Fr. A. Marianandam

Born On: 10-05-1907
Ordained On: 08-12-1940
Died On: 06-07-1997

Fr. Marianadam was a holy and dedicated priest, born in the village of Malaithathampatty, a substation of Malayadipatty Parish. He was the first born of the four children in his family, called '*Vandikaara Veedu*'. His Parents (Arockiam & Lourdu Mary) wanted him to get married and the bride was also ready; but his zeal to serve the Lord had made him opt for priesthood. Hence, he requested his younger brother Santhanam to marry that bride and he joined the seminary at Trichy diocese. (I used to see his father and mother coming for Sunday Mass to Malayadipatty, even at an old age. His father died at the age of 100; we used to tell him that he would surely reach his father's age). Inspired by the vocation of this holy priest, Sr. Josphine Mary, his only younger sister (the third child) also became a nun in St. Joseph's of Cluny Congregation in Pondicherry, after the ordination of Fr. Mariandam in 1940.

He is the second priest hailing from Malyadipatty parish. After his ordination in 08-12-1940, he served as Assistant Priest in two places - first in St. Joseph's Golden Rock, Trichy and then at Dindigul (Present Cathedral). He was then appointed as the first Parish Priest of Ulagampatty, where he served more than 14 years.

He was then transferred to Malayadipatty, his own native parish, where he served for 11 years (1962 - 1973). He was then shifted to avoor, where he served for 7 years (1973-1980). During this period, Malampatty was bifurcated as a new Parish dedicated to St. Xavier. He worked there also for seven years. He was indeed a hard worker until his retirement after which he settled in the Bishop's House, for treatment in 1985.

While serving at malayadiatty, he developed the parish well with the help of the foreign aids from the USA, like wheat, burger, etc. His remarkable and historical contribution was the construction of the Staircase at St. Thomas Hillock. The structure consists of 234 steps to climb up the mountain to reach the shrine at the top. It is noteworthy to mention that he was the vocation promoter to many of the later priests, namely Fr. Stephen Gaspar, Fr. Nichodemus and Fr. James Vincent. He not only inspired them by his spiritual priesthood but also helped and guided them to join the seminary and took pride in moulding them to become fruit bearing vine in the vineyard of the Lord. He also helped Rev. Sr. Josphine, his younger sister to find girls to join Saint Joseph's of cluny congregation Pondicherry; because of which we now have a number of nuns in the congregation, from Manaparai and Dindigul Vicariates.

As an exemplary life of spirituality, he used to go for evening walks around the bishop's house area, reciting the rosary, which inspired many of the priests residing there. Due to old age, he died at the age of 90, ironically not reaching his father's age of century. As per his request, his body was brought to Malayadipatty, where the funeral mass was celebrated by Most. Rev. Dr. Gabriel D.D, the then Bishop of Trichy. Later, his remains were buried in the

cemetery of Malaithathampaaty, his native - as he wished. The final rites at the cemetery was conducted by Rev. Fr. Stephen Gaspar (Myself). A beautiful monument is built upon his tomb by his beloved family. We are proud and happy that his inspiration continues even after decades - incidentally, Fr. Doss, his grandson, is a priest in the same diocese.

May His Soul Rest in Peace! Amen.

- Rev. Fr. Stephen Gaspar.