

Dear Fathers and Brothers,

Greetings from Chavara hills on this great feast of Immaculate Conception!

8th December 1855 is a remarkable day in the history of our CMI Congregation. It was on this great feast of the that eleven of our first fathers along with St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara made their religious profession and started officially as a canonically recognised religious congregation. The Feast of Immaculate Conception, which was officially declared a dogma of the Church in 1854, articulates the great grandeur of God's love for human beings revealed in Blessed Mother Mary. So our first Fathers chose this day as an apt one to begin a new way of life which originated from their rich God experience.



The life of our Blessed Mother teaches us that God's grace and mercy enfolded and made her worthy of becoming mother of Christ. She becomes the first one to be saved by the infinite mercy of the Father, which is the fruit of salvation which God wills to offer to every human being in Christ. Mary becomes, thus, an icon of divine mercy. From the first day of her existence Mary was kept free from the stain of sin and was ready by the grace of the Holy Spirit to respond freely, lovingly, and completely to the will of God and to cooperate with the Divine plan. Mary's response to the angel, "Be it done to me according Thy Word" ...possibly were the most pivotal words in all of human history!

The devotion to our Lady of Immaculate Conception is a great patrimony that our Congregation has received from our founding fathers and especially from the first Fathers who made their religious profession in our congregation on this great feast day. We find that an attitude of accomplishing the will of God permeated their lives and they always sought the will of God in prayer for everything they did. Being the members of such a congregation, which is consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, let us reflect in our lives God's unfathomable love and mercy and let us be seekers of God's will all through our life.

On this historical day 82 of our novices will make their first profession in our congregation. I do congratulate these brothers who through their first profession officially become members of our congregation. Gratefully I remember the respective novice masters and the novitiate team for preparing these novices for a significant and decisive moment of their religious commitment. I do commend them all to the heavenly intercession of our Blessed Mother and St Kuriakose Elias Chavara.

Once again let me wish you all the blessing of this great feast of Immaculate Conception.

Yours fraternally in our Lord,

Fr. Thomas Chathamparampil CMI
Prior General