

Bethany

# WAVES



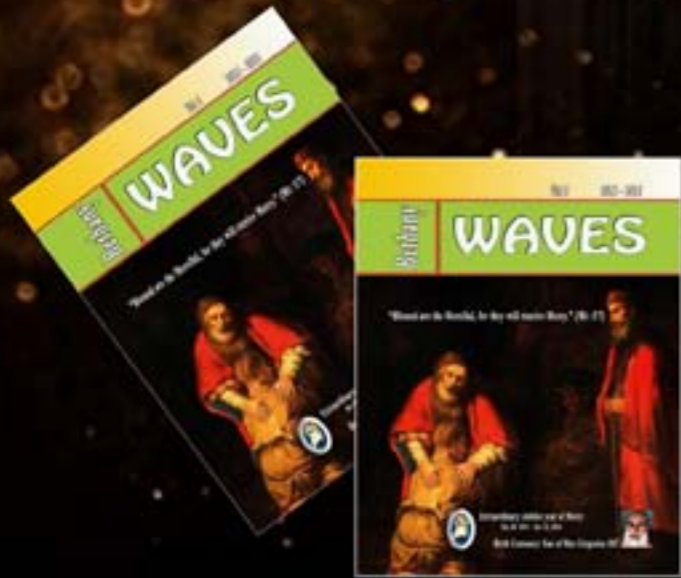
*100 Years of Bethanian Witnessing...*



ORDER OF THE  
IMITATION OF CHRIST

CENTENARY  
YEAR  
1919-2019

100



**Waves - 2019 from Bethany Scholasticate, Pune**



I am inspired by the members of the Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC), who through the Bethany Ashram, adopting the richness of Indian culture, give eloquent witness and proclaim the good news of God's love and forgiveness. Their single-minded dedication, total freedom from inordinate attachments, and profound inner disposition to imitate Christ interiorly and closely, springs from their deep trust and faith in the Lord.

I deeply appreciate their abiding commitment and passion in their apostolic and pastoral ministries, which strengthen the bonds between Mary and Martha, Contemplation and Action –and through whom God continues labouring in His entire creation. Thus, Bethany Ashram is a place where words and actions meet and work together in proclaiming the good news and realizing God's reign on earth. Wonderful people like the Bethanians open for us and for all creation a window to experience how unconditionally God loves His entire creation. I thank God for their presence in my life and pray that God continues to bless, protect and inspire them.

Fr. Bhausahab Sansare, SJ  
Rector, Papal Seminary, Pune.



It is with great joy that we celebrate 100th Anniversary of blessings...  
100 years of bethanian witnessing...  
Much has happened over these hundred years ...  
Much growth and development...

Remembering the Founder and all Fellow Bethanians who are rejoicing and celebrating with us in the 'Communion of the Saints' ...  
Remembering all who served and worked tirelessly for the good of the congregation...  
Remembering all benefactors and well-wishers...  
Thanking all for the support and generosity in many different ways in the past...

Marching forward with much hope...  
Living together with much charity...  
Looking up with much hope...

Knowing that you ALL are also in our thoughts and our prayers as we give thanks to God and celebrate this centenary...  
It is with great trust in God and with confidence in the prayers and intercession of our Patron Saints...

The tasks and the challenges that lie ahead are indeed great...  
To hear the call for a 'New Evangelisation' ...  
Mane nobiscum Domine... Lord, Stay with us...

<b>Regulars</b>		<b>BVP Colloquium</b>	
Editorial	5	Bro. Henry Sam OIC	49, 50
Rector Speaks	6		
Bethanians in Pune	7, 8	<b>Publications</b>	51, 52
<b>Our Legacy in Pune</b>		<b>Final Cut</b>	
Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiiyil OIC	9- 12	Bro. Alexis Pallissery OIC	53- 55
<b>Liturgical meditations...</b>			
Dr. Philip Vysanethu OIC	13- 16		
<b>Pondering of the heart...</b>			
Dr. Isaac Parackal OIC	17		
<b>Historical Overview</b>			
Order of the Imitation Of Christ			
Bro. Daniel Kallil OIC	18- 20		
100 Glorious Years of Bethany Ashram (1919 – 2019)	21- 30		
<b>'KILLFIE - The Newest Trend'</b>			
Bro. Linson Mathew OIC	31- 33		
<b>Understanding the Present with insights from the Past</b>			
Bro. Nithin V Mathew OIC	34, 35		
<b>Perspective</b>			
Bethanian Initiatives in Nurturing the Nature			
Bro. Jaison Simon OIC	36- 39		
<b>Book Review</b>			
"M- Cat: 100 Lessons a Malankarite should know"			
Bro. Martin Mathew OIC	40		
<b>The OIC I Saw</b>			
V. Rev. Fr. E. Zeitler, SVD	41- 43		
<b>The OIC I See</b>	44- 47		
<b>My Shadow</b>			
Bro. Jomal Mathew, OIC	48		

# Waves

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## From the Desk of

# The Editors



The Centenary is an occasion of great joy! The Order of the Imitation of Christ, known also as Bethany Ashram completes its 100 glorious years of existence and move towards a renewed commitment in joyful gratitude and zeal.

The Order of the Imitation of Christ reflects the wisdom and prophetic insights of our founder, the Servant of God, Mar Ivanios OIC, who established the community that upholds Christian values and rooted in the highest ideals of Indian culture and heritage.

It is a unique Indian religious order, in the Syrian Orthodox tradition bringing together the monastic ideals of the Christian East and the Indian Sanyasa in a particular life style, actualised in a life of prayer and apostolic activities.

Bethany Waves reaches you this year as a commemorative volume of our centenary year. It is the fruit of a joint effort, for which many have lend a helping hand. We are grateful

to Miss Joanne Gobrick, New York, USA who helped and supported us in carrying out the task of editing this book. Dr. Manu Varghese Puthenveetil OIC lend us much help in designing the cover page and Dn. Libin Mathew Kurian OIC and Bro. Jithu John OIC artistically organized the photographs that the volume contains.

It is indeed a labour of love made possible through the joining of many hearts, heads and hands. We thank and acknowledge the contributions of those generous souls.

Let us begin our journey through the centenary issue of Waves 2019, published in the 101 Founding Day of the Bethany Ashram, August 15,2020.

-Editors



## Rector Speaks...



The establishment of Bethany Scholasticate, Pune, in 1955 was the first step towards a great leap in the ecumenical, ecclesial, spiritual and academic realm of Bethany Ashram and of the Malankara Catholic Church. This historical leap should be inscribed in the golden annals of Bethany Ashram, as its Centennial Celebration is at its zenith. We, Bethany Scholasticate community, pay homage to our forefathers who envisaged such a centre in pursuit of knowledge and for which Pune was singled out. The historical significance attached to this selection was path-breaking and its impact was far-reaching. This can be summed up in four areas:

**1) Ecumenical:** As the Papal Seminary and, with it, the Papal Athenaeum (presently Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth), was transferred from Sri Lanka to Pune in 1955, Bethany Scholasticate was also planted in the same campus. This was an opening for Bethanians and for the Malankara Catholic Church to interact and engage themselves intellectually and theologically with the other Rites and Religious Congregations of the Catholic Church.

**2) Ecclesial:** That was the time when the people belonging to the Oriental Rites started migrating to the cities in search of jobs. For these people who were uprooted from their home-parishes, Bethany Scholasticate was an ecclesial and spiritual haven. It was the centre of the map of pastoral care of the migrants by the Malankara Catholic Church which resulted in the formation of two Malankara Catholic Eparchies – one in New Delhi and the other in Pune.

**3) Spiritual:** The word ‘Pune’ is derived from the Marathi word Punya-nagari, which means the city of virtue. The name can be attributed to the fact that Pune is situated on the confluence or sangam of the Mula and Mutha rivers. This merger of two rivers is considered sacred or punya. This is the reason why we see many temples and sacred buildings in and around the city. In 1955, Bethany Ashram also merged in this Punya-nagari emanating its Sanyasa Punya (monastic virtues).

**4) Academic:** Pune is known as ‘the Oxford of the East’ and ‘the Educational Capital of India’. This academic culture pervades the very life of Pune. Bethany Scholasticate contributes to it and shares in this life which moulded hundreds of Bethanians for the Kingdom of God. Academic formation in Bethany Scholasticate, Pune, continues to be the identifying mark of every Bethanian.

Bethany Waves 2019 is a befitting tribute to all acharyas and alumni of Bethany Scholasticate, Pune. Let it be a memento to mark the legacy of our alma mater, as it carries a special significance in the history of our Congregation.

*Centennial Jubilee Greetings to all our friends!*

## BETHANIANS IN PUNE

### LOCATION

Bethany Ashram is located 6 k.m away from the Pune city, on Pune-Ahmed Nagar Highway. Towards the west from Bethany Ashram, we have the Fransalian Seminary, De Nobili College, JDV and Papal Seminary. Towards the south, there are so many religious congregations beginning with CMI. Towards the north is the Nagar Road.



### HISTORY



Bethany Ashram, Pune has a history dating back to the mid Fifties of the last century. Until Then, candidates were sent to the seminaries of Kandy, Thiruchirapally and Aluva for priestly training. Cardinal Eugene Tisserant, the then prefect of the congregation for oriental churches, during his visit to the Malankara Church in December 1953, urged the Bethany Ashram superiors to start a scholasticate. Along with the initiative of some of our fathers and with the insistence and financial support of the Cardinal the decision was taken to have the center of priestly formation in Pune.

The first group of Bethanians, under the leadership of Fr. Gabriel OIC, Bros. Francis Sales, Augustine Kailath, Francis Xavier, Athanasios, Cyril Malancharuvil, Ambrose Mootheril, Thomas Mavileth, Sylvester and Philip reached Pune on June 8, 1954. The MSFS and CMI fathers received them at Pune Railway station. The generous hospitality of the Fransalians solved the initial problems of accommodation. While they stayed in the Fransalian seminary they were looking for a house of their own. The group was shifted from Fransalian seminary to the newly bought house called sunset view belonging to the Mrs. Willstrop, the widow of Major Harvey Willstrop. On 30th April 1955, Msgr. Gonsalves blessed the house. It was officially christened as St. Mary’s Bethany Scholasticate. The formation house at Pune brought all the members of the Congregation in priestly formation under one roof. Very soon, two more acres of land were acquired and a new building was constructed in 1962. In the academic year 1970-80, the house celebrated its Silver Jubilee.

## THE PRESENT STATUS

In this academic year (2019-2020), our congregation complete its 100 glorious years of existence and our scholasticate complete 64 years. There are 13 Philosophers , 13 Theologians and five priests in the house this year. Rev. Dr. George Ayyanethu OIC is the present Superior and Rector. He also serves as the resident professor of BVP and guest lecturer in JDV. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiyil OIC is the present Director of Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP), our institute of Oriental theology. He also serves as the spiritual father of the house and resident professor of BVP and guest lecturer in JDV. Rev. Dr. Philip Vysanethu OIC is the resident professor of BVP and he helps in the liturgical formation of the brothers. Rev. Dr. Isaac Parackal OIC serves as full time teaching staff in JDV and animates the activities of Mar Ivanios Academy and guides in the academic studies of our Philosophy students. Rev. Fr. Cyril Micheal OIC is the procurator of the house.



Since 1955 this ashram has been a place of spiritual guidance for the Malankarites in and around Pune. Along with the staff of Bethany Ashram, the students too are involved in pastoral activities of the Malankara parishes established in Pune.

## OUR LEGACY IN PUNE...



Making pastors since 1954...

**Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP)**

**Institute of Oriental Theology**

**Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiyil OIC**  
Director, BVP, Pune



## HISTORICAL NOTE

In order to train its priestly candidates effectively and to expose them to the multicultural context of India, Bethany Fathers with the help of Cardinal Eugene Tisserant established Bethany Ashram in Pune on 1st May 1955. It was officially christened as St. Mary's Bethany Scholasticate.



Bethany Ashram was an integral part of the Pontifical Athenaeum, the forerunner of today's JDV. Though one with JDV in all academic matters, the members of the Ashram always felt the need of preserving their identity in matters of ecclesial and spiritual traditions, religious charism and of cultivating them. Such values were zealously preserved in our religious and ecclesial life, and cultivated through a vital link between Bethany Ashram and the Malankara



community in Pune. Gradually, as the concept of the Church as a living communion of individual Churches emerged in the ecclesial horizon of the Church in India, the members of OIC were urged to act as the thinking cell of the Malankara Church. Priestly formation had to be adapted to the

exigencies of an emerging and expanding Malankara Church. When it comes to the formation of religious priests the charism of each religious community needs to be taken seriously. Thus it became a felt need to give due importance to the Oriental ecclesial genius and the Indian religious tradition in the formation process of the Bethanians.

To respond positively to this demand, a study programme was finalized by the General Council of the Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC) and was submitted to JDV for approval.



Fr. Lionel Mascarenhas, the then Rector of JDV, by his letter of 25th June 1983, communicated the approval of the programme to the then Superior General, Rev. Fr. John Berchmans OIC. The programme was accredited to the B

Th. degree of JDV. Thus began the OIC extension centre. This extension centre for Oriental and Indian studies was named Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP) by the General Council of the Congregation on 22nd July, 1992.

## VISION STATEMENT



We aim at an integral understanding of God, world and human being as presented in Christian tradition from an Oriental Christian perspective, rooted in the West Syrian tradition and Indian religious heritage, contextualizing in the life of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church.

## OBJECTIVES

- We give stress to the Oriental ways of theologizing. The Liturgy, the locus theologicus of theologizing in the Orient is its functional foundation. The West Syrian liturgy is this locus for us. We also aim at harmonizing Oriental Christian theology with the Indian spiritual traditions.
- Our context of theologizing is the Malankara Catholic Church. It undertakes the research and development of its history and patrimony - liturgical, theological, spiritual, disciplinary and cultural. Called to be a sign of communion, we involve in research and study that caters communion with our non-Catholic Sister Churches.
- Studying Bethanian spirituality, the source of monastic spirituality in the Malankara Church is our cherished goal.
- An interdisciplinary approach to translate theologizing into the multifaceted socio-cultural realities and pluri-religious and multi-ecclesial situations help us to respond effectively to the situation of our country.



## APPROACHES

We integrate theory with praxis, theology for the pastoral exigencies of the Church and of the Congregation. The catechetical programmes of Sundays in parishes, Bethany Bible Studies, Teens Orientation Camps, Field work programmes in the realm of Contextual Theology programme, etc. are some of the means to articulate

this. The publication of a periodical, conducting national and international seminars, sermon practice under the guidance of the BVP Resident Staff are some of the means to keep us abreast with the day-to-day dynamics of theology.

### B. TH STUDY PROGRAMME & COURSE CONTENT



Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP) follows a B.Th study programme that is accredited to the B.Th programme of Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth (JDV). All the courses on Liturgy, Sacraments, Oriental Canon Law, Spirituality, Indian Church history, Pastoral Theology and courses on Dogmatic Theology like Mariology, Christology, Ecclesiology, Ecumenism, Sacraments and Pneumatology are offered in BVP for its students. Other courses are attended in JDV. The courses offered in BVP keep the historical, cultural settings and at the same time reflect on how its content is lived in the Oriental Churches in general and particularly in the Malankara Church.

### LIBRARY

BVP library is an integral part of Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth. It specializes in Oriental Theology and ecumenism. It has around ten thousand of books related to Mariology, ecclesiology, Liturgy, church history, syriac patrology, etc. It also subscribes to around hundred and twenty periodicals. The BVP library is at the disposal of one and all of the JDV campus.



## Liturgical Meditations...

**“God who is seen above, at the right hand of the Father and below, between the thieves”**

*Dr. Philip Vysanethu OIC  
Resident professor  
Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth, Pune*



*“Pithruvalamay ninne Kandeemeelil, kallaanmaar thannidayilumaazhathil...”<sup>1</sup>*

The Liturgical hymn sung on Sunday evening, always takes me in a puzzle: ‘the Son who sits at the right hand of God the Father in glory is seen, simultaneously, among the thieves below on earth.’ However, this puzzle is very significant in the sense that this liturgical hymn portrays the splendour of the blending of both ‘Transcendence’ and ‘Immanence’.



This hymn is composed in the tune of Quqoyo, probably written by Simeon of Gesir /Semaon Quqoyo or it might have been attributed to him. He was a contemporary of Mar Jacob of Serugh. His poems have the rhythm of ‘potter’s wheel’ because he was a potter. In 508 Mar Jacob of Serugh commended his writings and encouraged him to write more. There are many hymns in the Malankara liturgy, which are written in the tune of ‘Quqoyo’. The hymns in the ‘Quqoyo’ tune are very popular

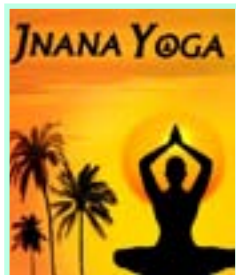
among the faithful of the Malankara Church. Just as the life of a potter is very simple, so the Quqoyo hymns are very simple and beautiful. A Quqoyo hymn can be sung in eight tunes. It is interesting to note that in whichever tune one may sing it, the rhythm remains the same, i.e. the rhythm of the potter’s wheel echoes in the chanting. Some of the tunes are crisp and others are very poetical and mystical. Apart from the exegesis of the hymn, in this short article, I would like to expose a bit on the beautiful panorama of Transcendence and Immanence depicted in this composition.

Down through the centuries mystics, poets and theologians strived to portray the Transcendence and Immanence. Transcendence is the existence or experience beyond the normal or physical level and the doctrine or theory of Immanence holds that the divine encompasses or is manifested in the material world.<sup>2</sup> When the mystics often tipped the balance of these two phenomena, theologians always tried to keep the balance. The spiritual thirst of the human being and his/her search for God is without any end. In an anthropomorphic sense one can describe that God 'lives' in two beautiful 'cities' that are nothing else but His transcendental and immanent manifestation. Since God is 'God' He can reveal his presence in both 'cities' simultaneously. The mystics in their mystical approach to God, as they are human beings, some of them concentrate more on the transcendence and the others naturally on the immanent realities.



"The theologians in the Hindu and Christian traditions have sought to maintain a careful balance between the claims of both divine transcendence and the human need for the closeness and nearness of God. By contrast, the mystic tends to tip this balance by stressing divine accessibility, sometimes ignoring the other side of the divine, namely its transcendence. However, by emphasising the accessibility of the divine, the mystic seems to reflect the concerns of popular piety in a religious tradition more clearly than the theologians of the same tradition. Divine accessibility is the very cornerstone of popular piety and it is indeed the sustaining force behind its spirituality."<sup>3</sup>

In Indian thought there are mainly two streams of spirituality which indicates Transcendence and Immanence; they are Jnana yoga and Bhakti yoga.



Jnana yoga comes in the process of realisation of atman and Brahman as not different (aham brahma asmi – I am Brahman). It is an intellectual and contemplative approach to the Ultimate Reality. This realisation as 'aham brahma asmi' itself is the Moksha/Mukti (liberation). It is a meditative realisation. "Moksha does not have its root in a special ability or capability of man. It is the knowing of the atman that transcends all individual traits and yet has to be regarded as not different from the empirical and individual personality. The atman is the transcendental dimension, as

it were, experienced beyond, in and through the empirical as its basis."<sup>4</sup> It is the liberation from avidya (ignorance) i.e. the liberation consists in the existential acceptance of the truth that we are not separated from God in our nature. "Moksha is rather the realization of what really is. By Moksha a wrong attitude towards reality (including a wrong perception) is negated so



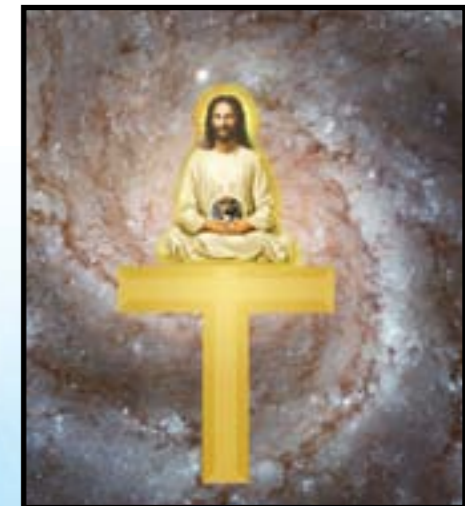
that the One Reality can be experienced; the veil of dualistic unknowing disappears, so that what always is can be seen."<sup>5</sup> Moksha is not a place but a state. It is in the knowing of what really IS. In this state the jivatman (soul) experiences the supreme Bliss of Paramatman (Ultimate Being). If one attains Brahman he will not be reborn and this state of Moksha is the changeless state of the soul to which it yearned for. All its wishes and desires are fulfilled and its spiritual faculties, namely the intellect and will, have reached their satisfaction. In short one can say that Jnana yoga consists of affirmation in negation – 'neti neti' (not this, not this but something else...).



Bhaktiyoga can be called path of love or devotion. The mystics have a deep intense devotion to God. It is an unconditional and undivided love for God, which results in the union of the Bhakta (devotee) with God. In this union the bhakta experiences a deep blissfulness that is not determined by the senses. "Its mark is that it is not determined by other objects and that it is not an expression of a desire for earthly or heavenly happiness or for liberation, that it is an end in itself and not a means to some other end."<sup>6</sup> "While a genuine

Bhakta (devotee) would try to conceal his/her love for God, there are organic manifestations which are hard to repress like the shedding of tears, etc. from which others can infer the authenticity of such an experience."<sup>7</sup> In Bhakti yoga attributes play a vital role (e.g. The Lord is my rock; God is my shepherd etc....)

In Christianity the two aspects of Transcendence and Immanence are blended in Jesus Christ who is purely divine and purely human. When the Alexandrian school emphasised on the Divine nature ("And the Word became flesh and lived among us and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth." Jn 1:14), the Antiochian school concentrated on the human nature ("For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority." Col 2:9). Since most of the Syrian composers were both mystics and theologians their hymns and poems maintained a careful balance. Hence one could observe a perfect blending of Transcendence and Immanence in this liturgical hymn.



Acknowledging and relishing the splendour of Transcendence and Immanence is very significant in our lives. Human 'life' can be taken as a 'myth' consists of happiness, sorrow, strength, weakness, worries, anxieties, hope, depression etc. The very



moment one demythologises 'Life', it loses its beauty because demythologisation of 'life', leads one to a single reality. For instance, when I focus only on my happiness I cannot confront the tough reality of life. When I brood over my weakness or sickness I cannot come to the shore of hope. In every time and everywhere we can experience both Transcendence and Immanence when we meditate on our life. As Christians we must be able to fix our eyes simultaneously to the suffering Christ and to the glorified Christ. God is not only someone who is far beyond the horizon, but also who is Emmanuel, God with us. 'I can touch God and taste God in my day today life yet he is beyond my comprehension.' In this realisation one can say as St. Paul, the Apostle: "Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong (2Cor 12:10)". This is the beauty of the panorama of Transcendence and Immanence, which the composer of the hymn portrays on the canvas of each one's heart.

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### HISTORICAL MOMENTS...



### Pondering of the heart...

### A GREAT LESSON...

**Dr. Isaac Parackal OIC**  
**Resident professor**  
**Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune**



A great lesson to learn from the last wishes of Alexander the Great.....

On his death bed, Alexander summoned his army generals and told them his three ultimate wishes:

1. The best doctors should carry his coffin ...
2. The wealth he has accumulated (money, gold, precious stones) should be scattered along the procession to the cemetery...
3. His hands should be let loose, so they hang outside the coffin for all to see !!

One of his generals who was surprised by these unusual requests asked Alexander to explain.

Here is what Alexander the Great had to say :

1. "I want the best doctors to carry my coffin to demonstrate that in the face of death, even the best doctors in the world have no power to heal ..."
2. "I want the road to be covered with my treasure so that everybody sees that material wealth acquired on earth , will stay on earth.."
3. I want my hands to swing in the wind, so that people understand that we come to this world empty handed and we leave this world empty handed after the most precious treasure of all is exhausted, and that is : **TIME**.

We do not take to our grave any material wealth. TIME is our most precious treasure because it is **LIMITED**. We can produce more wealth, but we cannot produce more time.

When we give someone our time, we actually give a portion of our life that we will never take back. Our time is our life!.

*The best present that you can give to your family and community is your time and to God is your life...*

**Let's be well connected, well communicated with caring , sharing and spending time together ....!!!**

## Historical Overview..

### ORDER OF THE IMITATION OF CHRIST (OIC) BETHANY ASHRAM

Bro. Daniel Thomas Kallil OIC  
III B. Th, JDV



#### INTRODUCTION

The Bethany Ashram, formally called the Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC), is the first indigenous religious congregation started in the Malankara Church. The founder Mar Ivanios OIC, with the unique vision and life style, aimed at bringing together the monastic ideals of the Christian East and the Indian sanyasa actualised in a life of prayer and apostolic activities. Thus Bethany was founded by the divine inspiration to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through-out India, through the spiritual renewal of the Malankara Church.

#### FOUNDATION OF BETHANY ASHRAM

The late Archbishop Servant of God Geevarghese Mar Ivanios (Fr. P.T. Geevarghese) founded Bethany on August 15, 1919 at Perunadu, Mundanmala in Kerala. He concentrated his attention on the foundation of a monastic community as an instrument of spiritual renewal within the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. Mar Ivanios, the seeker of truth came in contact with many religious institutes irrespective of church, denomination or religion and all of them influenced him in the maturing of his dream of establishing a monastic institution that he visualised. In order to have his dream realised, he went around the world and visited many religious places of importance. He visited Sabarmati Ashram of Gandhi, Santi Niketan of Tagore, etc., and he received first-hand experience of Indian Monastic life. He got fascinated by the rules of St. Basil, the greatest proponent of monastic life in the East. After making the necessary arrangements to begin such an austere form of life, he started the first Christian religious community in the Malankara Church.



#### THE CHARISM OF BETHANY

Each religious congregation is blessed by a unique gift of the Holy Spirit called a "charism," which is an expression of the way the congregation is called to follow Christ. The charism of the Order of the imitation of Christ is following Jesus Christ in his life of prayer and action, realized in oriental monastic tradition and Indian sanyasa and aimed at the evangelization of India through the spiritual renewal of the Malankara Church.



#### LIFE IN BETHANY

The houses of Bethany Congregation are given the name Bethany Ashrams. Bethany is the name of a village where the house of Mary, Martha and Lazarus was situated. Lazarus was a friend of Jesus and witness to the resurrection; Mary was a symbol of prayer life; Martha, a model of service and apostolic activities. Ashram is the abode of a sanyasi where strenuous efforts for God experience is made in prayer, silence, simplicity and hard work.



#### A SYNTHESIS OF INDIAN SANYASA AND ORIENTAL MONASTICISM

A religious community's charism is expressed in its way of serving the Church in mission, its particular way of living community life and its distinct "culture." Bethany blends beautifully the spirit of both Oriental monastic tradition and Indian sanyasa.

The realization of the charism in Indian sanyasa is to imbibe and safeguard the inner spirit and lifestyle of Indian spiritual tradition in order that the rich Indian culture and sanyasa which tends to union with God might be made perfect in Christ. The simple life of Jesus, who always united with the Eternal Father in prayer and went about doing good to all, is imitated with the detachment and simplicity of Indian asceticism.



## Historical Overview..

### CRADLE OF THE SYRO MALANKARA CATHOLIC CHURCH

As the very name indicates, Bethany Ashram has been a house of response for all those who entered its threshold. Bethany was instrumental in the spiritual revival of the Malankara church at a time when it was infected by litigations and the in-fight for dominance inside the church. Later it became the cradle of the Reunion Movement when Mar Ivanios and others embraced the unity of the true Catholic communion, thus giving rise to the Malankara Catholic Church on September 20, 1930.



### PONTIFICAL STATUS

Through the wide range of apostolic activities with Missionary Vision, the Bethany Congregation was given the privilege of Pontifical status on April 14, 1966 by Pope Paul VI. It was a clear sign that more than the

numerical growth, the rich heritage and the tradition of the Bethany and the Malankara Catholic Church were recognized by the Universal Church. The door of Bethany was opened for the needs of the Universal Church. The Pontifical status of Bethany Congregation given by Roman Pontiff demands her to break the barriers of borders and territories and preach good news to all.



### BETHANY TODAY

As part of the growth of the congregation on April 24, 2000 two provinces, namely Bethany Navajeevan Province and Bethany Navajyothy Province, were erected. At present the Bethany Congregation is having 289 members including priests, religious brothers and Scholastics. Bethany actively participates in the mission of the Church through her presence in different parts of India and across the world, especially in Ethiopia.

### CONCLUSION

Down through the decades, Bethany Ashram continues her special mission and role in the Church through the apostolic activities and the missionary works. Bethany looks forward to the revitalization of her original charism and to reconnecting with the people.

### 100 GLORIOUS YEARS OF BETHANY ASHRAM A JOURNEY DOWN THE ARCHES OF YEARS (1919 – 2019)



- The Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC) popularly known as Bethany Ashram is the first indigenous Religious Congregation (Sanyasa Ashrama) for men started in the Malankara Church.
- It was founded by Servant of God Archbishop Mar Ivanios on 15 August, 1919 at Ranni, Perunadu, Pathanamthitta District, Kerala – INDIA.
- Bethany in the Bible is the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus who intimately loved our Lord and was loved by Him.
- This Biblical name 'Bethany' indicates the nature and charism of our Congregation, which gives supreme importance to both prayer and action.
- An Ashram is the abode of a Sanyasi where strenuous effort for God experience is made in prayer, silence, simplicity and hard work.
- Bethany Ashram became the Cradle of the Reunion Movement as Mar Ivanios its founder and others entered into the communion of the Universal Church on 20 September 1930, giving rise to the formation of Malankara Syrian Catholic Church.
- Bethany Ashram was raised to Pontifical status on 14th April 1966.



## FOUNDATION OF BETHANY ASHRAM: 1919-1929

1919 Foundation of Bethany Ashram, officially known as the Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC), by Fr. Geevarghese Panickeruveetil at Mundanmala, Ranni-Perunad on 15 August. The Holy Rule of Bethany Ashram signed by the first four members on 23 August 1920 The Holy Rule placed at the Altar on 9 March.

1924 Priestly Ordination of Dn. Jacob Kalapurackal OIC (Bishop Yakoob Mar Theophilos OIC)

1925 Solemn Vow of Fr. Geevarghese Panickeruveetil O.I.C as Ramban at Bethany Church, Thirumoolapuram on 28 January and Episcopal Ordination of Ramban Geevarghese as

Bishop of Bethany with the name Mar Ivanios, at Niranam Church on 1 May. Foundation of Bethany Madhom, officially known as Sisters of the Imitation of Christ (SIC) on 21 September.

1927 - Solemn Vow of Fr. Jacob Kalapurackal O.I.C. as Ramban on 12 December.

1929 - Bishop Mar Ivanios was elevated to the status of Metropolitan of Bethany on 13 February

- Episcopal Ordination of Ramban Jacob of Bethany as Yakoob Mar Theophilos at Niranam Church on 14 February



## CATHOLIC COMMUNION: 1930-1939

1930 - Mar Ivanios takes decision to leave 'Mundan Mala' to enter into the Catholic Communion on 17 August and along with majority of the inmates left Perunad 'Mundan Mala' on 20 August and stayed at Vennikkulam. This year also witnessed the Reunion of the first five members with the Catholic Church before Bishop Aloysius Maria Benziger of Quilon on 20 September. The members of Bethany (Bethanians) moved to the newly built Bethany Ashram, Pullad on 6 November

1932 - Fr. Barsleeba Kallumpuram OIC and Sadhu Hilarion OIC started staying at a rented house at Kunnukuzhi, Trivandrum- 12 June Mar Ivanios and Fr. Joshua Thavalathil OIC started staying at Vellayambalam, Trivandrum on 5 October

1933 - Promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution, Christo Pastorum Principi and enthronement of Mar Ivanios as the Archbishop of Trivandrum on 12 March. Bethanians shift their residence from Pullad, Vennikulam to Nalanchira.

1933 - Installation of Bethany Metran Mar Theophilos OIC as Bishop of Thiruvalla on 6 November

1934 - Mar Theophilos OIC started Diocesan Congregation at Thiruvalla

1934 - Bethanians started living at Thirumoolapuram on 29 May

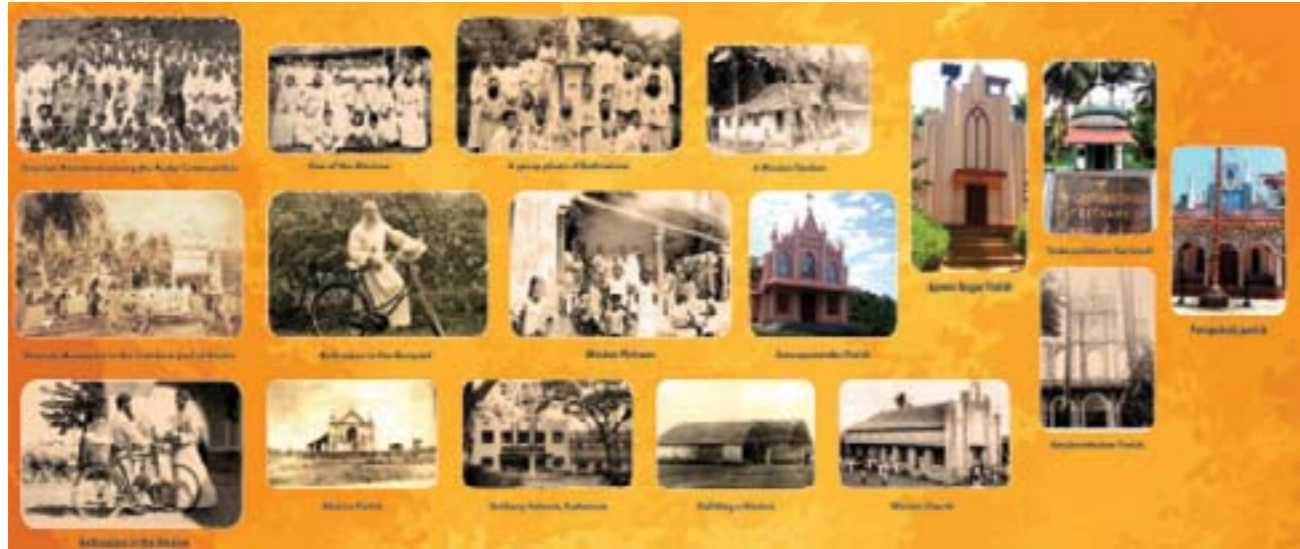
1935 - Bethany Ashram becomes a Diocesan Congregation under the Local Ordinaries of Trivandrum and Thiruvalla

1936 - Bethanians move from Thirumoolapuram to the newly built Ashram at Thukalassery on 12 April

## TOWARDS THE PERIPHERIES: 1940-1949

1947 - Bethany Ashram starts at Kattanam on 17 May. Mar Ivanios entrusts Pope Pius XI High School (Std:1-X) to Bethany Ashram for training the apostolic students of Bethany Ashram on 19 May. Mar Ivanios hands over the property at Poolachira to Bethany in view of starting an Ashram on 24 May





1948 - The re-unification of Bethany Ashram as a Congregation under the Superior General on 12 September. Fr. John Kuzhinapurath OIC elected as the First Superior General on 21 September . The first Generalate started functioning at St. Thomas Mission House Chengannur on 3 November  
 1949 - Fr. Joshua Thavalathil OIC elected as Superior General

**A LEGACY: 1950-1959**

1951 - Mar Ivanios and Mar Severios promulgate a new Holy Rule for Bethany Ashram on 15 April Fr. Francis Sales TOCD appointed by the Bishops as Canonical Visitor on 19 May  
 1952 - Mar Ivanios was given ‘Kanteela’ in the Chapel of Bethany Ashram, Nalanchira by Mar Severios on 2 September. Ramban Ordination of Fr. Benedict Thangalathil OIC on 27 December. Fr. Augustino Lombardi appointed by the Oriental Congregation as Apostolic visitor to the Congregation on 27 January  
 1953 - Episcopal Ordination of Ramban Benedict Thangalathil OIC. Fr. Peter Kozhimannil nominated Superior General by the Apostolic Visitor- 29 June. Archbishop Mar Ivanios OIC, the founder of Bethany Ashram enters into eternal rest on 15 July  
 1954 - The first batch of Scholastics for Priestly training moves to Pune with Fr. Gabriel Thykadavil OIC on 6 June  
 1955 - Erection of Bethany Ashram at the Sunset View building, Ramwadi, Pune on 30 April  
 - The revised Holy Rule approved by the Holy See on 30 April



1956 - Bishop Mar Theophilos Kalapurackal OIC enters into eternal rest on 27 June  
 1959 - Fr. Joshua Thavalathil OIC elected as Superior General



- Priestly Ordination of the first batch of Deacons at Pune

**TOWARDS CROWNING: 1960-1969**



1960 - Fr. Michael Manjanamkuzhy OIC goes to Malabar - Mykavu Mission on 29 May. The praxis book titled “Bethany Sanyasa Samoohathinte Aacharanushtanangal “ approved by the General Chapter in 1960  
 1961 - A Mission Mandiram opens at Nellickakuzhy, Kanjiramkulam  
 1964 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Meenangadi, Sulthan Bathery  
 1965 - Fr. Jacob Perumpral O.I.C. elected as Superior General  
 1966 - The Order of the Imitation of Christ raised to Pontifical Status on 14 April. The declaration of Pontifical Status at Bethany Ashram, Nalanchira on May 31 by Archbishop Rt. Rev. James Robert Knox, Apostolic Internuncio



1967 - The property of 30 acres at Asokapuram Aluva bought for Bethany Novitiate on 27 April

1968 - Cardinal Maxmilien de Furstenberg, Prefect of the Oriental Congregation, lays the foundation stone for Novitiate House at Asokapuram, Aluva on 19 February. Fr. Jacob Perumpral O.I.C. re-elected as Superior General. Inauguration of the Jubilee Memorial Health Centre at Nalanchira – 12 December and Erection of Nedumangadu Mission Mandiram

1969 - The Golden Jubilee Celebration of Bethany Ashram at Nalanchira from 14 to 16 May

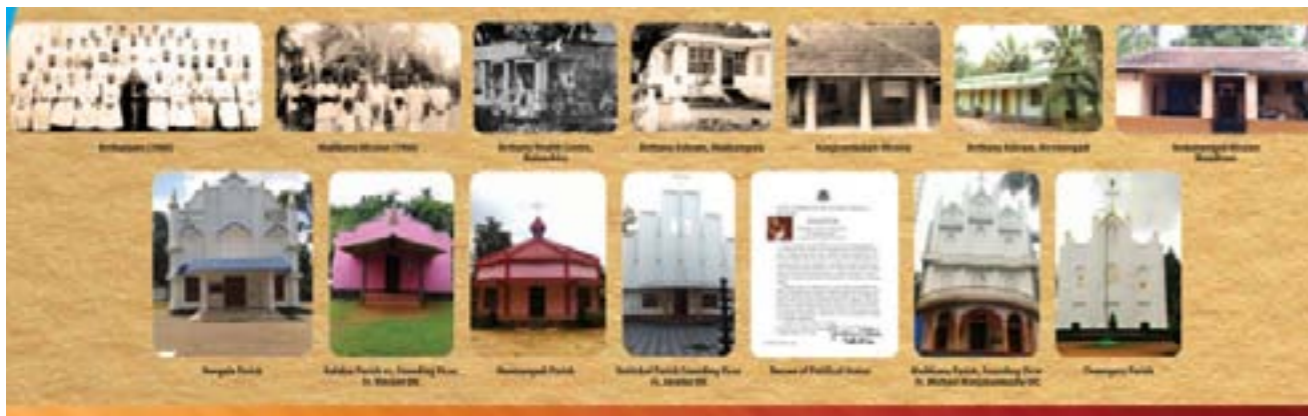
## NEW PASTURES: 1970-1979

1974 - The Generalate shifts from Nalanchira to Kottayam on 20 February. Inauguration of Bethany Sannadha Sevasangham (BSS) at Eraviperoor Church by Fr. Abraham Padinjaremannil O.I.C on 18 April

1974 - Fr. Cyril Malancharuvil O.I.C. elected as Superior General The first Kudumba Sammelanam at Bethany Ashram Generalate, Kottayam on 9 May. 'Trippadam', a Social Service Centre, initiated and begun by Fr. Gabriel Thaikadavil O.I.C. at Pazhakutty, Nedumangad on 27 May

1975 - Girideepam Bethany English School opens at Kottayam on 9 June. The inception of mission at Thekkummala, Vadasserikara by Fr. Vincent Xaviervilas O.I.C. on 1 December

1976 - The inauguration of Bethany Nature Cure Centre at Bethany Ashram, Nalanchira on



10 May . A 'Balabhavan' for boys opens at Bethany Ashram, Vengola at the initiative of Fr. Francis Sales Anchanattu O.I.C.

1977 - Mount Bethany English School and Boarding started at Mylapra on 1 June. Blessing of Novitiate House at Asokapuram, Alwaye on 1 September .

1978 - Fr. Jacob Perumpral O.I.C becomes the Vicar General following the appointment of Fr. Cyril Malancharuvil O.I.C as the first Bishop of the Diocese of Sulthan Bathery

1979 - Bishop Cyril Mar Baselios O.I.C entrusts South Canara (Dakshina Kannada) Region to Bethany Ashram for Apostolic work on 1 August . Erection of Bethany Ashram, Noojibalthila, Dakshina Kannada

## ETHOS OF BETHANY: 1980-1989

1980 - Fr. John Berchmans Xaviervilas O.I.C elected as Superior General. Golden Jubilee Celebration of Reunion Movement at Mar Ivanios Nagar (Nehru Stadium), Kottayam from 26 to 28 December . Erection of Bethany Ashram, Kadaba, Dakshina Kannada

1981 - Bethany High School opens at Noojibalthila on 29 June . The Blessing of Rehabilitation Centre, Pulayannarkotta, Trivandrum –on 16 July. Erection of Bethany Ashram at Nellyadi

1982 - Publication of Bethany Sabdam from Bethany Generalate, Kottayam on 15 January - Started Bethany Bible Studies (BBS)

1983 - Inauguration of Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP), Pune.

1986 - Fr. Louis Mooleveetil O.I.C elected as Superior General

1987 - Erection of Bethany Ashram at Chirackal, Kunnankulam. Bethany Ashram initiates Teens Orientation Camp (TOC). Cardinal Lourdasamy, Prefect of Oriental Congregation visits Bethany Ashram, Nalanchira on 18, 19 August



1989 - Inception of Bethany Mission House at Kalayapuram on 9 November

1980 - 89 - New parishes start in Bombay - Pune region

## EXPANSION OF THE MISSION: 1990-1999

1991 - Erection of Bethany Ashram at Kolkota, Bhilai, Kallar and Sulthan Bathery.

1992 - Fr. Jerome Peedikaparampil OIC elected as Superior General

1994 - Platinum Jubilee Celebration at Kottayam

1996 - Inauguration of mission at Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh and Opening of Bethany Ashram, Kalewadi, Pune

1997 - Opening of Bethany Ashram, Chelakkara, Trissur

1998 - Fr. George Thomas Kallunkal OIC elected as Superior General. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Kulappada, Nedumangad

1999 - Opening of Mission Mandiram, Mangalapuram, Karnataka  
 1990-99 - Parish ministry in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, USA and Middle East

## MISSION IN ETHIOPIA - EAST AFRICA: 2000-2009

2000 - Declaration of Navajeevan Province and Navajyothy Province on February 18.



Inauguration of Navajeevan Province at Nalanchira on 26 September and Inauguration of Navajyothy Province at Bethany Ashram, Thiruvalla on 26 September

2001 - Navajyothy Provincial House shifted from Thiruvalla to Desom, Aluva on 15 May

2003 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Bethany Nagar, Nalanchira on 25 March. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Angamoozhy, Pathanamthitta on 4 March

2004 - Fr. George Thomas Kallunkal OIC re-elected as Superior General. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Surat, Gujarat on 23 November. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Vencode, Tamilnadu on 16 December

2005 - Erection of Bethany Mission, Ludhiana, Punjab. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Hyderabad and the inauguration of Karunalayam-Home for the poor

2006 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Pulikkalody, Nilambur

2007 - Episcopal Ordination of Fr. Chacko Aerath OIC as Jacob Mar Barnabas OIC on 10 March

2008 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Adimaly, Idukki. Opening of Social Service Centre, Kokkathode, Konni

2009 - Fr. Jose Mariadas Padipurackal OIC elected as Superior General. Bethany



Ashram takes up mission work in Emdibir Diocese, Ethiopia. Erection of Bethany Ashram Emdibir on 20 September

## TOWARDS VILLAGES: 2010-2019

2010 - Episcopal Ordination of Fr. Antony Valiyavilayil OIC as Thomas Mar Anthonios OIC on 13 March

2011 - Inauguration of Bethany Ashram and Jeevaram Mar Ivanios Animation Centre, Mavelikara on 7 November. Erection of Bethany Navajeevan Provincial Ashram, Nalanchira on 18 February. Erection of Bethany Ashram, Kottavattom, Punalur

2012 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Hebri-Karnataka and Khargar-Navi Mumbai.

2013 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Ghaziabad-U.P, Titwala-Maharashtra and Kottoor-



Thiruvalla

2014 - Erection of Bethany Ashram Ludhiana-Punjab, Goroo – Ethiopia, Kinathukadavu-Tamil Nadu and Thycavu-Pathanamthitta

2015 - Fr. Jose Kuruvila Peedikayil OIC elected as Superior General

2016 - Village mission in Punjab begins on 25 December

2017 - Erection of Bethany Ashram, Sire-Ethiopia and Khanna- Punjab. New Mission in Chhattisgarh, Assam, Tripura, Kolkata, Bihar and Jharkhand. Mission in the Diocese of Balseore, Orissa. Mission in the Diocese of Jhalandhar, Punjab

2018 - Mission at Badkajra, Ranchi, Bihar. Blessing of the Centenary Door and Opening of Centenary Gallery by His Eminence Cardinal Rainer Maria Woelki, Archbishop of Cologne, Germany on 19 July. Erection of Deepagiri Bethany Ashram, Bethany Mala, Perunad (declared at the Bethany Ashram Generalate) as Centenary Memorial on 15 August and Blessing of Deepagiri Bethany Ashram and Inauguration of the Centenary Celebration by Major Archbishop Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos on September 22.

2019 -Centenary Gallery was inaugurated in Pune Scholasticate by Fr. General.

Closing of the Centenary Celebration at Kottayam on 21 September, 2019.

*Releasing the centenary logo...*



**'KILLFIE- THE NEWEST TREND'**



**Bro. Linson Mathew OIC  
III B.Ph.**

In the month of July, 2017, a 28 year old man sneaked into a restricted safari area at the Bannerghatta Biological Park in Bangalore with his friends. He tried to take a selfie of himself with an elephant. And the man was trampled to death.



Selfie is the latest fad among people, especially the younger generation. A selfie can be considered as a symbol of recognition, self- expression and acceptance. Although it is a relatively new concept today social media is crammed with selfies. And, it seems like this trend is not going to end anytime soon. Today I would like to talk on the topic, 'Killfie- the newest trend'. This world we live in is heading to 'the era of killfie'.

The quest to capture the ultimate selfie shot at bizarre and dangerous locations has resulted in the death of many people. 127 selfie –deaths were reported around the world from March 2014-September 2016. And the strange but true fact is that India is the world's No 1 in selfie deaths. Of the 127 selfie-deaths, 76 were reported in India. A collaborative study by researchers from Carnegie Mellon University and Indraprastha Institute of Information, Delhi showed that Pakistan had nine selfie-deaths, followed by the United States with eight and Russia with six in the last two years. It is the need of the time to understand why selfies are causing deaths.



According to the study 'Me, Myself and My Killfie: Characterizing and Preventing Selfie Deaths', young men are more prone to take dangerous selfies in very dangerous situations. And a majority of these people fall under the age of 24. While in the world most people have



died by falling off high buildings and mountain cliffs, in India most deaths have been water related or near railway tracks. For instance, a 17 year old teenager Preeti Pise was trying to take a selfie at Marine Drive. A high tide hit her and resulted in her tragic end. In 2015, three college students died in Kosikala while trying to take a selfie in front of a speeding train. The alarming rise of selfie-deaths needs to be addressed soon because it results not only in the death of the individual, but also seriously hampers the lives of their near and dear ones. We also have to realize that extremes of 'selfie obsession' damage the psychological balance of the individual.

The behavioural experts have divided selfies into three main categories: those taken with friends, those taken during certain activities or events and those that focus on physical appearance. A recent study appearing in the journal 'Psychology of Popular Media Culture' found that people who posted lots of selfies tends to have higher levels of certain narcissistic traits like fragile self-esteem. Obsession with selfies can further lead to adverse influences on the individuals' self esteem, body image satisfaction and feelings of anxiety and depression. Dr. Samir Parikh, director at Fortis Hospital, warns that selfie culture deprives youth of social stimulation; they are becoming



more and more engulfed in the virtual and technological world of the media. Such excessive preoccupation can lead to social withdrawal and alienation. We all do have the realization that anything in excess can prove to be harmful. Obsession with taking selfies stimulates the individuals to click photos in dangerous situations. Selfies should not be taken while compromising our own safety. Selfie culture has not only resulted in deaths but it is also destroying the social lives of the individuals. People are no longer interested in the real but in reel. The increasing number of selfie related deaths must stimulate us to introspect about how we value ourselves as individuals.



Rollo May, the famous American existential psychologist says, "Variety and Narcissism- the compulsive need to be admired and praised undermines one's courage, for one then fights on someone else' conviction rather than one's own." The one taking selfies and posting them continuously has this narcissist mentality in the underlying nature of his personality. We often worry about what others think of us. But, actually what really matters is what do I think of myself? Alarming rise in selfie-deaths has to be dealt at the earliest. The Tourism Ministry has notified state government to mark 'no-selfie zones' at dangerous locations. The authorities must join hands to ban taking selfies at accident prone areas. Russia, in 2015, launched a 'safe-selfie' information campaign. We all have to take



selfies  
are born  
out of low  
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responsibility to counsel and guide the youth of our country regarding 'Safe Selfies'. The people now live in the world of 'apps'. The government must take the initiative to create an app that warns people when they approach accident prone areas or dangerous locations. Schools and colleges can also conduct seminars and classes on how better to avoid risks while taking selfies. They have to be taught that safety is of higher priority than the best click.



I would like to suggest that as missionaries and seminary students, we have to take initiative to counsel the youth in our churches and schools regarding 'safe selfies'. The famous American politician Brigham Young once said, 'Why should we worry about what others think of us, do we have more confidence in their opinions than we do our own?' killfie is the result of a selfie. And selfies are born out of low self esteem and low confidence in us. Let us all believe in our own value. Let us live and help others live with the realization that how we value ourselves is much more important than how others value us.



## UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENT WITH INSIGHTS FROM THE PAST

Bro. Nithin V Mathew OIC  
III B.ph.



January 12, 2018 will always remain strong in the mind of our nation, because on that day 4 judges of the Supreme Court gave an unanimous declaration to our country they said that, “our Chief Justice is committing mistakes, the Judiciary is in danger, the democracy is in danger and also our country is in danger”. It was under the leadership of Justice Chelameswar that this press conference was conducted. Last year, 2018, witnessed a number of remarkable judgements by our Supreme Court like making National Anthem optional in cinema halls, Right to reputation, Legalising gay sex and adultery, Adhar being made conditional and declaring Sabarimala as open to all women. All these judgements have also paved the way for hot discussions and protests. Various political parties have made use of the situations for their personal benefits. At this crucial point, we must seriously reflect on how we reached this place in our history on the basis of the reform movements. In this article, I would like to bring your attention to the present social situation of Kerala in the light of various reform movements happened in its history.

Aruvippuram consecration by Narayana Guru and Guruvayur Satyagraha are the greatest reform movements in the history of Kerala. Till the early part of the 20th Century, Ezhavas and other lower castes were not allowed inside Hindu temples. During Sree Narayana Guru's wandering life, he happened to be at Aruvipuram in 1888. He picked up a stone from Neyyar River and used it as an idol for the new temple and consecrated it. He also set up temples at Alwaye, Vypin and Cherai. After the Aruvipuram consecration, he had written in Malayalam, the four lines “*Jaathibhedam Mathadwesham Eathumillathey Sarvarum Sodarathwena Vazhunna Mathrukasthanamanithu*” meaning “this is the model abode where everyone will live in brotherhood, without animosity due to differences of caste and religion”.

Guruvayur Satyagraha took place in 1932, which was an effort to allow entry for untouchables into Guruvayur temple. It was led by K. Kelappan who undertook a hunger strike for 12 days. Until it was abandoned because of a request from Mahatma Gandhi, it was only in 1936 that temples in Kerala were opened for all to use.

The temple Entry proclamation was issued by Maharaja Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma in 1936 and abolished the ban on the so called ‘low caste people’ or avarnas from entering Hindu temples. The proclamation was a milestone in the history of Kerala.

Being religious, we should not forget about the movement by St. Kuriakose Chavara. St. Kuriakose Chavara started an institution for Sanskrit studies at Mannanam in 1846. After that he took initiative to start a school in Arpookara for the pulaya caste. Fr. Chavara was the first Indian who not only dared to admit the untouchables to schools but also provided them with Sanskrit education which was forbidden to the lower castes.

The founder of our congregation, Mar Ivanios, who established schools for the upliftment of people and society, is a great example. One of the pioneering institutions, Mar Ivanios College, that produced many prominent personalities, is a thing to be proud of. It was a dream of Mar Ivanios to bring renovation in the church and society through education. Through reform movements many traditions have gone out of the window. It was traditional for the widow to die on the funeral pyre of her husband, a practice ended by William Bebtinct at the prompting mainly of Raja Rammohan Roy.

Our nation is filled with many important historical events. But, we should not limit ourselves in taking pride in our literacy, cultures and traditions. Today, more than humanity and its circumstances, more importance is given to religious rituals. It is taking place none other than in our land of historicity. Also like this, when man is completely lost in competing with himself; political parties are coming up with their selfish ideologies.

As we live in a land of drastic changes, let us take few decisions in these critical situations. Let us give importance to both humanity and the human condition. Remove all the false politics that are working for their own motives. Through this we should assure ourselves to bring all the knowledge into practicality. If not, Kerala in 2019 will be again known as “lunatic asylum” stated by Swami Vivekananda in 1892.

Kerala is home for a number of reform movements in contrast to other states in our country. Our Kerala has not become the domination of a particular party or religion during its course of history. So, we must take our guard in not becoming a part of self-interested politicians and religious extremists. It is so because we are living in the birthplace of legends who said like, “the important thing is to be a good person irrespective of religion”. Therefore, let us build a land of unity and harmony.

# BETHANIAN INITIATIVES FOR NURTURING NATURE



Bro. Jaison Simon OIC  
III B.Th.



## BETHANY UDYAN – Special Initiative – Bodharamam (Garden of Wisdom): ‘The Concept of Sacred Grooves’

- Cosy Sitting
- Hut
- Umbrella of Curtain plant
- Fruit trees, Garden Plants...

### 1. BECOME MORE AWARE OF RESOURCES

- Awareness Programmes
- Extension Lectures
- Video Presentations
- Group Discussions



### 2. GREEN BELT

- Planting Trees, Medicinal Plants, Conserving the Plants etc.
- Gardens
  - Flower Garden
  - Medicinal Garden
  - Vegetable Garden
  - Bethany Udyan – Special Initiative
  - Fodder Cultivation
  - Agriculture Practices



**FODDER CULTIVATION**



**TAPIOCA GARDEN, PLANTAIN, BANANA**



**FARM PRODUCE**



**USE LESS FOSSIL FUEL BASED PRODUCTS**  
Goober Gas, Bio gas, Solar etc...



Bethany Ashram, Pune, in line with clean and green India mission, has started a waste management centre with special bins to segregate and collect wastes under different categories. Besides this, individual collection bins for plastic waste have also been placed on each storey of the ashram and also outside the refectory. New storage units have been constructed to hold all tools and material necessary for the work of the offices of Surrounding Cleaners, Park and Garden and the Vegetable Garden.

**CULTURE OF FIVE 'R'S – Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle**



**ECO-FRIENDLY GET TOGETHER**



**DRAMA ON ECO-CONSERVATION**



*“If we wait for the meek to inherit the earth there won't be anything left to inherit” —Bob Hunter, founder of GreenPeace*

“M- CAT: 100 LESSONS A MALANKARITE SHOULD KNOW”

Bro. Martin Mathew OIC  
III B.Ph, JDV



Rev. Dr. John Berchmans OIC (1934-2018) was a zealous missionary, a great pastor and theologian par excellence of the Malankara Catholic Church. He obtained LPh and LD from JDV, Pune and Doctorate in Scripture from Biblicum, Rome. Inspired by the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Youcat, he was dreaming of a catechism text explaining the fundamental faith of the Malankarites and he was passionately involved in this work during his last days but unfortunately he could not see it published. The posthumous publication of this book allows all who knew Fr. Berchmans to celebrate the rich legacy that he left behind.

“M- Cat: 100 Lessons a Malankarite should know” is really a handbook of the faith and Christian living of the Malankara Catholic Church. It explains what Malankara Catholics believe and why (doctrine), How Malankara Catholics celebrate the mysteries of the faith (sacraments), How Malankara Catholics are to live (moral life) and How they should pray (prayer and spirituality). Each lesson is explained in a simple way in a straightforward, relevant, and compelling manner. M-CAT will likely become the "go-to" place for young people to learn the truth about the Malankara Catholic faith.

This book can be approximately classified into six categories. The first six chapters are on Bible and Tradition, the sources of Revelation. Chapters 7-44 are dealing with faith. This is explained from the matrix of Nicea- Constantinople creed. Chapters 45-74 are on liturgy, sacraments culminated in the life of Eucharist. Chapters 75-80 are on moral and ethical aspects of Christian life. Chapters 81-90 are on prayer and meditation. Finally chapters 91-100 are on church history, and other practices of the church. In short, this book will guide all the readers of the book into a versatile of theological topics like Holy Scripture, tradition, Trinity, Christology, Mariology, Pneumatology, Ecclesiology, Liturgy, Sacraments, Moral Theology, Church History, etc.



It is a gift from a person who always had only two things in his mind: Malankara Catholic Church and Bethany Ashram. The most important contents of the faith of the Malankara Catholic Church are summarized briefly and comprehensibly. This book is really a great contribution to the Malankara Catholic Church in the centenary year of Bethany Ashram.



THE OIC I SAW

V. Rev. Fr. E. Zeitler, SVD



( An article originally published in Golden Jubilee souvenir of Bethany Ashram)

The first time I heard of the St. Thomas Christians was in the primary school in Germany. It was the time when Mar Ivanios joined the Catholic Church. It was our parish priest who showed us the picture of the strange man in his strange dress and still more strange headgear and told us that this was the catholic bishop in far away India who has found his way to the true church. Our parish priest had no doctorate in theology, not even a BA but his heart was as wide as the world.

Many years later when we had just started the novitiate, our teacher a noted professor of Church history gave us an excellent introduction to the history of religious Orders. It was there I heard for the first time the name of the OIC and was told that they were a Syro-Malankara religious Order. It was all still rather nebulous for me. I asked the famous professor of the church history: “but why are they Syrian? Could they not lead their own religious life in India?” His answer: “why are we German Latins?” My answer: “well, our forefathers were “barbarians” at least this is what Caesar tells us. But are these St. Thomas Christians in India not as old as Christianity could they not take deep roots in the Indian soil.” I received no answer.



Several times we have demonstrations of oriental rites in our big scholasticate and this was always an event that made a deep impression on us. These oriental groups were most welcome and made our scholasticate near Boon the centre for their liturgical programmes. Still a humble novice, I took courage one time to ask one of those venerable fathers with a long white beard. How do you appreciate our Latin rite? Do you invite in Syria also our Latin priests for such demonstration services in your seminaries? I received no answer. My novitiate lasted only for a few weeks. Then I was again called to the German army and soon find myself on the way to Leningard. It was in one of those terrible battles that we found shelter in an old monastery of Orthodox monks which was used by the soviets as a mental asylum.



While the rain of shells burst against the thick walls, I had a chance of studying the beautiful old icons still left on the walls, icons of the oriental church, depicting in such a moving way the belief in our Lady. Years passed by, the world changed I was ordained a priest and in 1954 I came to India, the land of St. Thomas. My wish to see Mar Ivanios remain unfulfilled: he had passed away the year before. But I met his successor Benedict Mar Gregorios, many a time, nowadays usually at the conferences which have

become part of our modern life. In 1956 I was sent to Poona to explore the possibilities of setting up an SVD scholasticate. It was there in Poona where I first met the real OIC who had just started their own scholasticate on the plot which soon was to become a small Vatican, a conglomeration of ecclesiastical Institutions.

Ever since I have remained in close contact with the OIC, I attended their liturgical functions and tried to understand them and got them explained, sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly. I tried also to get some literature about their history, their world of thought, their ideals and many things more. It always struck me whether the Indian Church would be able to produce something that is genuinely Indian and at the same time genuinely Catholic e.g. a liturgy based on the great Indian heritage, flowing from an Indian theology. I tried also to



study more about their founder, Mar Ivanios, the great man who inspired me. I regretted that I could not find a scientific biography exposing in a realistic way, not in a flowering language of popular pamphlets, his ideals and the history of his foundation. A feature that was more sympathetic to me was his deep devotion to Our Lady and the strange coincidence in his life with the feasts of Our Lady, of the Carmel. Many of the decisive turns in his life were connected in a strange way with the other world in which Our Lady reigns. I think it

would be part of the spiritual patrimony of the OIC to develop this topic in a time which more and more forgets even in the church Our Lady. In the following decade which brought me all over India, I met time and again traces of Mar Ivanios. It was with a sense of reverence that I saw for the first time the place where he was born, Mavelikara. I remembered him, when I visited the Christian College in Madras where he took his M.A. at a time when few thought that higher education would affect a major break-thought for the Catholic Church in Kerala.

I felt his spirit in the halls of the Serampore College in Calcutta where he was teaching for six years Syriac, Church history and political economy. It was especially the strange combination of these subjects that struck me. Finally I saw his tomb in Trivandrum; I also saw the Cathedral growing up over it. It is a place where one can pray that Divine Providence may guide the movement where he has started. He is among those great men that are time and again called in moments, when the church is going to make a decisive turn and we must pray because every movement is endangered by its successes and failures, by an overdose of unrealistic spirituality or by losing its identity in the materialistic world of today.



For the last 13 years I have seen the new generations of OIC's growing up in Poona. Two



of the rectors have become Superior Generals, the young scholastics of then are today already superiors, novice masters and people in responsible positions. Some of them I have met in Rome and elsewhere. It is with great expectations that I am following their development. What I hope most from them is they continue to give an example of religious poverty and detachment from material goods, a feature that strongly characterized their founder. Another hope is that they develop their original seeds of contemplation in a world that has a little place for this basic element of Christianity. It is also my hope they will discover fully their own identity which naturally take its own time.



May the OIC never be swallowed by the spirit of worldliness and overactivity; but show the religious asceticism which characterizes the holy men in India. May those members who were sent abroad, return with the best they can find outside India, but leave before they return India, everything abroad that is not keeping with their mission here.

I wish them also that they may be able to build up their material resources in such a way that they are firmly rooted in the Indian soil without

being forced to be too much troubled about what they should eat and how they should clothe themselves, just as the gospel advises them. What matters is the spirit, a spirit that is as wide as the Catholic Church is; fully Indian yet continuously transcending all national barriers; fully rooted in their traditions but knowing that all living beings in order to grow must assimilate new elements; fully concerned with the world to come, a symbol of the eschatological character of the Church; and yet deeply concerned with the needs of the poorest of the poor in whom they serve Christ the Lord.



*This in short, is the OIC I saw and the OIC I would like to see.*



**And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29)**

## OIC I SEE...

At the outset, let me underscore that I find the Bethanians as joyous, pleasant, sociable and hospitable people in the Campus. Their evangelical simplicity, religious demeanour and decorum are admirable to me. Their prayerful life gets manifested in their integrated daily living. They noticeably make a difference in all the students' activities at JDV. I appreciate their active participation in JDV Students' Council. While Bethanians' dedication, discipline and sportsmanship in the games field are enviable; their creativity, commitment and collaboration at cultural events are very commendable. May their tribe continue to thrive!



**Dr. Arjen Tete, SJ, JDVSC Co-ordinator**

On the centenary year of the Order of the Imitation of Christ (OIC), I thank God for his Grace that the staff and students of JDV have been receiving for many years through the inspiring presence and committed involvement of the community members of Bethany Ashram. Diversity is the beauty of our campus and the presence of Bethany Ashram makes a unique contribution to this wonderful experience of diversity. The contribution of the members of Bethany Ashram is threefold: Spiritual, Liturgical and Theological. Through a harmonious blend of Eastern Spirituality and Mysticism, the Bethany Ashram stands out in the Campus, creating fertile terrain for Indian ways of doing theology and to experience the ineffable mystery of the Christ event. With deep sentiments of gratitude I wish all the members of the Order a joyful and meaningful centenary celebration.



**Prof. Nishant A. Irudayadason, Faculty of Philosophy, JDV**

Two things stay in my mind as I think of Bethany: The first is how spotless the Bethany campus is - bearing witness to the commitment to recycle all waste, especially plastic waste. A second aspect relates to some of the brothers who demonstrated a keen desire for personal growth, approaching me outside of class hours so that they could take their academic and personal growth even deeper.



**Dr. Dinesh Braganza, SJ, Faculty of Philosophy, JDV**

The Church of Christ has always been characterized by its unity in diversity. In a country, India, this delights in diversity. It's a privilege and blessing to have the presence of the inmates of the Bethany Ashram of the 'Order of the Imitation of Christ' (OIC) as part of the JDV Family. The priests and brothers of the OIC Religious Family are known for their exemplary living of Indian Sanyasa (monasticism). Bolstered by a rich Syro-Malankara religious tradition, they add a spiritual, cultural and intellectual dimension that adds light and life to the formation envisaged at Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth. We are extremely happy and grateful for the many contributions from both, the staff and the students of the Bethany Ashram. We look forward to their continued support and collaboration for achieving that "fullness of life" (Jn 10:10) which Christ came to bring.



**Prof. Dr. Francis Gonsalves, S.J., Dean, Faculty of Theology, JDV**



I had great regard for Mar Ivanios, whom I heard about as a Jesuit novice. So when I reached Pune for my Philosophy Studies at DNC, my eyes were fixed on Bethany Ashram. I was not disappointed. Apart from the excellent pioneering work in dialogue and Indianisation, the brothers I met were always unassuming and humble. What is now commonplace in some centres, the OIC was forging paths unraveled at that time!

**Dr. Cyril Desbruslais, SJ, Professor Emeritus, JDV**

Teaching and interacting with the seminarians from Bethany has always been a good experience. They cannot be missed because of their pink or brown kurtas, cut and stitched in the same style. Coming from a different rite, their presence enhances the diversity of the campus. When I was a philosophy student in JDV, I often enjoyed meals at Bethany Ashram. Last year I met one of my companions who was the administrator there and learnt about some other of my companions, who have now traversed international lines. I wish them all the best for the programs planned for their centenary year.



**Dr. Konrad Noronha, SJ, Faculty of Theology, JDV**

I am very happy to know that you are bringing out a small magazine on the occasion of your centenary year. I wish you all the best for your centenary celebration. May God's abundant blessings be upon each and every one of you during this year and all the years to come. I consider the presence of Bethany Ashram in JDV campus a great blessing. You contribute the unique perspective of the Syro-Malankara rite of Catholic Church. I am very happy to notice that the staff and students of Bethany Ashram actively take part in all the activities of Jnana-Deepa Vidayapeeth. Once again I extend my hearty congratulations to all of you on the occasion of your centenary year.



**Prof. Dr. Jose Thayil, SJ , Registrar, JDV**

The presence of Bethany Ashram in JDV Campus is a blessing to the Church in India. Bethanians enrich the staff and students of JDV with the Syro-Malankara liturgy, spirituality and their way of life. The BVP International Conferences on various themes deepen our understanding of Syro-Malankara Church's rich tradition, spirituality and theology. BVP's fraternal collaboration with JDV in the past fifty years has strengthened our fraternal bond.



**Prof. Dr. Mohan Doss SVD, Faculty of Theology, JDV**

It is indeed a matter of delight to know that the Congregation of the Order of the Imitation of Christ is in its centennial year. Many consider its presence on the campus—in the form of Bethany Ashram—as a veritable blessing for all of us. By your presence you are bearing witness to the hallowed ashram tradition in our midst, which I believe is rendering a powerful testimony to the predominantly Hindu context of Ramwadi-Vadagaon Sheri. I wish you God's many blessings in this centennial year!



**Prof. Thomas Malipurath SVD, Faculty of theology, JDV**

The presence of the Bethany Ashram in the JDV Campus certainly adds colour to the feature and the fabrics of JDV. The Ashram makes its contribution both academically and culturally; their periodical national and international conferences help us in updating ourselves with the recent developments in Theology and Liturgy. They are very regular in bringing out their News Letter, which is very creative, informative and inspiring. My hearty congratulations to all the fathers and brothers as they celebrate their centenary. May the Good Lord continue to bless them to reach greater heights.



**Prof. Stephen Jayard, Faculty of Philosophy, JDV**

Bethany Ashram is very familiar to me from the early 1980s onwards. It is a place of learning and insight into Indian culture and Christian faith. The staff and students make efforts to continue the good traditions as well as necessary changes for the future. It is a place where one can experience the Hospitality of Martha and the Prayerfulness of Mary. One can freely walk into Bethany ashram and feel at home. Congratulations to you all!



**Dr. VM. Jose SJ, Faculty of Theology, JDV**

Bethany Ashram has been a unique presence in the JDV campus. Hospitality, friendliness, and warmth characterize the community the Fathers and brothers are very welcoming and extremely generous. Their simplicity and commitment is truly commendable. I thank God for their creative presence in the campus. Being present is an existential inevitability; but making one's prophetic presence overwhelmingly felt for a century long witness to the truth that Ivarian fire of love continues to burn the hearts of many.



**Prof. Dr. Kuruvila Pandikattu, SJ, Dean, Faculty of Philosophy, JDV**

We Fransalians, Carmelites, and Bethanians together make a sangamam of all three Rites .We do learn from one another. BVP, Institute of Oriental Theology, which is an extension centre of JDV has added a feather in the cap of JDV and there is an ambience of peace and serenity in and around the campus because of Bethanian presence. They work hard in the farm and poultry and their loving services in distributing milk & curing Jaundice by giving medicines are benefited by the lay people around of different faith. Their simple life style and ascetic way of living due an Ashram way of living inspires all of us in general.



**Dr. Johnson Gonsalves MSFS, Rector, Fransalian Seminary, Pune**







# My Shadow

Bro. Jomal Mathew, OIC  
II B. Ph, JDV



You are the shadow to my life  
Oh my mother, my dear.

I was in darkness, but when  
you become light in my life  
there formed a shadow that  
imprinted your likeness as God.  
You are the shadow to my life  
Oh my mother, my dear.

Without your presence, the light,  
there is no shadow.  
So, I need your presence  
through all my life.  
You are the shadow to my life.

I feel this when I lay in your lap  
by hearing your valuable voice,  
My mother, my dear.  
You are the shadow to my life.  
You did not teach me anything  
but I learned everything by  
looking at your shadow.  
Oh my mother, my dear.  
You are the shadow to my life.  
MY mother, today all consider  
shadow as a black power



because of black idols.  
So, teach them that shadow  
does not move but the mover  
is our own self.  
You are the shadow for all.

My mother, when you pray,  
I see Jesus. When you work,  
I see a most sincere person and  
when you help, I see God  
in your shadow  
You taught me  
not to get everything but to give  
by your shadow.  
All your shadows were right,  
because your shadow represents  
your actions, oh my mother, my dear.



# BVP COLLOQUIUM

Bro. Henry Sam OIC,  
III B. Th.  
BVP Students Representative 2019



Being the centenary year of our congregation, and taking into consideration the importance and richness of monastic life, Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP) conducted a Theological Colloquium on the theme: Monasticism Meeting Modernity: Oriental Christian & Indian Perspectives & Challenges.

There were rosters of scholars from around the world who came to present their papers and engage in lively discussions of the topic. It was an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas and to learn from each other.

In the words of BVP Director Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiyil OIC, the colloquium was “an attempt to explore and exchange the richness of monastic life and to bring about a rebirth and revitalization in the spiritual life and apostolic activity in the Church and in the world.” The Program began with the opening Bhajan by Rev. Fr. Philip Vysanethu OIC. Fr. Shajan welcomed all to the Program, and made special mention of the late Dr. John Berchmans, the founding father of BVP. Vote of Thanks of the Inaugural Session was presented by Rev. Dr. George Ayyaneth OIC. Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Anthonios OIC offered the Inaugural Address, and our Superior General Very Rev. Fr. Jose Kuruvila OIC delivered the Presidential Address. The Keynote Address was given by Most Rev. Swami Virabhadrananda of Ramakrishna Math, Kerala.

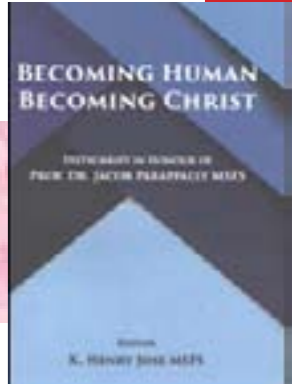
The Colloquium was an academic fiesta for BVP staff and students especially against the backdrop of the centenary of the foundation of the Bethany Ashram monastic movement (1919-2019). This colloquium enabled us to realize and cherish what our founder said about the religious life. “*sanyasa* is the heart of the Church” and the role played by monks has to be played by monks alone. No one else can replace it. Also the heart should play only the role of the heart and not of the hand.



**“The World needs monks and religious to give Christ in the complexities and darkness of the modern world”**

*Baselios Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos*

# Cherished Colloquium Memories



## Humanist Manifesto of Jesus in Storytelling

An Article Published by Dr. George Ayyaneth OIC in 'Becoming Human, Becoming Christ: Festschrift in Honour of Prof. Dr. Jacob

Becoming Human – Becoming Christ, the central theme of this book, suggests Jesus as the ideal image of a perfect human being. His words and deeds amply give witness to the fact that he totally denounced a mere vertical dimension of spirituality, piety and faith. By placing the horizontal dimension as a prerequisite to vertical, Jesus elevated the human aspect on a par with that of the divine in the religious discourse. In his very act of incarnation, in his teachings, in his preferential option for the poor, downtrodden, oppressed, and neglected, in his choice of the death on the cross, and even in his compassionate presence at the glorified state of resurrection [e.g. as a fellow-traveller on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35), as a cook preparing breakfast for the hungry disciples at the seashore (Jn 21: 1-14), as a close friend to the doubting Thomas (Jn 20:24-29), etc.] show plainly the human face of Jesus.

Another important aspect of the humanist manifesto of Jesus is his very art of storytelling. Why did Jesus resort to storytelling to communicate with the people and with his disciples? The answer will lead us again to the same fact that to manifest his human face fully, Jesus disassociated himself from the kind of language and culture innate to alien-being or semigod or belonging to imperial and juridical realm. Storytelling was his privileged means of communication, which in turn vociferously tells volumes on his naive human traits. The Article is an attempt to unravel the humanist manifesto of Jesus in storytelling.

## “Towards an Eco-Spirituality”

An Article published by Dr. Isaac Parackal OIC in *Indian Journal of Secularism, Vol. 21 (April-June, 2018). 21- 32.*

Modern world witnesses a life which is not harmonious, inhuman and irritating in many walks of life. The violation of human rights coupled with the disastrous greed of human being made the vanishing of natural resources so that the natural balance dwindled. Human beings forget the value of nature and began to exploit it as possible ways. People who understood the calamities going to happen may vanish not only humans but also other creatures from the face of the earth began to formulate measures to restore the balance which is lost due to human interventions. Rapid growth in environmental consciousness coupled with





with spirituality gathered momentum in the present scenario can contribute a lot in conserving nature. In this article, the author points out the importance of eco-spirituality in reinstating the ecological balance. The article gives the notions of eco-spirituality in the light of different religions. Generally, none of the religion is against nature rather it praise the importance of nature and harmonious life. The idea of tawhid in Islam provides the mutual interrelated existence of created entities in God. The reflected unity of God in nature gives the implications that all creatures in the nature should live in a harmonious way. The eco-spirituality is asserted through the principles like unity, trusteeship and accountability. In Buddhism, the notion of interdependence is overemphasised. The cosmological model of mutual relatedness sustains the universe and makes life possible.

**“Monasticism Meeting Modernity”**

***Oriental Christian and Indian Perspectives and Challenges***  
**Co-edited by Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiyil OIC and**  
**Dr. George Ayyaneth OIC, published in the year 2019.**



We live in a world where people look for new models and monasticism is not an exception. Being the centenary year of our congregation, and taking into consideration the importance and richness of monastic life, Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP) conducted a Theological Colloquium on the theme: Monasticism Meeting Modernity: Oriental Christian & Indian Perspectives & Challenges. The fifth BVP Colloquium was an attempt to understand Monasticism with its Unprecedented challenge of modernity in the context of the centenary year of the Bethany Ashram (1919-2019). This book contains scholarly papers presented by experts and resource persons coming from different parts of the world representing various potifical universities and seminaries, co-edited by Dr. Geevarghese Shajan Kuttiyil OIC and Dr. George Ayyaneth OIC, published by Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth (BVP). This book rightly showcases ideas, visions, scientific approaches, challenging persuasions and all the more, all aspects and aspirations for the generations to come.

***“Launching a new book is kind of scary; you spend such a long time alone with your characters, and then, in one sudden moment, they’re running wild into the hands of strangers...”***

***Nanette L. Avery***

*Final Cut...*

**Lord stay with us to be more fruitful**

**Bro. Alexis Pallisery OIC**  
***I B. Th.***



The consecrated life is a gift which the Father has given to the church by means of the Spirit so that, in faithfulness to the Gospel, the most characteristic traits of the life of his Son Jesus, the chaste, poor and obedient one (cf. Mt. 8:20; Phil. 2:8), and the unfathomable riches of his mystery (cf. Eph. 3:8), might be present in the world and might draw everyone toward the kingdom of God. Bethany is called for that.



Bethany congregation has been existing for 100 years, and it has gathered memories. As the name suggests, it is a place of memories, of promises and hopes and above all a place of consolation. Think of the history that has passed it by. It was built in the early years of the conflicts in the local Church, and stood above the demonstrations for Independence and then for freedom and the right to choose its own future.

The centenary celebration helps us to reflect on the consecrated life in the light of God's plan, returning to the sources of grace from which it arises, the great wealth of its historical expressions and the legacy of its patron saints. At the same time, however, the celebration is intended to discern the challenges and expectations of the contemporary world, for which the Holy Spirit enriches bethanians with resources of grace, spirituality, manifold works and creativity in the apostolic life.

The framework for this reflection on the centenary celebration is the new evangelization

of today's world, characterized by the rise of new values and cultures which have a conditioning effect on the traditional view of the consecrated life. While this context presents significant challenges to its identity and mission, it also affords a providential opportunity, on the basis of the creativity of the charisms of the Spirit, to evoke courageous responses based on the Gospel. The hope-filled moment in which the church is living calls for such a reflection, as does the constant invitation coming from Christ and from the charism of the founder, which continues in time.

The members of Bethany Ashram constitute an important group in the church, comparable to the Gospel leaven (cf. Lk. 13:21). The members are a minority within the people of God. Though small in number, this group is 'a radiant sign of the kingdom of heaven' for the church



and for the world. Bethanian lifestyle is a memoria of the teachings and example of Christ and the Gospel values lived by the saints in the course of the pilgrimage of the people of God throughout the ages. It is a witness of commitment in the following of Christ and a prophecy of the eschatological destiny of history. A common reality unifies us - the call to total self-giving to God; love for Christ the teacher, Lord and bridegroom of the church, who is intimately followed and served above everything; and the decision to live according to the Spirit.



Scattered into many areas of the particular churches, we are placed among the people as a sign of ecclesial communion and Christian fraternity. We are often found in the 'desert' where there is no one, on the 'margins of society' where they experience poverty and share the necessities of people, and on the 'front lines' where many face the risks of proclaiming the Gospel in difficult situations.

Analogous forms of personal dedication seen in the search for the divine, in

meditation, prayer, asceticism and the witness to the transcendent values-often accompanied by compassionate service to one's neighbor-can be found in other non-Christian religions. The life in Bethany is the basis for a fruitful dialogue with them and offer a common witness to the values of the Spirit.

The memory of the past is interwoven with the holiness and role of the consecrated life in bethany. Hope for the future-until the Lord returns in the glory of his kingdom-is also a part of the role to be exercised by the charisms stirred by the Spirit. In this year of the Centenary, looking to the past preserving the present building for the future, the congregation witnesses in various human capacities to the call of God; still pondering the prayer; Mane nobiscum Domine – Lord, Stay with us.



Bethany Community, Pune, 2019



*“Let us continue to radically witness the warmth of the Nazarene through our uncontaminated smile and small acts of kindness and of love amidst the crazy kitsch clichés of sinister intent.”*

*100 Years of Bethanian Witnessing... 1919 - 2019*



Possessing God is nobler than serving God.  
Except the love of God nothing should be our inspiration.  
Above all, we need the love of Jesus Christ. When we love everyone in Christ's name, the day will not be far when everyone will be united in faith.

Mar Ivanios



Bethany Ashram, Ramwadi, Pune



Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth, Pune