



E-BULLETIN # 16

"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5,16)

ITEM 36

Golden Jubilee gift to Assumption Province

On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Pallottine presence in the Archdiocese of Goa, Most Rev Filipe Nerei Ferrao has offered us a parish at Badem, Anjuna.

The name of the parish is **Our Lady of Miracles**. It is located about 4 kms from Casa Pallotti, Assagao. The Provincial Council has decided to take up this new parish.

newsletter: BA Province - INDIA
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province@vsnl.net

ITEM 35

a Yearning for...a Contemplative Way

An Urge and a Yearning for a Closer life with St Vincent in a Quieter, Contemplative Way

For the last fourteen years or so I have been spending a week in silence during the Lenten Season near the Hill Top Shrine of St Thomas the Apostle at Malayattoor, Kerala, India. It is close to Cochin, and even closer to our House, Pallottialayam, Aluva, just about 30 km east, up in the hills. Despite my brokenness, or even due to my brokenness, I liked the quiet time spent there and I felt drawn to the place. During this past Lenten Season, and all through Holy Week and a week after Easter, I lived on the Hill Top helping out with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Celebration of Holy Eucharist.

This is the most busy Pilgrimage Season. Over Two Hundred Thousand Pilgrims climbed the Holy Hill during this season. They climb up to the Shrine praying the Stations of the Cross and with Devotional Chants. It's almost a two kilometer climb up through the hilly and forest route and takes an hour or so to reach the Hill Top.

Lots and lots of pilgrims come for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and take part in the daily Eucharistic Celebration. There is a Priest Chaplain to oversee the Sacramental Needs. He too lives at the Hill Top. I was helping him out. Besides the Chaplain there is a group of priests consisting of the Rector, the Pastor and his Associate, living in the nearby Mother Parish which is at the Foot of the Hill and by the side of the famous and ancient River Periyar.

During Holy Week a good number of priests came to Hill Top Shrine to help out with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Celebration of Holy Eucharist. Many a Pilgrim Group comes with their own pastors

and priests and have their Celebration of the Eucharist. They come in groups of families and parishes.....people of every age, young and old, and of different religions, they come. They keep coming all through days and nights.

On May 15th, the main Feast Day, the Cardinal Major Archbishop came up and celebrated the Holy Eucharist.

Apart from these two months of busy Pilgrimage Season it a very, very, quiet place... no crowd at all... no rush of pilgrims ... but, though few in numbers, they keep coming all through the year.

The so called Off Season is the time I relish and want to spent in prayer and reflection. I want to keep frequenting the Shrine for a year and keep staying there for a longer stretch of time. I plan on going up this Weekend, and in the coming months. The early Mornings and late Evenings at the Hill Top Shrine, during the Off Season, are so peaceful and quiet. And it is an enriching experience indeed!

From Jan 2014 I plan on staying there for a year or so without any travelling...in silence...just confining myself to the daily celebration of the Eucharist, and to be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the few pilgrims who keep coming.

I also plan on writing something based on S. Scripture and spirituality and drawing from my own personal experiences...my successes, failures, and frustrations as a Pallottine and as a priest.

As I am sixty five years old and am moving towards the concluding years of my life. I have been nursing a desire to spend more and more time in silence, prayer, and reflection. It is very much in line with our Indian Way of approaching Human Life with it's different Stages, right? Also, it is in perfect harmony with the innate contemplative spirit of our Holy Founder, right?

Ever since I got back after my stay and studies in Rome and USA, though I have been going around offering classes, courses and retreats in different Seminaries and Institutes, all along I have been toying with this idea of a quieter and contemplative life as a Pallottine.

But I waited till I reach sixty five...And now that I have...I want to...

If everything goes well, it is my wish to be of any help to start a Prayer House of our own, in tune with the Prayer-filled and Contemplative spirit our Holy Founding Father, St Vincent.

As a remote preparation, in tune with our Indian Traditions, I have been keeping a Vegetarian Diet. I also have been familiarizing myself with the Vipassana Meditation of the Buddhist Tradition, which has helped me much. Next February I plan on attending the fourth and the last course at Igathpuri, near Nasik.

I know full well that... I am no saint... and can't even pretend to be one!!! More and more it is becoming clearer and clearer that I need very much to keep growing and to keep moving in my pilgrimage of life as a Pallottine Priest. And I need to grow gracefully old!!

I am fully aware that I am very much in need of prayerful support. And I know that I can count on the Prayerful Support of You, of Our Pallottine Community, and the prayers of many Well Wishers!

If it is the Lord's Will and Vision, Someday, Somewhere, we will have a Pallottine Prayer House, where we will be able just to keep listening to the Sound of 'Silensium Magnum'!

Joe Kallani sac [NA] – Cochin – INDIA
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joekallani@gmail.com