



ST THOMAS SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH BOSTON

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MY LORD!
MY GOD!

FIFTH SUNDAY OF KAITHAKALAM
JULY 27, 2008

Sister Alphonsa

Today's Gospel (Lk. 16:19-31)

"There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores. When the poor man died, he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried, and from the netherworld, where he was in torment, he raised his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.' Abraham replied, 'My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours.' He said, 'Then I beg you, father, send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they too come to this place of torment.' But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.' He said, 'Oh no, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' Then Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead.'"

Sr. Alponsa was born on 19th August 1910 as the fourth child of Joseph and Mary Muttathupadath, in the parish of Kudamaloor in the state of Kerala. She was baptized on the 27th August. Her baptismal name was Anna and her pet name Annakutty. Her mother passed away three months after her birth. Annakutty started her schooling at Arpookara and left for Muttuchira Govt. School for pursuing her studies from the fourth class onwards under the immediate supervision of her maternal aunt Annamma Muricken. The aunt brought her up extremely affectionately, but equally strictly also. Her one ambition was that the child should be brought up as a respectable housewife for a deserving bridegroom. Annakutty had a vision of St. Theresa of Liseux whose life inspired her to become a religious. She therefore did not yield to any marriage proposals. Finally when she was almost compelled to be betrothed to a boy, she extricated herself from it by voluntary burning her foot placing it in an ash pit of burning husks. Against such determine resistance the aunt succumbed to her desire and permitted her to join a convent.

Annakutty joined Clarist convent at Bharananganam in 1927 on the feast of Pentecost. She received the veil postulant on 2nd August 1928 with the name Alphonsa. Her vestition was on 19th May 1930. Later she joined the St. Theresa's School Changanacherry for higher studies, on completing which she engaged in teaching for a period of one year at Vakakkad. Sr. Alphonsa entered the novitiate on 12th August 1935. During this period, she had a sever attack of hemorrhage and it was feared that she would have to be sent back. But on the ninth day of novena held by her and the community seeking intercession of Fr. Kuriakose Elias Chavera, she was miraculously cured. She completed the novitiate and made the solemn profession of her religious vows on 12th August 1936.

Sr. Alphonsa continued to have her repeated spells of sickness and pain. She was on a bed of thorns, torn and tortured by excruciating pain and prolonged agony. She was longing to suffer even more for her own sanctification and that of the world. She constantly advised her companions and novices to accept sufferings cheerfully citing the biblical references to the grain of wheat which has to fall down and decay for raising new sprouts; it has to be ground in order to be turned into hosts for transformation as the body of Our Lord. She also reminded them of the grapes which have to be crushed for yielding wine to become the blood of the Lord.

Her death(28th July 1946) was unnoticed by the public. The funeral was simple and thinly attended. But soon the school children, who loved her received favors through her intercession. Her tomb at Bharananganam turned into a great centre of pilgrimage attracting people from far and near.

H.E. Cardinal Tisserant inaugurated the diocesan process for her beatification on 2nd December 1953. The Long diocesan and subsequent apostolic processes bore fruit when on 9th November 1984 the Holy Father officially declared that she had practiced the Christian virtues heroically. A miracle wrought through her intercession was also formally approved by the Pope on 6th July 1985. Providence has been pleased to bestow on this generation the grace to see a daughter of the soil, a seed of the ancient Christian community of Kerala and India, beatified (8th February 1986) in her homeland by the Supreme Pontiff during his visit to this chosen land. Sr. Alphonsa is to be declared a Saint by Pope Benedict XVI on 12th October.

Today...

11.30 pm : Holy Qurbana; Celebrations of the Feast of Sr. Alphonsa; Perunnal Committee Meeting

Marching forward...

Sunday Celebration Assignments

August 3 : Youth

July 29 : Feast of St. Martha

Aug. 01 : First Friday - Holy Qurbana at 7:30 pm followed by Holy Hour

Aug. 02 : Holy Qurbana at 11 am; Novena

Aug. 06 : Transfiguration of our Lord; Holy Qurbana at 7 pm

Aug. 08 : Sacred Heart Family Unit Prayer at the home of Mathew and Mary Peralakkattuchalil

Aug. 15 : The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Indian Independence Day Holy Qurbana at 7 pm.

Aug. 16 : Divine Mercy Family Unit Pilgrimage to Divine Mercy Shrine



Our Youth have won the Inter-Church Volleyball Tournament

Participants were: Tena Paul; Tenes Paul; Jerril Varghese; Roshin; Sajith; Ajith; Ritu Scaria; Jenny Fernandez; Alice Pottakal; Joe Pottakal; Jeffin Varghese; Shawn Francis and the coach was : Juliet Fernandez.

Congrats.

Our Perunnal was well celebrated and well appreciated. major Archbishop His Beatitude Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil has sent his greetings and, thaks and blessings.

Congratulations and thanks to all who worked for the success :
Kaikkarans; Committees;
all the parishioners.



PLEASE recite the **PRAYER FOR OUR DIOCESE**
AND OUR PARISH every day in your families.