

## **Congregazione dei Rogazionisti**

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To the Most Rev. Superiors  
of the Rogationist Circumscriptions  
and To the Rogationist Communities

Dear Confreres,

I am writing you this message from Aluva as we celebrate on this day, the 25th anniversary of the presence of our Congregation in India. I write with a heart filled with gratitude towards the Lord for having blessed our Institute during these years in this great country of India.

He, in His great goodness, sent us in this nation, of which the whole world admires the civilization and spirituality, to bring here the Charism of the Rogate, a gift particularly precious, because it pleads the workers of the new evangelization and strives to uplift the little ones and the poor.

We are grateful to the Syro-Malabar Church of Kerala which opened to us the doors, and in particular to the late Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly, Card. Mar Antony Padiyara, who has consented us to start the first community in Aluva on April 13th 1987, and we received the indult of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches on February 26th of the following year. The Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly extended her great support to the Congregation by assigning diocesan priests as collaborators, among them we remember and thank in particular his Excellency Mons. Thomas Chakiath, appointed as Chief Functionary of the Rogationist Indian Mission and Fr. Thomas Vithayattil, as Chief Formator.

The initiative of the new opening was taken by the then Superior General Fr. Pietro Cifuni, and the task was entrusted to Fr. Antonio Barbangelo, who had then completed his missionary experience in the Philippines. He arrived in India on December 5th 1986, then other confreres, according to the order of arrival, Bro. Nilo Pelobello, Fr. Vito A. Lipari e Fr. Filippo Puntrello followed him.

The new Foundation in India was accompanied and sustained by General Government and was supported by the Philippine Delegation which, since the beginning, sent her confreres to sustain the mission. We remember among them :Fr. René Panlasigui, Fr. Ulyses Angus, Fr. Gabriel Flores, Bro. Marcelino Lavente. On October 1999 Fr. Luigi Toffanin has been appointed as the superior delegate of the Rogate Ashram.

A heartfelt thanks from all of us, go to these confreres and all the others who, for a limited time, have operated with zeal and sacrifice in this blessed land of India.

In 1988 the Mission of India was annexed to the Philippine Circumscription which was named later Philippine-Indian Delegation. And it is precisely in the Philippines that the first Indian novices and religious have made part of their religious formation.

Since the beginning of the institution there was considerable commitment on the part of the confreres in the vocation promotion and their formation. In the first year of our presence itself in the House of Aluva thirty seminarians were welcomed, although with much discomfort but with great enthusiasm and fervor they stayed together. In 1989 we had the first batch of four novices (sent to the Philippines) and ten years later the two first Indian Rogationist priests: Fr. Joseph Mailapparambil (October 30th. 1999) and Fr. Devassy Painadath (January 1, 2000).

Later for an appropriate accompaniment of young aspirants and religious information new formation houses were opened: in July 2002 the House of Aimury was blessed and two years later, in October 2004, the House of Mananthavady was blessed and new communities were established. In July 2007, there was the starting of the Novitiate in India, the seat of the novitiate at first in Chengamanad (in a rented house) and in March of the following year it was shifted to Meenangadi in our own house, as a house affiliated to the community of Mananthavady.

The gift of vocations, by which we have been blessed in India, was a sign of hope and of commitment to the charismatic formation. Along with the prayer for good workers it was felt the need to be authentic witness to the seminarians and young religious and to express our commitment in the field of education and the care for the children and the youth, especially the needy and the marginalized ones and in the evangelization and the human and cultural promotion of the poor.

Over the years, the apostolate of charity through the program of adoption at distance which was initiated by Fr. Vito A. Lipari and assisted by other confreres has grown in favor of thousands of boys and girls, adolescents and young people, with the collaboration of many benefactors. They are sponsored in their studies, basic needs of the families and in many cases with the construction of their houses. A valuable economic contribution for the training of religious students come through the initiation of the Missionary Adoption.

This apostolate of charity of adoption at a distance was progressively undertaken in all the Houses including in the new communities of Attappady and Nalgonda.

During these years we have witnessed the growth of the Communities in India. Therefore, on May 1st 2008 they have been constituted as the Indian Delegation and three years later, on September 29, 2011 as Indian Quasi Province.

The Lord continues to bless us. In a "Memorial of the divine benefits" we remember that our presence in India today consists of seven religious communities, twenty-nine priests, Thirty three religious students, six novices, thirteen postulants and seventy one seminarians. Even today, these data are signs of hope, constitute



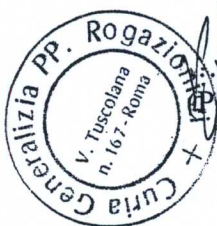
grounds for new undertakings so that to the gift of the Lord may correspond our humble and grateful cooperation.

Dearest, with great joy let us look at the Indian Quasi Province, in this Jubilee of Foundation. We express our affectionate closeness to the young Indian confreres, admiring their religious witnessing and their sense of belonging, which is manifested even with the missionary availability already expressed by some of them extending their fraternal help to other Circumscriptions.

We accompany the young people on their journey with the support of our prayers and paternal gaze which our Holy Founder had towards the young.

We know that the Quasi Province of India looks with confidence and hope for its further growth, for the benefit of his own country and beyond those borders, in full communion with the whole Congregation.

I entrust these wishes to the blessing of the Divine Superiors, the intercession of St. Thomas the Apostle, the patron saint of India, and of our Founder, Saint Hannibal Mary Di Francia, while I greet you with affection in the Lord.



*Angelo A. Mezzari, R.C.J.*  
Sup. Gen.