed and which enabled him to accomplish things. And these despite the fact that all through the years he was of indifferent health. He was also definite that he would not seek any financial assistance from the Province for the development of the mission. That perhaps was an indication of his faith and trust in God's providence and his own abilities.

The Montfort Sec. School at Rujewa, our first centre in Tanzania, was started a year ahead of schedule from what was fixed with the Bishop of the Iringa Diocese. And that came about because of the persistence of Bro. Berchmans with the diocesan authorities. That was another quality that enabled him to succeed in whatever he set out to do; persistence even to the extent of seemingly being obstinate. The Montfort School campus at Rujewa is a marvel considering how what was just a bush land when the Brothers went there was converted in a couple of years into a centre engaged in numerous activities; with a secondary school, a hostel for students, a juniorate (home for candidates), rice farm and orchards, and with all the structures and facilities needed for these.

Being the Brothers' first centre and community of the mission, he was keen to establish good traditions with respect to the life and apostolate of the Brothers, and he succeeded too in doing this to a great extent. He was a person who led by example. Wanting to expand the mission further, he now set his mind on having a centre in the city of Dar es Salaam.

He is much appreciated for the vastness of area and location of the land that he got from the Government for this purpose. The poor were always his focus of service. And that is what made him start a technical school here and name it Montfort Technical Training Centre. This subsequently became the headquarters of the mission too.

Bro. Berchmans left the mission and returned to India in the year 2000 after having rendered yeomen services there for 15 long years. By then the mission was sufficiently well established making it easier for the others to carry on. He left a strong mark of himself wherever he spent time in the service of the people. 'Berchmans' is not an easy name to pronounce especially for those unfamiliar with Church names and terminologies. Yet, he had such an impact on people that they spoke of him appreciatively long after he had left the place, by enquiring about him whichever way they pronounced his name. .

We raise our hearts in gratefulness to God for the gift that Bro. Berchmans was to the Brothers' mission in Tanzania, now the District of East Africa, and soon to be the Province of East Africa. (Bro. N.F. Joseph)

8. Bro. BERCHMANS – A SMALL MAN WITH A BIG HEART (Bro. CA JAMES)

Bro. Berchmans appeared small and weakly built man, often sick yet has done wonders with the power of God. He had a large heart and did hard work for the poor and people at the periphery.

There was a fire of the spirit inside him which made him go far and wide into villages and hamlets where people feared to go. When Bro. Berchmans reached the Pori (forest) with various dangers, thorny bushes semi arid land some people of the land had a mischievous smile thinking to themselves and saying what can this poor Indian do in the God forsaken and people forsaken place which is indeed the present day Montfort Agricultural High School campus in Rujewa District.

The man with the spirit set fire to the thorny bushes and the evil spirit of the land and destroyed them. He made the same land flowing with milk and honey. The same land became a rice bowl of Tanzania. What a transformation small man with fire of the spirit could do.

He was indeed a companion "Ndugu Yangu" he used to address the people when he was in Tanzania... He remained a Ndugu throughout his stay in Tanzania. He was indeed "Mtu ni Watu", He became a partner, companion, helper and healer and a good messenger to every person he met. He was indeed one with the people of Tanzania and closely associated with the land and the beautiful creation around him.

He cultivated the land, built orchards of various kind. He

made plans to harvest water, recycle them and used the natural resources with respect and equanimity. As a result he nature gave him back with hundred fold in every kind. Thus he was a lover of people and a lover of the nature.

Bro. Berchman can be compared to the archangel Raphael and Gabriel who were companions, helpers, healers and brought good messages to the land of Tanzania.

The technical school in Dar es salaam was the brainchild of Bro. Berchmans which was intended to give vocational training to the marginalized youth, women and people in need of a new life.

I salute him and thank God for sending him as a good messenger, a good companion, Ndugu, Wema for me personally and for the Brothers of St. Gabriel and for the marginalized and poor of Tanzania and India. He was also a stalwart for the particularly vulnerable Tribes at Montfort School, S.Gopalapuram, Srikakulam District, India. I am privileged to continue the good work started by Bro. Berchmans in Tanzania at various places and here in S.Gopalapuram village. May his soul rest in peace and intercede for us for a dynamic, spirit filled mission. BR. CA JAMES

9. My Tribute to Late Br Berchmans - Br KM Joseph

It is always a pleasant experience to recall the memory of late Bro. Berchmans. When one recalls his memory, one recalls his zest for life, his passionate involvement in everything that he did and his total commitment to the cause of education, particularly that of the poor and marginalised.

I had the good fortune of knowing Bro. Berchmans from the year 1965. When I entered the novitiate, he was there as the Socius. Though we could not see eye to eye, sometimes, his commitment to the formation of the novices was outstanding. In spite of being moulded in the pre-Vatican school of spirituality, he welcomed and adjusted to the post Vatican changes, though sometimes it was difficult for him.

He was in his elements when he was associated with education. Wherever he was the principal of the school, well to do school or poor one, he always paid great attention to the infra structure development of the school. He also ensured that the school's neighbourhood also developed along with the school.

Being a man of simplicity and uncomplicated in thought and behaviour, the objects of schooling, for him, were very simple and clear: the students must pass the examinations with excellent marks so that, in future, they can succeed well in life.

Character formation and faith education were also areas he paid great attention to. He was a great missionary and excelled in pioneering work. If today, the District of Tanzania is on the process of becoming a Province, a great deal of credit need to go to Br Berchmans for his undaunted pioneering efforts in Tanzania.

It is also true that, sometimes, in his over enthusiasm to

achieve results in the quickest of times, he failed to carry along with him, the Brothers he worked with. All the same, everyone was able to adjust and work with him because of his unassuming nature, passion and commitment. Among the many qualities he was adorned with, two are outstanding: his absolute trust in God and his passionate commitment to alleviate the sufferings of the poor. It is these qualities that mark him out as a great Brother.

While we recall his glorious life on this earth, during his first death anniversary, let all the Brothers of the future Province of East Africa and the Congregation take a leaf out of his book of life to commit themselves to the *option for the poor* they, as a congregation, have made. May the exemplary life of Bro. Berchmans be a source of inspiration for all of us to lead lives of faith and trust in God, in our commitment to lead the life of a Religious Brother. He loved to pray to our Mother Mary. St. Montfort always prayed, *Through Mary to Jesus Christ...*, - this became the opening key prayer and dedication of the life of Bro. Berchmans. He dedicated his life to Mary and his Son Jesus Christ in all that he had done. By and large this mantra became the instrument to live his life of hope, grace, peace and harmony with his confreres as a religious Brother in communities.

Now the consoler and forgiver of us all, the Lord has taken our lovely Brother Berchmans, to start afresh a new life in heaven, the unknown life of joy and grace, that all who believe do travel one day in the same boat, full of wonder and grace. Pray for us your sinful Brothers in Christ. We remain united with you in the Spirit of the Lord. Keep praying for the success of the mission in Tanzania where you sowed the seed and the mission still remain incomplete! Will never forget your good nature and we miss you Brother.

10. Br Berchmans Bro. Masini—Headmaster Mwembeni Sec School

The Lord has given.....the Lord has taken away! My deep appreciation and respect for Bro Berchmans.

I know him personally as I lived with him a year as a candidate in Dar es Salaam, as a young boy immediately after completing my secondary studies at Mwembeni, Musoma. He was the Mission Superior of the District of East Africa. Frankly speaking he was my friend too.

“Start Afresh”...Bro. Berchmans, I experienced his care as a candidate, and he led me into the joy of reciting prayers morning and evening, day in and day out; praying the rosary while walking as well, that united the whole community in praising the Lord. Today you are not any more with us Bro. Berchmans physically. Apart from the spiritual tools, he gave me Oxford Dictionary and Grammar books to learn in order to be rich in English language. Thus before dawn after praying decades of rosary we used to sit under a guava tree in front of the old house, now named Bro. Lambert Office and he would inspect my works.

“Start afresh”, the Servant of Yahweh! The other attributes that I learnt from Bro. Berchmans is that, he was man of the people, because of his friendly nature and respect to the people, and the way he approached them with tender

care. As a missionary he did not have “NO”, from his tongue when saw the demand of the mission in front of him. He approached the government officials with confidence and they received him as one of them. I was used to accompany him when he visited government offices, carrying some files.

“Start afresh”, Man of faith and hard work. Today we see the development of the mission growing from South to North of Tanzania, spreading Montfortian spirit to Kenya and now the zeal to spread the mission to various countries like Uganda and Malawi.

“Man of Dedication and Prayer”, the whole life of Bro. Berchmans was dedicated to prayers. He loved to pray to our Mother Mary. St. Montfort always prayed, “Through Mary to Jesus Christ...,” this became the opening key prayer and dedication of the life of Bro. Berchmans.

He dedicated his life to Mary and his Son Jesus Christ in all that he had done. By and large this mantra became the instrument to live his life of hope, grace, peace and harmony with his confreres as a religious Brother in communities. Now the consoler and forgiver of us all, the Lord has taken our lovely Brother Berchmans, to start afresh a new life in heaven, the unknown life of joy and grace, that all who believe do travel one day in the same boat, full of wonder and grace. Pray for us your sinful Brothers in Christ. We remain united with you in the Spirit of the Lord. Keep praying for the success of the mission in Tanzania where you sowed the seed and the mission still remain incomplete! Will never forget your good nature and we miss you Brother.

11. BROTHER BERCHMANS JOSEPHA - By Sr Sleevea Mettu and others

Great Missionary of God and a compassionate Brother
It is a great pain and sorrow
Of losing you our beloved
Brother Berchmans

A Great Missionary of God and a Compassionate Brother
Who held our hands and supported us

To reach the success in which we are now.

You encouraged us to come to Tanzania in 1995 and we agreed

Our first step was in Rujewa moved on as far as Dar es Salaam

Therefore we expand in different places including Mafinga and Morogoro

But now you are not with us
For we loved you but God loved you most

You accompanied us in our journey and supported us step by step

We shall ever remember you for your kindness and love

You have showed us through the days that we were together.

We believe that elders are called and appointed by God

A committed religious, a dedicated missionary

A loving and responsible brother you were

Of being example to the flock, a trailblazer

A guide, a brother, a leader, who showed us the way

It is you who showed the shadow of Joy

To sow the seed of growth in the minds of the people of Tanzania

To educate and empower them in a simple way

Your zeal for the Mission reminded us of the perseverance of our Father Founder Silvio Pasquali “TO DIE IN THE MISSIONS”

Brother Berchmans, those wonderful days we remember

Unable to forget, we render our thanks to God and to you

Oh! How we wish those days could be precious and lasting

In the sight of God for the happiness and joy you shared.

Wherever you are now we keep you in our hearts

In prayers, we believe that all happens for a reason,

So we live in a way that mean see the Kingdom of God

Just, as you are in the heavenly bliss.

MAY YOUR SOUL REST IN PEACE DEAR BROTHER
BERCHMANS JOSEPHA

With Great Love Sr. Sleevea Mettu and CSA Sisters in Tanzania Congregation of Catechist Sisters of St. Ann, India

12. Memories of Br Berchmans by Fr. Felix OCD

(The following is a memory from Fr. Felix OCD priest who was in Tanzania for many years but now back in India due to treatment for cancer in Mangalore).

Rev. Bro. Berchmans was one of my best friend to whom I could confide anything. I had landed in Tanzania in 1985, directly from Italy where I was studying. Bro. Berchmans came little after. We used to call him fondly with a nick name Malaika.

When Bro. Malaika comes to our house, in the beginning it was in Mikumi, it was a feast day for us. He used to bring fish from Ruaha River, sweet potatoes from Iringa and bananas from Rujewa... Later while I was in Morogoro, Bro. Berchmans never failed to make a stopover in our house in Morogoro on his journey to Dar from Rujewa. His company always made us to feel that we have not forgotten our home land India.

THE SCHOOL BRO. BERCHMANS FOUNDED

Bro. Berchmans never enjoyed a good health. Feeble in stature, he always fell sick with Malaria but he had his own medications.

He was such a practical person; he always gave practical solutions to the ordinary problems. Once he came to our house in Mikumi, with some extraordinary guests (Defeni-

tor from Rome) I had prepared a good meal with fish curry. The Defenitor Brother from Spain had little problem to eat our fish that had little thorns. Unfortunately, a little thorn was struck in his throat. The Brother had put the knife into his throat to remove the thorn and he began to bleed. We were all in panic. But Br Berchmans prepared three dry rice balls and asked the brother to swallow. The Defenitor Brother first hesitated but later swallowed the three rice balls and the throat was cleared of the fish-bone.

Bro Berchmans was filled with the missionary zeal. He really wanted that the Montfort Congregation should be implanted in the local soil. Wherever there were possibilities he used to obtain land for the future growth. He was not minding about his health much; instead he was always on the road to open new enclaves, wherever it was possible. In the year 2012 he had come to Tanzania for the Jubilee celebration of Rujewa School when I met him last. Dear friend I miss you and pray for us from heaven above.

13. Br Berchmans Joseph, One Who Touched The Hearts of Many by Br Gaudence FwaloDar Es Salaam

Br Berchmans Joseph has touched the hearts of many people and more especially in the mission land of the District of East Africa where I have lived with him and touched my heart too by his life of simplicity, loyalty and total dedication in religious life in the Congregation of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel.

I came in touch with him since 1991 during vocation camp at Rujewa, Mbeya in Tanzania. Bro. Berchmans Joseph liked to call me by my surname Fwalo though he will wrongly spell it as Foulo and that he used it throughout his life whenever he met me. I liked it because he captured my surname first which is unusual and by the way pronouncing surnames are always difficult and some are too long in the context of Africa.

He has touched the hearts of many because whenever I get into many of the offices especially in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania they have been asking about Br Berchmans, because they were touched by his simplicity. It has been a common trend for the person to be respected and received well at the first sight by the way they dress and by physical appearance but for Br Berchmans who was slim and simple in dressing it was unbelievable that he could do great things by the way he appeared at the first sight.

He is remembered by all around Dar Es Salaam for the struggles he underwent in getting the land in Dar Es Salaam and electricity in place which was not a simple job. Through the life of Bro. Berchmans, people (officers) came to the conclusion that appearance is deceptive. Thus, with prayer everything is possible.

He touched my life by the way he taught catechism when I was studying at Montfort Secondary School in Rujewa for he taught it with elaborations and made one to under-

stand better.

I remember the day he conducted the test on prayer "Our Father" in Swahili "Baba Yetu" for it was a disaster for us (Juniors) we knew to recite it very well but when it came to put it down on the paper with all the punctuations it was a challenge for many of us who did that test. This taught me to diversify in all aspects of reading, writing, listening and conversing properly.

He has touched my life through silent prayer, even when we travelled together in the car, he often recited the rosary and at the same time he insisted others to pray always without forcing us to join him in prayer.

When he prays naturally one has to pray too. Through prayers he won the hearts of many for most of the things he desired for the congregation came through as I experienced when I was with him in Dar es Salaam community as a candidate in 1996. All in all he longed for Tanzanian candidates to become Brothers and I am one of them. May his words and actions continue to linger in our hearts and may his soul rest in peace. *(Bro. Gaudence FwaloDar Es Salaam)*

14. Remembering Br Berchmans - Br Lawrence D'Souza

I was under Bro. Berchmans for five years. Two years, of my life as a candidate in NSM, studying Intermediate and again under his guidance, graduation at Loyola College for three years. He was my role model in many ways.

He lived by what he said and practiced whole of his life. He was a man of prayer, who never missed his daily prayer life as well Eucharistic celebration. His prayerful life impressed me a lot. In fact prayer life and Eucharist was a spiritual nourishment which sustained him totally in his mission.

He is a Brother who practiced vow of poverty to the total satisfaction in his life. Many of us preach regarding simplicity of life style but he is a Brother who practiced in his life be it clothing, food culture and travel. His life style really reflected what he stands for while he was with us as a True Brother.

His love and respect for the Brothers and others is tremendous which really touched me and has a lasting impact. Long ago when Bro. Berchmans was in his office and many people were waiting in turn to meet I also wanted to meet him. I was a temporary professed Brother. Yet, when he spotted me he called me in and enquired me *what's the matter?*. This incident or encounter still has a lasting effect on me -his preference to Brothers which I practice in my life in such situations even today.

Wherever he worked in India or Tanzania he has given himself totally be it financially sound institution or developing from the scratch to wanted institution. Today

though I cherish those memorable moments I miss him a lot as I move around the campus. *Br Lawrence D'Souza, Principal Vijayawada, India*

15. BABU, WE WILL MISS YOU - Br Erasmus Marando SG

Gone is the face we loved so dear,
Silent is the voice we loved to hear;
Too far away for sight or speech,
But not too far forthoughts to reach,
Sweet to remember him who once was here,
And who, though absent, is just as dear BABU, BABwe'll miss you.

What would I give to clasp BABU'S hand,
His happy face to see, To hear his voice and see BABU'S smile,
That meant so much to me a junior between the mangos and oranges,

BABU, BABU we'll miss u.
The rolling stream of life rolls on,
But still the vacant chair, Recalls the love, the voice, the smile

Of the one who once sat there.
BABU, BABU, Rujewa will miss you.
Nothing can ever take away
The love a heart holds dear,
Fond memories linger every day,
Remembrance keeps him near,
BABU, BABU, Vituka will miss you.
More and more each day we miss BABU,
Friends may think the wound is healed,
But they little know the sorrow Lying within our hearts concealed

BABU, BABU, anzanian will miss you.
Deep in our hearts you are fondly remembered,
Sweet, happy memories cling round your name;
True hearts that loved you with deepest affection,
Always will love you in death just the same.

BABU, BABU we'll miss you.
You're not forgotten,
BABU, dearNor ever shall you be;
Kipalapala Kiswahili your tongue,
As long as life and memory last,

I shall remember you. I will miss you BABU.

16. ANCHOR OF TANZANIAN MISSION - Br Mani Mekkunel

In the 300 years old history of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, the Indian reach out to Tanzania is considered a successful venture.

All the Brothers who set foot on this sacred land and proclaimed the gospels through educational activities are upheld with great respect and admiration. Br Berchmans Joseph became the Anchor of this mission by his enduring presence and indomitable commitment to the cause.

When Bro. Lambert had his pioneering presence for two years in Tanzania, with the support system of the Salasians, the Provincial and Council made a prophetic decision to open a mission, at the geographically remote region of Rujewa.

The next difficult question was *Whom Shall We Send?*, Bro. Berchmans who was a member of the decision making council made a spontaneous option, and called for the company of N.F. Joseph for the mission to an unknown land and people.

Those of us who were part of this decision experienced the presence of the Spirit who made many miraculous things happen at the beginnings of the churches. With the joining of Bro. Jose Varghese after his sojourn in Europe and at the footsteps of Jesus, the team was complete.

Appointed as the head of the mission, Br Berchmans who had his experience as formator and educator, became the spirit, sustainer and social entrepreneur of the Project-Tanzania.

Enculturated with malaria and the simplicity of the people he became an embodiment of the Gabrielite missionary enterprise. He was truly the ANCHOR of this evangelical insertion and the future shaping of the East African mission. Proponent Provincial of East African Mission Initiative.

Blessed with a team of senior Brothers to provide experience and expertise, and many young missionaries with dynamism and mindfulness, the mission grew as a Province. The exponential growth it promises is a challenge to the leaders of today.

With the heavenly interventions of Swargiya Berchmans we can expect greater things to happen. May his remembrance bring us an outpouring of missionary spirit in a globalized world without borders. *Br Mani Mekkunel -Proponent and Provincial of East African Mission Initiative)*

17 Mwl. Ngajilo Yohanes WASIFU WA MHESHIMIWA MTAWA BERCHMANS

Utangulizi: Mtajwa hapo juu ni Mheshimiwa Mtawa wa Montfort wa Shirika la Mtakatifu Gabriel ambaye ameishi hapa Tanzania akitokea huko India zaidi ya miaka 15. Alifika Tanzania kwa minajili mbalimbali mwaka 1985. Akiwa hapa Tanzania na hasa Rujewa Kijiji cha Mwakaganga ndipo alianzia kutimiza ndoto yake ya kueneza ujumbe mahsusi wa kujenga ukristo katika roho

za watu kupitia Kristo bwana, pamoja na mambo mengine mbalimbali ambayo aliyatekeleza sehemu nyingi za Nchi na Nchi jirani pia.

Ili kufikia malengo ya ndoto zake alifanya kazi kwa bidii na ustadi mkubwa sana kwa kushirikiana na Waheshimiwa Watawa wenzake, jamii na wadau mbalimbali kimawazo na katika mahitaji mengine ambao kimsingi walitambua malengo yake na hasa swala zima la elimu kwa watoto wa Kitanzania.

KWANINI ALIFIKA TANZANIA Kama utangulizi unavyojieleza Mheshimiwa Mtawa huyu wa Montfort wa Shirika la Mtakatifu Gabriel alifika Tanzania kutimiza ndoto yake katika mambo mahsusi yaani kueneza habari njema kwa watu kama mjumbe wa Kristo bwana.

Alifika Tanzania sio tu kama mjumbe wa kuleta habari njema za Kristo, alifika kama mmisionari ndio maana hakufanya kazi hii hapa Rujewa tu, aliweza kufika maeneo mbalimbali ya Nchi na Nchi jirani. Zaidi ya kuwa mjumbe na mmisionari alikuwa na wajibu wa kuanzisha shule katika maeneo mbalimbali ya Nchi na kuisadia serikali kupunguza tatizo la watoto wa Kitanzania kukosa elimu ambayo ndio msingi wa mambo yote.

MAJUKUMU (KAZI) Mheshimiwa Mtawa huyu mjasiri na mshupavu wa Montfort wa Shirika la Mtakatifu Gabriel amefanya kazi nyingi sana akiwa Tanzania na kwa uchache ni pamoja na usimamizi wa ujenzi wa shule akianzia na Montfort sekondari Rujewa, Mwakaganga. Alikabiliana na changamoto nyingi sana ikiwa ni pamoja na kutembea kwa miguu toka Ujewa Misheni hadi kwenye eneo la mahali shule ilipo. Kazi ya ujenzi ilianza mwaka 1986 na kuendelea na mwaka 1987 ujenzi wa nyumba yao ya kuishi ulikamilika.

Ujenzi wa majengo mengine pia uliendelea na jiwe la msingi liliwekwa na Mheshimiwa Askofu Mtega mwaka 1988, na shule kufunguliwa rasmi tarehe 06/04/1988. Mimi binafsi sitamsahau ndiye ambaye alinifanyia usahili pamoja na Mheshimiwa Mtawa Chacko na Mheshimiwa Mtawa Joseph KM mwaka 1995.

HITIMISHO Ebu,ebu fikiria, maono, uthubutu, ujasiri na zaidi ya yote hayo uamuzi wa kuiacha Nchi yake na kuja Tanzania ili kutimiza ndoto yake.

Somo kwa yeyote awaye tujifunzalo toka kwa Waheshimiwa Watawa wa Shirika la Mtakatifu Gabriel kila mwanadamu amejaliwa karama mbalimbali na Mwenyezi Mungu hivyo ni wajibu wa kila mmoja wetu kujitoa kwa ajili ya vizazi vilivyopo na vizazi vijavyo yaani twapaswa kuwa wajumbe na wamisionari. Mwenyezi Mungu Aiweke Mahali Pema Peponi Roho ya Marehemu, Amen. *Mwl. Ngajilo Yohanes. Mwalimu wa Taaluma (MONTFORT—RUJEW)*

18. Br Berchmans – A Man For The Poor By Br Odrick Kiala SG

A man who walked with great love towards the poor people, to unknown mission land, to share God's love and care, towards building his kingdom that's Br Berchmans Joseph.

He made a fire which does not stop burning throughout the mission land of East Africa. We really see the mark of his footsteps in this mission land. He did simple things with great love and today we see the outcome of his love. Who can say that he did not live a life of our founder, of begging for food even shelter all the way to make this mission fruitful?

That's why today we still hear the echo of his voice saying, **OPEN THE DOOR TO THE POOR.** He did it by giving the people of Tanzania education which added to them knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Bro. Berchmans, may your work be remembered forever from generation to generation to this mission land of East Africa. We really miss you a lot our dear 'Babu'. Be blessed for all that you have done to us from the time you started the Mission as Director in 1985 – 1992 at Montfort, Rujewa, Tanzania, and you did not end there in 1993 – 1997 again you became the Mission Superior at Dar Es Salaam and during all those years you did a great job, which made everybody feel the mark you left behind, again in 2000 – 2002 you became the Superior of Montfort - Rujewa. We all speak the same language about what you have been to us and to this mission land. Bro. Berchmans was truly a man who had great love towards the poor people. He ventured into unknown mission land, unknown language, unknown food, and even unknown culture. Nobody knows how difficult the mission was or how heavy it was, but he still stood firm to make this mission grow. We thank God for him. What we can offer is our prayers, so that his soul may rest in peace forever. AMEN. (Br Odrick Kiala SG)

Our Memories - Leela and Jacob MG

Whenever we met in Gunfoundry Church, we made it point to drop Br Berchmans in St Pauls Hyderguda, although he used to say first *No Thank You*. Till 2015, he used to walk up and down to St Joseph's Cathedral and St Pauls. Later on he used to come in auto rickshaw or car or in the Community Car.

My first tryst with Br Berchmans was in April-May 1966 in Kolathur - two to three weeks of Pre-Novitiate with our fellow novices from Naotoli and Palakurichi. When he gave me the first prize for singing at the end of our stay, Br Berchmans advised me *You sing very well. Though you sang film song, I give you the prize to encourage you to sing devotional songs in future..* He warned me that I would miss my football games in Yercaud and encouraged me to learn new games read serious books. He told me that he was glad that I was trying to pick up Tamil though he didn't approve of my humming the Tamil film songs which the local Cinema Theaters belted through out the evening. I recall that his assistant at that time in Kolathur was Late MGA Emmanuel who died in Hyderabad a year ago.

Our usual meetings would be on First Friday and Saturdays, and Sunday in St. Joseph Cathedral Gounfoundry - Br Berchmans would be in the third or fourth row and we would join him with pleasant smiles of acknowledgment.

Our family is blessed to have the privilege to drive Br Berchmans to St Pauls Hyderguda after celebrating the Holy Eucharist many times.

During one of our trips driving him back, Br Berchmans asked us to join for breakfast which we deferred to another time. Seeing the rosary on neck Leela asked from where rosary was from. He told it is a Pope Francis Rosary. We said wow. Then while climbing out from the car he took out the rosary from his neck and gave to Leela - *This is my gift for you - The Pope's Rosary*. We preserve this Rosary and pray with it daily. I used to tell Br Berchmans earlier that in future we could boast after years that we were privileged to drive a saintly Montfortan Brother from the Church to St Pauls...He used to smile silently.

Br Berchmans and Br VM Stephen (Provincial who succeeded Br John of the Cross) were considered the spiritual ascetics in the 1960s and who moved with times post Vatican II Council.

Br.Berchmans is a Saint who walked on the earth like his colleague Late Br Paul Chalil who passed away in 2013.

Service in Brotherhood

1956-1960 All Saints' High School Teacher

1960-1965 Eachinkadu Noviciate Socius

1965-1966 Scholasticate Director

1966-1973 V.V. High School Principal

1973-1977 St. Gabriel's H. School Principal

1977-1979 St. Mathew's P.S Principal

1979-1980 St. Mathew's P.S Director

1980-1981 Boys' Town Director

1981-1982 St. Mathew's P.S Teacher

1982-1985 St. Mathew's P.S Principal

1985-1992 Montfort Sec, School, Director Ru-jewa—Tanzania 1992-1993 Montfort Sec, School Mission Superior

1993-1997 Montfort T.T.C Mission Superior Dar Es salaam—Tanzania

1997-1998 Generalate Spirituality Study

1998-2000 Montfort Sec, School, Principal Ru-jewa—Tanzania 2000-2002 Montfort School Principal

2002-2003 St. Mary's Jr. College Director

2003-2004 St. Alphonsus High School Teacher

2004-2015 Montfort School Principal

2005-2016 St. Paul's High School Member

Slept in the Lord : 17th September 2016

Laid to Rest : 20th September 2016

[Back to Contents](#)



Remembering Br Berchmans -Tanzania . . .



Br Berchmans Memorial School -Tanzania ...

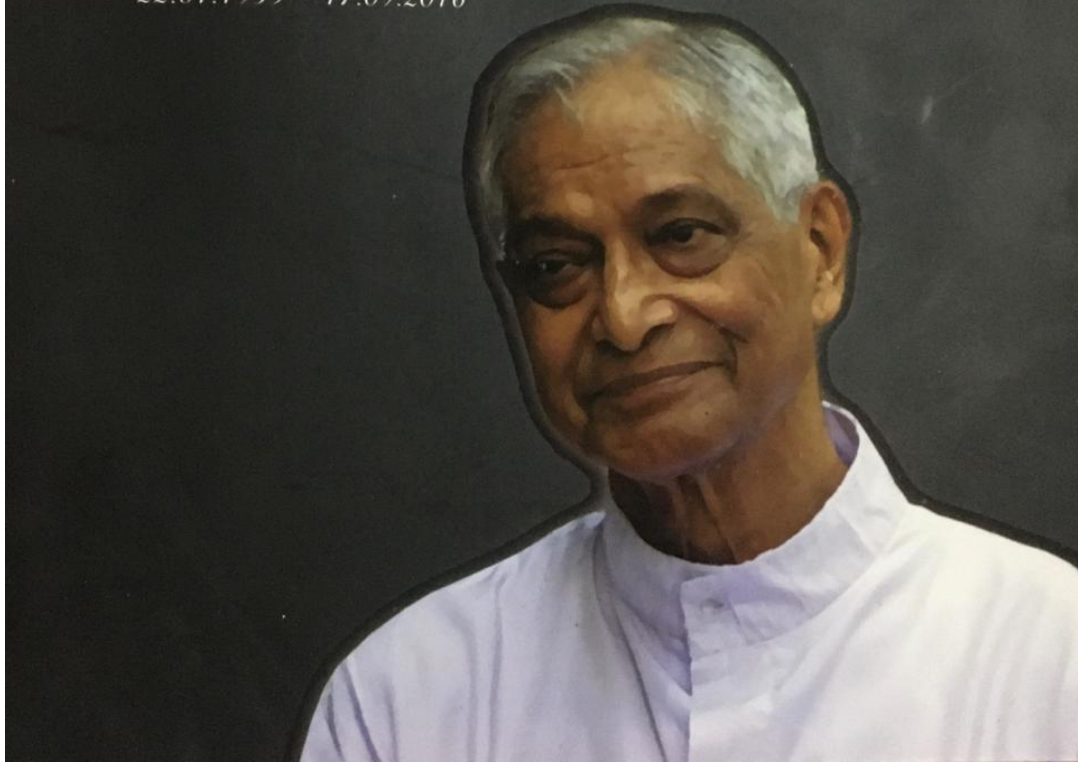


Memorial Br Berchmans -Tanzania ...



Br Berchmans wore this Rosary on his neck; gift to Leela and MG Jacob ...

A
TRIBUTE
TO
Bro. Berchmans Joseph
22.01.1935 - 17.09.2016



Br Berchmans ...