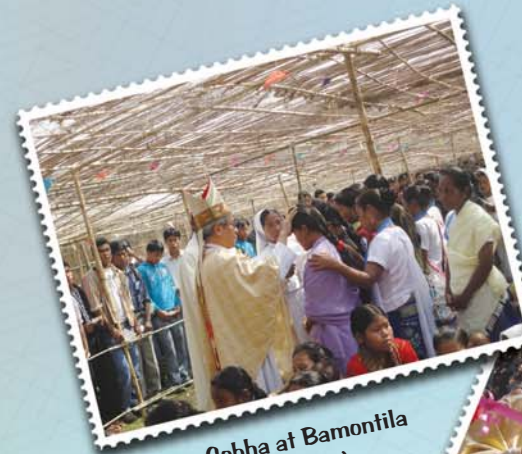




# Events



Garo Sobha at Bamontila  
(Meghalaya)  
13th February 2011



Blessing of the Church at  
Ichamati (Meghalaya)  
26th February 2011



Arrival of CCR Sisters at  
Dhing (Assam)  
2nd February 2011



Inauguration of Divine Saviour  
School at Ranchi (Jharkhand)  
2nd April 2011

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*For Private Circulation only*



# FOREWORD

Dear Confreres,

*Any human anywhere will blossom in a hundred unexpected talents and capacities simply by being given the opportunity to do so*

*I am glad to learn that Otto Hopfenmüller theology study house Shillong, has taken the initiative to resume the publication of the magazine In the Shadow of the Cross for the members of the Vicariate and different communities around the globe.*

We live in a world marked by fast and rapid growth of the modern technology that makes information innovative and effective. The media such as television, news papers, books, periodicals, radio and internet play a key role in shaping human personality. Hence, understanding the need of the hour, the theology students have made quality efforts to come out with the fascinating magazine *In the Shadow of the Cross*.

I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to Fr. Peter K. Nengnong SDS, Rector, who behind the curtain, shouldered the responsibility in motivating the young and energetic theology students to collectively bring out this Salvatorian magazine.

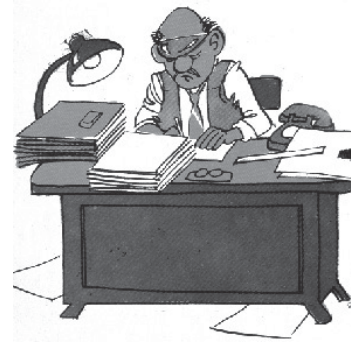
I hope this magazine will be a great tool to manifest the love of the Saviour and enrich the talents and abilities of the Indian Salvatorians. May the Divine Saviour continue to sprinkle His manifold blessings upon all of us that we may become an instrument of effective communicators in words and deeds for the establishment of God's kingdom here on earth.

Yours in the Divine Saviour,

**Fr. Rosario Chinnappan SDS**  
*Vicariate Superior*



# EDITORIAL



*Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people  
and hallelujah is our song - **Pope John Paul II***

*Dear Confreres,*

We are happy to publish the new edition of *In the Shadow of the Cross* which will be a bi-yearly magazine from our community. It carries the thoughts of young Indian Salvatorians from different communities around India and articles from our friends and well wishers. It also contains the testimonies of the people who received graces through the intercession of Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller. In fact, these articles reflect the growth of our Indian Mission Vicariate and the wealth of thoughts in the young minds. We shall try to bring out variety in the coming issues. It would help us to appreciate each one's talents and gifts.

I take this opportunity to thank the students of theology who took initiative to bring out this magazine. I am grateful to all the contributors and the superiors of different communities. My sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Joe Francis, for going through the articles and giving corrections and suggestions. I appreciate the Vicariate Superior and his council for encouraging us to take this task of releasing this magazine. I hope that you would continue to support us in every way possible.

Let Jesus the Saviour bless all our endeavours. I wish you a meaningful Easter celebration. May God bless us all!!!

Yours in the Divine Saviour  
**Fr. Peter Kordor Nengong SDS**  
Rector

## **CELIBATE LIFE AND THE CHALLENGE OF INTIMACY**

FR. SUNIL KASHAMKATTIL



Why do so many priests and religious live in loneliness and alienation in our days? And why are there so many scandals concerning priest and religious in the medias nowadays? It is because many priests and religious have failed to develop meaningful interpersonal relationships. Lack of deep relationships in religious life can often be attributed to an attitude (among many religious) that discourages intimacy. Intimacy, they would say, is a state to be shared with God and not with any other human persons. But in other cases, the pendulum swings the other way. In the effort to remedy the lack of human intimacy, one can go to the other extreme and forget the importance of intimacy with God.

Living as mature adults is a difficult task. Intimacy, which is necessary to maturity, is a difficult and demanding process. It calls us and challenges us to step out of ourselves and let significant others see us not as we would like to be seen: strong and generous, brave and bold - but as we really are: weak and needy, scared and vulnerable. Intimacy with another human being

brings the Christian to a closer and emotionally rich relationship with the Lord.

Intimacy is a term used to describe the quality of many different types of interpersonal relationships, including, for example, relationship with sex partners, between close friends and between parents and children. Whatever the character of the relationships, the individuals concerned experience intimacy as a moment during which they find themselves being deeply and wholly touched by another. Intimacy does not require being touched physically, but neither does it preclude it. Psychotherapist Thomas Terry



opines that during moments of intimacy—tactile or otherwise—we find ourselves deeply, often visibly, moved by a touch that has penetrated to the core of who we are as persons. We find ourselves opened up, exposed, and made visible. What

makes this moment so painful is our egocentricity. We want others to be God for us and to permit us to be God for them. We have great difficulty being ourselves and allowing other people to be themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Persons called to a life of celibacy must seek intimacy with God, of course, but they also must seek intimacy with other human persons. After all, all of us were conceived during an act of intimacy in which the sacred and profane merged!

The call to celibacy is a call to be human and is answered best by going deeper into life and not going under, around or above it. Celibate persons should celebrate their life, relish and enjoy it. The virtue of chastity is not one that is restricted to the lives of celibates only. It is, in fact, meant for all Christians, for chastity means becoming respectfully reverent to the whole of life. Thus, all persons are called to be chaste, to acknowledge the whole of life and to integrate all its dimensions. Any human contact that intends intimacy is an unchaste act if the act is impersonal. When we deny our sexuality, we cannot relate to others with our *whole person* because part of us is left out. Denying our femaleness or maleness will lead to impersonal contact because, whether we like it or not, all of us are 'sexed' persons.

When we are in the presence of others, we find ourselves awakening,

if we are alive to ourselves. We are awakened by the dynamics of intimacy. Intimacy is a call that we hear whenever two of us come together. Persons who deny their sexual awareness virtually refuse to acknowledge this call; they refuse to acknowledge their needs, wants, and desires. They are not able to be open to the beauty of the interpersonal relationships because they are embarrassed by it and try to avoid it. They, therefore, never experience moments of being wholly and deeply touched by others. As a result, they become stale, dry, and dead. The interpersonal no longer attracts them. The wonder and mystery of intimacy cannot call them because its voice has been stilled.

But the sexual detachment of the repressed person should never be mistaken for spiritual detachment... at least not the kind that is called for by St. John of the Cross. Repressed persons cannot be interpersonally holy because, having denied their bodies and their feelings, they have truncated the sacred and their profane. Men and women who have separated the spiritual and profane, who are ashamed of or embarrassed by their corporeity, have virtually withdrawn from the interpersonal world.

If the vocation of the Christian is a vocation to freedom for self-transcendence of love, then one of its significant dimensions is an

<sup>1</sup> T. J. Terry, "Intimacy, Sexuality and Infatuation," in Anna Polcino (ed.), *Intimacy*, (Denville: Affirmation Books, 1978), p.55.



invitation to relationship with ‘the other’ as an integral person.<sup>2</sup> A person’s relationships to things and animals imply a certain degree of dominion on the side of a person and submission on the part of animals or things and hence they do not make a proper relationship in the strict sense of the term. According to L. M. Rulla, the interpersonal relationship involves an analogy of nature (when the other is God) or a shared nature (in the case of the human other).<sup>3</sup> In relating to a human person the subject is involved in his interiority and incommunicability. The same holds for the person of the other, for an interpersonal relationship arises and is maintained only if the otherness of the interiority and incommunicability of the person is respected.

Interpersonal relationship loses its depth, vitality, and resourcefulness when it becomes a means for domination and submission. Therefore, relating to the other means

being open to the other, but not suppression of one’s own identity. The human being, created in the image and likeness of God, has an inherent self-worth and dignity, no doubt. But at the same time, the dignity of a human being is realised in its fullness not in pure isolation but in a mutually gifting relationship. “Human interpersonal relations find their highest expression in love.”<sup>4</sup>

The New York psychiatrist Thomas Hora, in the book *Existential Metapsychiatry*, suggests the image for a true human relationship two pairs of hands coming together parallel in a prayerful gesture, pointing beyond themselves and moving freely in relation to one another. This is a helpful image, because it makes it clear that a mature human intimacy requires a deep and profound respect for the free and empty space that needs to exist between partners even as they ask for a continuous mutual protection. Only in this way can a relationship be lasting, precisely because mutual love is experienced as a participation in a greater love to which it points. In this way, intimacy can be rich and fruitful, since it has been given a carefully protected space in which to grow. This relationship no longer is a fearful clinging to each other but a free dance, in which we can move forward and backward respecting the inter-personal spaces, and see each other as always new.

<sup>2</sup> L. M. Rulla, *Anthropology of Christian Vocation*, Vol. 1, (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1986), p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> L. M. Rulla, *Anthropology of Christian Vocation*, Vol. 1, p. 276.

<sup>4</sup> L. M. Rulla, *Anthropology of Christian Vocation*, Vol. 1, p. 277.



# PRAYER

KITBOK M.UMLONG

Prayer is commonly understood just as any sort of communication. Hence, prayer is merely perceived as the activity in which the believers take themselves to be speaking to God. With this understanding we are so much cloistered, defining prayer just as a conversation; conversing for seeking God's favour, for expressing gratitude, for worship, for making a vow. True prayer is raising of mind and heart (body) to God. The limitedness of our knowledge can reduce prayer to just a conversation, whereas conversation is only one of the aspects of prayer.<sup>5</sup>

Raising our mind and heart to God includes all our actions, words and thoughts. In general any sorts of speech-act-thought or address made by one human being to another could also be address to God and thus is a prayer. In one way we can say that it is because of the lack of understanding but more it is all because of our negligence to our duties and fail to be true to one self. We should cultivate the tendency of praying more frequently. In the view of our founder Fr. Francis Jordan, our prayer life starts with fidelity in little things. It is when I am concerned for a minute that I will be accountable for the hour and the day. My concern for my family will prove me capable for the society. The parable of the



talents in the gospels conveys this message. We need to answer some basic questions in order to have a deep understanding of prayer.



## Why Prayer?

In the philosophical doubt that involves the omniscience and benevolence of God, the questions that arise are, if God knows all my needs and desire, why inform him of them through prayer? Will He not satisfy my needs regardless of whether I pray?



Prayer is not a one sided responsibility, a responsibility of God alone. Yes God already knows what one wants, one needs and what one will say in the prayer. Prayer does not change God but it changes us. Moreover the divine foreknowledge will anticipate human actions in the order of time but it cannot substitute for that action, in the sense of making it irrelevant whether the action is actually done. This applies to prayer too. Hence, our expression of our needs, and desires, and our making a prayer is just an act of trust that there is God, we all depend on him. It is only in prayer that

<sup>5</sup> Mavrodes I. George, "Prayer", *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (New York: 1998) 649.

we open ourselves to his presence and the graces that are among us at all times.<sup>6</sup>

### How Do We Pray?

In the letter to the Thessalonians, St Paul wrote “Pray without ceasing.” WE see Jesus praying in the Gethsemane, and also asked his disciples to stay awake and pray. Likewise all are call to pray consistently and tirelessly. Our founder calls us to pray without ceasing and with great confidence.<sup>7</sup>

Our prayer should flow from our hearts. If we pray with our voice and allow our thoughts to wander, it would not be a real prayer. Even though we are disturbed with many concerns and our thoughts are distracted, these distractions can become an offering to God. Who but God alone knows the depth of our hearts (Jer 17: 9). God reads the hearts and He does not care much for our words or gestures but the attitude and the desire of the heart.



Another important characteristic of prayer is humility. The word prayer is derived from the Latin verb ‘*precari*’ meaning ‘to ask’.<sup>8</sup> Asking with humility is the real prayer. A proud heart cannot

bend in front of the Mighty Lord. Christians have a great responsibility to develop humility in their lives. It is one of the characteristics of life in God’s kingdom and it is work of the Spirit in the life of the individual. Such humility will help produce genuine fellowship with God and fellow human beings.<sup>9</sup> We complain about our unanswered prayers because of haste and rush. We lack fortitude and endurance, the result of humility.

### How is Prayer Answered?

With regard to the answer to our prayer many of us take recourse to miracles. But this is a limited way of looking at prayer. God answers our prayers in different ways. Sometimes, the silence from God itself becomes an answer to our prayers. God, who made His dwelling among in order to save us, will listen to our prayers if only we have complete trust in Him and if we seek the things what pleases Him. The scriptures says, “He who did not withhold his Own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?” (Rom 8:32). Since we are not guided by the Holy Spirit we seek for many selfish motives and desires.

A Spirit filled prayer will not go unanswered. It is the Holy Spirit that inspires us to pray. (Rom 8: 26)

Let us raise our minds and hearts with all its desires and aspirations. May the Holy Spirit guide us to become pray-ers: the men of spirit filled prayer. For it the wish our founder Venerable Fr. Jordan that Salvatorians would become men of prayer. He called us to be pray with confidence and to be faithful in little things. May this be the call of our lives.

<sup>6</sup> Mavrodes I. George, “Prayer”, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig 7 (New York: 1998) 650.

<sup>7</sup> SD IV, 6.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Annette, *Prayer Who Needs It* (New York: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1970) 8.

<sup>9</sup> Fleming Don, *Bible Knowledge Dictionary* (New York: Pilot Books Co., 1990) 184.

## MAN AS RELATIONAL BEING: VIEW OF LATER WITTGENSTEIN

CL. JOHNSON SDS



Ludwig Wittgenstein (1881-1951) is one of the eminent philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was able to influence two views of language and philosophy. The picture theory of language which he proposed earlier and philosophy as a therapy in the later period are widely debated topics in the realm of philosophy and psychology.



Private language argument is pivotal in later Wittgenstein's philosophy. This argument is the thread of his later philosophy. It tries to demonstrate the impossibility of a language which only one person could understand or only one person could have reason to believe he or she understood.<sup>10</sup> The concept of communication is explored in the private language argument. It shows the fundamental belongingness of human beings to the world and the fellow beings. Human beings are not just 'thinking things' but living beings who have sensations and are able to communicate about them to others. Wittgenstein's private language



argument can be utilized to give a positive picture of language that can overcome the metaphysical illusions and suggests a social concept of language.<sup>11</sup>

*Philosophical Investigations* 243 to 275 deal with private sensation and its expression through language. In PI 243, Wittgenstein introduces the idea of a private language as one that refers to an individual's immediate private sensations. In this kind of language, the vocabulary is completely

<sup>10</sup> David Pears, *Wittgenstein* (Glasgow: William Collins & Co. Ltd., 1971) 142.

<sup>11</sup> John Haldane, "Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Human Person as Linguistic Animal," in *Images of the Human*, ed., Hunter Brown (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995), 460.



detached from everything in the physical language. The private diarist or the author of the language understands the purpose although nobody can. The private diarist associates his sensations and refers 'S' as the sign of sensation. 'S' is marked everyday of sensation.

The diarist cannot point to a sensation in the ordinary sense, but he can speak, or write down the sign, and at the same time concentrate his attention on the sensation inwardly. Wittgenstein calls this as 'impressing it on oneself.' This inward pointing or introspecting is essential to a private language. In this sense, the mental occurrence of one's mind can be given a name. The correctness of this could never be assessed by anybody else. There is no more to the meaning of a 'sensation' than its standing for a mental occurrence. The meaning of an expression of one's present sensation is simply to indicate that inner occurrence.

The problem here is that the word stands in need of a justification which can be understood by all. But if one gives a private definition to a word, he has inwardly undertaken to use in such and such a way it leads to the problem. This inward understanding supposedly makes a language private.<sup>12</sup>

Wittgenstein notes in PI 261, that sensation is a word in our common language. It is not the word intelligible to oneself alone. According to him, though sensation may be private, language and sensation expression are community oriented and someone who attempts to use language in private way would not merely be unable to communicate his meaning to others, but would have no meaning to communicate even to himself. As a result, he would not be saying anything at all. The language used to describe our 'inner experience' is not private because the words which we use refer to the sensations are 'tied up with natural experience of sensation.'<sup>13</sup>

An individual can have a language which would imply the mental occurrences, but how does such language become meaningful? The objectivity of such a language could be found only its public use. Otherwise even the word used would not find any meaning in that. We accept that sensations are private. The 'privacy' or 'ownership' is analogical. No one can claim the ownership of same sensations. The use of 'sensation,' 'pain' and 'privacy' are parts of grammar in the sense that there are rules according to which they are used, and their usage is found in public. The analysis of private language and the impossibility of such one would mean that the ostensive definition would fail. The words

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<sup>12</sup> Sevrerin Schroeder, "Private Language and Private Experience," in *Wittgenstein: A Critical Reader*, ed., Hans-Johann Glock (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001) 175.

<sup>13</sup> *Philosophical Investigations*, 206.

find meaning in the common usage. Language is not found in the mind teaching itself. It is not only the self-conscious contribution driven by the mind illuminated by God, but a common custom which is governed by rules and shared by others. It makes a human being a person, being in the world and being with other persons.

There are two objectives which are latent in the argument. The first one is to show the social and relational nature of a human person and the second objective is the affirmation of completeness of human person; against the mind-body dualism of Cartesianism. It is expressed in the very words of Wittgenstein – “The human body is the best picture of the human soul.”<sup>14</sup>

The failure of private language would also imply that the Cartesian concept of mind and body is mistaken. Human person cannot be divided into psychological and corporeal. In fact, he is not one of these but he is an integrated whole. In his wholeness he is able to know himself and at the same time he can communicate with others in a common language. He does not stand aloof with the ‘non-



extended mind’ searching for the occasions to collaborate with the ‘extended body.’ He is a relational being – in relation with himself and others. An authentic human being journeys a life of integrity and not fragmented. His relationship with others helps to preserve this integrity.

Human beings are necessarily social beings participating in the society by following the rule-guided activities such as language. The individual is not sidelined for the sake of the community but finds place in the society. His existence gives meaning to the society and vice-versa. The participation is strengthened by customs and traditions with the help of forms of life.

The social nature of human being has its implications in our religious life too. In our communities, we communicate with others and we are identified with those with whom we stay. Our being is enriched by others and the community is strengthened by our presence. We are not isolated from anyone. We share our pains and joys because we are able to express them in our everyday language. We are governed by rules, regulations and our life is enhanced by the customs and traditions. In following these, no one stands secluded rather relational. This inter-subjective nature is the source of our religious life. It calls us to speak one language – the language of love, which all of us would understand better.

<sup>14</sup> *Philosophical Investigations*, II.iv.

## HUMAN SUFFERING: A REFLECTION

SOOSAIRAJ



*“If you wish to be my disciple, take up the cross and follow me” (Mt: 10-38)*



Life is the precious gift of God, and it is the mixture of both joys and sorrows. If it is so, suffering also is the gift of God. It is one of the most important features of this life on earth and it is also universal.<sup>15</sup> It is the nature of the human being that one has to undergo many struggles, sorrows and sufferings as part of life. At times many people are not able to cope with the sufferings in their lives which drive them to frustration and eventually suicide.

It is because they think that suffering is the curse from God and suffering itself is the final end. When we have an aim-oriented life it is possible to find real meaning in life, even in the state of despair, sadness and sufferings. A man who has ‘why to live’ can live somehow.<sup>16</sup> So we should have a purpose or goal in life. It should be a search for finding meaning in life and God promised us the fullness of life.

Suffering becomes the gift of God, when we have a place for God in our lives and believe that God has got a plan for each one of us. We accept that whatever happens in our life as the will of God. But if I ask you to accept everything that happens in your life as God’s will, you may ask me some questions. Does God will people to be killed in the natural calamities like, tsunami, earthquake, flood, etc? And why at all good people and innocent children are killed? In fact, he does not will the people to be killed and if at all they die, the death itself is not the final end; it is just the birth to the eternal life as we the Catholics believe in.



God, who is so good, looks for the well being of all His people in the world. But it does not mean that God does not care for the minority of people who suffer

<sup>15</sup> Michael Downey, *the New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1995) 950.

<sup>16</sup> Viktor Frankl E., *Man’s Search for Meaning in Life* (Lisbon: Beacon Press, 1962) 141.



and die. He cares and loved them. We have witnessed the human essence of solidarity through the services offered by different individuals who came to rescue and rebuild the lives of the people who suffered during the tragedy of Tsunami. It shows us the enormous human energy our God has given us and it is the good side of humanity. Many people in the world have a wrong view that suffering is the consequence of sin and God punishes people because of their sins, which it is not true and correct in many cases. God also gives suffering as the gift to the innocent people, whom he loves, to check their faith in him and to build up a good relationship with them.

Jesus, the beloved son of God accepted suffering, persecutions, humiliation, crucifixion and death as a gift from His Father for the sake of the humanity. In his humanity he had the temptation to run away from these suffering. But he remained obedient even unto death, by accepting suffering as the will of the father, as he himself prayed, **“Father if It is your will take away the cup of suffering from me, it is not my will but let your will be done.”**(Mk 14:36) And thus he finally sacrificed himself on earth for the forgiveness of our sins but in heaven He sat on the right hand of God with glory and Honour.



Jesus Christ our lord invites us to receive his gift that is the **‘CROSS’**, as he says, **“Until and unless you take up the cross and follow me you cannot be my disciple.”** (Mt: 10-38). So we are created according to the plan of God and called to accept suffering as the will of God, as Jesus accepted it. We may say that it is possible for Jesus, who is fully human and God to accept it as the will God. But how can we, the human beings accept it? We can take the example of Mother Mary. She knew that it was not possible for a virgin to bear a son before marriage but still amidst all the sufferings and humiliations she said YES to the will of God. We cannot imagine the pain that a woman would have to endure at the time of delivery. Even at that stage our mother Mary has to flee from place to place and how terribly she would have suffered when she saw her own beloved son, being beaten, spat on, crowned with thorns and crucified on the cross. How tremendous her pain would have been! But still she accepted everything as the will of God and in returns she was crowned as the queen among the angels and saints in heaven.

Most of the saints were cruelly persecuted for Christ’s sake and they accepted suffering as the gift of God on earth in order to receive the greatest gift in heaven, which is an eternal and everlasting happiness with God in his kingdom forever and ever. So suffering is the divine gift of God on earth in order to prepare us to receive the greatest gift in heaven. So let us accept suffering as the will of God, for suffering itself is not the final end of life.

**“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”** (Mt 5:10)

## SPOUSAL RELATION WITH CHRIST

V. ASHOK REDDY



Spousal relation is an intimate one between a man and a woman who make a commitment with a full consent to live together. They share their mind, body and heart, as they accept joy and pain and with the love they have for each other. It is a communion and communication between two people. I am sure, we have seen so many families wherein love, harmony and joy reign in their day-to-day lives and we also have seen such families wherein hatred, tension and sadness prevail. What is that one factor which is lacking in unhappy families and prevailing in happy families? It is the mutual understanding. Therefore, for a committed spousal relationship, couples have to strive all their life for mutuality of understanding and dealings with one another. Church is the bride of Christ. Christ is our Spouse. Then all the Christians are “brides in the Bride (Church)”.<sup>17</sup> The Christians as a whole express this relationship with Christ but, as individually it is a big question. Each religious receives God’s grace of vocation to have an exclusive and an intimate spousal relationship with Christ, our Saviour.

We, the Salvatorians, by the very inspiration of our charism and the Biblical source or root, are called to live a committed and exclusive spousal relationship with Jesus. We all know that our charism is to know the Saviour and to make Him known. Our founder, Fr. Jordan, was deeply moved by the experience at Lebanon looking at the cedars and pondering over the words of Christ: “Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the One true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You have sent.”<sup>18</sup> And therefore, this text became the charismal foundation of our society. In order to understand our charism which is the gift of the Holy Spirit to Our Venerable Father, we need to understand the meaning of the verb “to know”. Fulton J. Sheen beautifully explicated the meaning of the word “to know” in his autobiography “Treasure in Clay”:



I have often sought some way to explain the fact that we priests are to *know* Christ, rather than to *know about* Christ. Many translations of the Bible use the word “know” to indicate the unity of two-in-one flesh. For example: “Solomon knew her not,” which meant that he had no carnal relations with her. The Blessed Mother said to the Angel at the Annunciation: “I know not man.” St. Paul urges husbands to possess their wives

<sup>17</sup> Felix Podimattam, *Consecrated Life Revisited* (Delhi: Media House, 2006) p.65.

<sup>18</sup> John 17:3



in knowledge. The word “know” here indicates two-in-one flesh. The closeness of that identity is drawn from the closeness of the mind with any object that it knows. No knife could ever separate my mind from the idea that it has of an apple. The ecstatic union of husband and wife described as “knowing” is to be the foundation of that love by which we priests love Christ.<sup>19</sup>

So, every religious is chosen in a special way from among many by Jesus to experience His love more intimately. And it depends on each and every one of us to be more open to our beloved and to know him more deeply. Our

Venerable Father had experienced exclusively this love from Jesus Christ. That is why, in his spiritual diary, at least we find in two places where Fr. Jordan addresses Jesus as his Spouse:

“O Beloved Spouse of my soul, possess me wholly.”<sup>20</sup>

“O most beloved Jesus, Spouse of my soul, grant that I may always love You above all things.”<sup>21</sup>

As the spiritual sons and daughters of Fr. Jordan, we are invited to take our Venerable Father as our model to love and experience Jesus as he loved and experienced.

Spousal relationship demands for an exclusive love between the spouses. Then a question arises in our minds. Do we, as the spouses of Christ, have to love only Jesus and not other fellow human beings? Here comes the challenge of our understanding and dealing with our spouse, Jesus Christ. The exclusive love for Christ urges us on to have an inclusive love for all his creatures, because to be His spouse is to be conformed to Him and to His style of life and to be conformed to his mission, and the purpose of His life i.e., the Kingdom of God. In other words, this love calls us to be like Him and to do as He did.

Today Religious Life is at crossroads and its values are fading away. The impact of Post-modernism, Hedonism, Regionalism, Castism, Consumerism etc. are deviating some religious from their serious commitment. Therefore, consecrated life needs a creative depth. This can be achieved only with a proper understanding of the true nature of our call as Religious and by establishing a deeper communion with Jesus as contemplatives and by committing ourselves to the well being of God’s creation through our apostolate. As I reflect on Fr. Jordan’s experience, I understand that this might have been the vision of our founder in founding the family of contemplatives-in-action with universal appeal.



<sup>19</sup> Fulton J. Sheen, *Treasure in Clay* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2005) p. 191.

<sup>20</sup> SD I, 142.

<sup>21</sup> SD I, 144.



## TESTIMONIES

### GRACES RECEIVED THROUGH FR. OTTO HOPFENMÜLLER SDS



#### CURED FROM URINARY INFECTION

I, Ms. Monica Pohrmen am so grateful to God Almighty for listening to my humble prayers that through the intercession of Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller SDS, my brother-in-law Mr. Anthony Mukhim has been cured from his sickness. He is 71 years old and father of nine children out of whom two embraced the religious life. He is staying at Nongtalang, a remote village, 76 Km away from Shillong, located

at the border of Bangladesh. He enjoyed a healthy life for long but on the 12th January 2010, suddenly he was unable to urinate and we took him to Nazareth hospital in Shillong. He was diagnosed with enlarged prostate glands and the doctors gave him some medicines. If he was not cured with medicines he needed an operation within two months.

At that moment, I remembered Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller and using the prayer written in the leaflet I prayed through his intercession for the recovery of my brother-in-law, and promised to make known publicly the graces received through his help. To my surprise he was discharged from the hospital after two days and was given little medical prescription. The only advice from the doctor was to undergo regular monthly checkups and the operation was absolutely not necessary. The last time he went for medical check up was on the 2nd March 2011 and the doctor assured him that neither medicine nor check up is further needed.

I cannot but make known to all, my gratitude to Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller SDS. He had interceded before the Divine Throne for the speedy recovery of my brother-in-law. I still continue to pray through him for different intentions and for the Universal Church and I am sure that one day the Church and the world will see him being raised to the pedestal of Sainthood. I wish the Society of the Divine Saviour (Salvatorians) continues to grow in his missionary spirit especially in North-East India.

May Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller continue to aid us through his intercessions.

**Ms. Monica Pohrmen**  
*Shillong*

## CURED FROM BLEEDING GUMS

The wondrous works of the holy people of God continue to flow into the lives of many who seek their help and intercession. Though most of us know that miracles are taking place, we still have our reservations and doubts. It is not an exaggeration to say that we remember God and His Saints only in times of difficulties, miseries and sufferings. Though we are unfaithful, God expresses his love through some miracles in our lives. One such incident was the miraculous cessation of the bleeding from the gum after my tooth was extracted on August 31, 2010. The dentist who had extracted it advised me not to eat or chew anything hard for the rest of the evening. Accordingly, I followed the instructions very carefully and ate nothing.

I was instructed not to remove the big thick cotton placed in my mouth to block the bleeding. This should be removed only after an hour. After the prescribed time when I removed the cotton there was no bleeding. But at night the bleeding started and continued till the next morning. This made me feel nervous and fright overcame me. As the bleeding got worse my worry grew stronger and stronger, and I was confused and helpless. My family members saw my tension offered to take me to the hospital because the clinic of the Dentist who extracted my tooth would open only after 10.00 a.m. With anxiety and helplessness, I suddenly remembered the sharing of a friend about the various miracles performed by Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller, especially those with eye problems. I was like a doubting Thomas for a moment and then decided to turn to Fr. Otto's intercession for a miracle. Though I kept the secret for myself quietly I decided to invoke his help and prayed. After a few minutes of spontaneous prayers, Our Father and Hail Mary, I went to rinse my mouth and there the bleeding continued. I began to doubt my friend's certification. But on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2010 around 8:30 a.m. the bleeding decreased and eventually stopped. There was a sense of remorse because I initially doubted the divine help of Fr. Otto. I went to his tomb near the Cathedral to thank him for the miracle.

I had narrated this miraculous happening to a confidant and a friend and it ended in a story. It may seem like a simple incident, but for me it was a divine intervention. However, when I met Fr. Peter Nengnong, I told him about the blessing I received through Fr. Otto. Ever since, I continue to seek Fr. Otto's help whenever there are difficulties and troubles. I sincerely request all those who will be reading this story to pray for Fr. Otto and seek God's miracles through the intercession and help of his servant Fr. Otto.

**Mr. Bedarius Shylla**

*Shillong*

## PRAYER FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF FR. OTTO

Heavenly Father,  
in every age you sent your messengers  
to proclaim Your Kingdom  
and bring people out of darkness.  
You chose Fr. Otto to be the founding father  
of the Catholic Faith  
in the North East India.  
He worked for you zealously  
and gave up his life for the mission.  
Raise him to the dignity of your altar  
That the Church may recognize his missionary zeal  
and heroic faith.

As Salvatorians we are impelled  
to continue the mission he had started.  
Help us to proclaim you as the only true God  
and Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the World.  
May we bring many more souls to the truth of eternal life.  
Though the intercession of Fr. Otto  
we ask you for the necessary graces to continue our mission.  
*(Put forward the needs in silence)*  
Ignite our minds that we may burn with the zeal for the souls.  
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.



# IMAGES FROM COMMUNITIES

*Otto Hopfenmüller Theology Study House - Shillong (Meghalaya)*



*Flying High*



*Birthday Bash*

*Rakshaka Sadan, SDS Minor Seminary - Bangalore (Karnataka)*



*Setting Goals*

*Christ Jyoti School - Dhing (Assam)*



*Assembly Time*

*Peter & Paul Parish - Laitkynew*



*Angels Choir*

*Jordan Philosophy Study House - Warangal (Andhra Pradesh)*



*Sky is the Limit*



*Let's Rock*