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REV. FR.

Alexius Sanglura S.D.B.

Born : 08.10.1932
Professed : 24.05.1956
Ordained : 17.04.1966
Died : 29.01.2006

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THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

Regrets to announce the passing away of

Rev. Fr. ALEXIUS SANGLURA S.D.B.

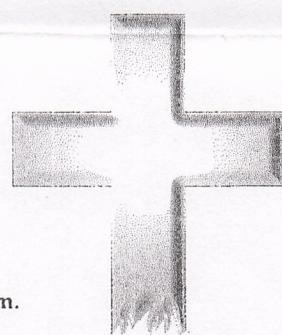
at Haflong on Sunday, 29 January 2006 at 00.00 hrs.

*There will be a Concelebrated Requiem Mass
at the Cathedral of Mary Help of Christians, Shillong
on Monday 30 January 2006 at 1.30 p.m.
followed by the Funeral Rites at the Catholic Cemetery, Laitum-
khrah, Shillong.*

*All Religious, Priests, the Faithful and his
Friends are invited to attend the Services
and pray for the repose of his Soul.*

Fr. PHILIP BARJO, S.D.B.
Provincial

*There will be a Concelebrated Requiem Mass
on 30.01.06 in Don Bosco Tech. School, Shillong at 7.00 a.m.*



Fr. Alexius Sanglura, SDB 1932-2006

Once again we gather in sorrow around the mortal remains of one of our brother priests. We are staring at an unexpected death and unexpected departure touches us very deeply. We still cannot fully take in the reality even as we conduct this funeral service. It is hard to believe that Fr. Alexius Sanglura is no longer with us. We come to mourn his death and bid him final good-bye. But despite the pain of loss, we come to thank God today for the life of Fr. Sanglura and for the blessings his life brought to so many. Our mourning is mingled with a deep sense of gratitude, gratitude to God for the gift of Fr. Sanglura, gratitude to Fr. Sanglura himself for being what he was to us.

His life

Fr. Alexius Sanglura was born at Hmueng, Aizawl on 8th October 1932. His parents were Hnuni and Neihlaia. After his early schooling in his place, he came to Don Bosco, Shillong, and studied here from Class VII. It was at Don Bosco, Shillong that he came in contact with the Salesians and decided to join the Salesians. He was sent to Sonada for his aspirantate. He entered the Novitiate at Yercaud in 1955 and on 24th May made his first profession. He completed his philosophical studies in Salesian College, Sonada. His first year of practical training was at Don Bosco, Park Circus. From 1960 to 1962 he was in Don Bosco, Shillong. He made his perpetual profession in Shillong on 26th May 1962 and proceeded to Kotagiri for his Theological Studies. After completing his studies at Kotagiri he was ordained a Priest in Shillong in 1966.

Fr. Sanglura began his priestly ministry in St. Paul Seminary in 1966. However within a year he was transferred to the Cathedral Parish, Shillong as Asst. Parish Priest. He worked in the cathedral parish for five years and was asked to move to Jongksha parish where he served for the next three years. From 1975 to 1982 he worked as Asst. Parish Priest in Haflong in North Cachar Hills. Towards the end of 1982 he went to Vellore for treatment and on his return in 1984 he was sent to Kumarkatta as Parish Priest. After serving the parish of Kumarkatta for three years he was made the Parish priest of St. Dominic Savio Parish, Mawlai in February 1987. In 1991 he was sent to Khliehriat as Asst. Parish Priest. His keen desire to work in Mizoram was fulfilled when he was appointed Asst. Parish Priest of Saiha in South Mizoram in 1994. He eventually became the Rector and Parish Priest of Saiha in 1998. In 2001 he was asked to be parish Priest of Seling and 2003 he was asked to be incharge of the three subcentres of the Parish and also remain on in Seling as Asst. Parish Priest. On account of his poor health he was relieved of this assignment as well and as the dialogue was going on for a new appointment that his end came suddenly on 28th midnight at Haflong.

His apostolate

Fr. Sanglura was a very determined and enthusiastic person. He underwent many difficulties and trials in order to achieve his goal. But he stuck to it. His vocation story is an inspiring one. He came from a loving family. And since he came from a non Catholic background his decision to become a priest must have required great courage on his part. In 1960 he wrote to the provincial, *"It is almost ten years that I have not been home. My mother is getting old and my relatives would like me to see her again. If you find it convenient to send me home after BA, it would be most grateful to you. But arrange things according to your own convenience."* After his holidays he wrote again to the Provincial saying *"I stayed just eight days with my mother. I did not move anywhere. I was always with her. My mother and the rest of the family were very glad to see me. Now I can say that they are all very glad about my religious life. The way of the Lord is wonderful. All felt that my stay was a little too short. When I was leaving my mother was crying and said, "I will not see you again, I am getting old now and I will not be able to wait till you visit the next time." It was very hard for my family to see me off again.*

Fr. Sanglura was eager to prepare himself for his apostolate. In 1959 he wrote to the Provincial from Sonada. *"When I come back to our Province I do hope you will please give me a chance to learn a new language either Assamese or Hindi. If I do not learn them now, I think I will find them very difficult later on."* He learned well enough quite many languages in order to speak sufficiently well to manage his work. After his confession examination he reminded the provincial, *"I will be very grateful to you if you could inform the Bishop to give me the faculty to hear confessions. It will be very useful for me during the Christmas season."*

Fr. Sanglura was attached to Don Bosco, to the Congregation and to the Province. When he was in the Novitiate at Yercaud and later at Kotagiri for his theology he maintained regular correspondence with the superiors. In 1962 he wrote from Poonmallee, *"We are very anxious to get the news from that side. Here we get no news at all concerning the situation in Assam. We have been thinking and praying for you all. We are thinking of the time when we will come back to Assam."* In 1983 when he was away in Vellore and Assam agitation was going on, he regularly enquired about the situation, *"Every day in the paper we read so many more killed in Assam. There must be a terrific turmoil there. What a pity. Let's hope it end soon."* And again he inquired, *"what news from that side we know very little about happenings because of election but nothing about our province. I hope the confreres are well and not disturbed by the happenings around us."*

His love for the congregation was shown in his interest in getting vocations. He was always on the look out for boys who showed some interest in joining the Salesians. He regularly informed the people concerned about possible candidates from Mizoram and also from Myanmar.

Fr. Sanglura suffered due to his ill health. He suffered from rheumatic arthritis, chronic malaria and heart problems. But in spite of these he carried on working as much as his health permitted. He kept his superiors informed about his health condition.

His love for Mizoram

Fr. Sanglura's dream was to work in Mizoram. Several letters to the Provincial reflect his ardent desire to work in Mizoram. On 17th July 1993 he wrote from Khliehriat. *"Is there any hope of moving up to Mizoram for me? So when are you going to send me to Mizoram? I can stay with Fr. James and help him. If you plan that Fr. Valluran be at Seling, it's well and good. I can help him also in touring the villages. This in fact should be my main job. I am anxiously waiting for your reply."* And again on 27th October the same year he wrote, *"I met Fr. Valluran and he told me that he has hired a house (I saw it) in Seling hoping to start soon. I'm very happy about it and thank you for giving him an O.K. to start. He told me also that he spoke to you about me. I repeat here what I told you sometime back that I'm ready to go to Saiha and stay with Fr. James. I hope you will consider my case at this time. Let Fr. Valluran be at Seling to start. He has ability and strength. I shall help him in his needs."*

He had several plans for the work in Mizoram. One of them was to gather the Past Pupils and organize into a powerful force for the betterment of society. When I proposed to him to come away from Mizoram because of ill health, he was sad. He was ready to take up a new assignment in the Province (a lighter one) but I could see that his heart was in Mizoram.

As a person

Those who were close to Fr. Sanglura, knew him and loved him. Fr. Francis Allenchery, the Councillor for Missions, knew him when both were in Mawlai. He wrote to us saying, *"He went about his work calmly and with dedication. He had time for a chat with the confreres. He was a positive element in the community."* One of the Salesians wrote to me saying, *"he loved the communities wherever he was. He loved Don Bosco and his priestly and Salesian Vocation."* One of his students had this to say, *"I was really shocked to get the sad news of the passing away of Fr. Sanglura today, we'll miss him a lot. Although he had lot of defects in his dealing with people he was always good at heart, very missionary minded and always for the church & Don Bosco. I was associated with him quite many times especially in his missionary tour in Mizoram. Recently I received his letter mentioning about the work in Mizoram & other projects he wishes to do in spite of his ill health. May his soul rest in peace."*

et hanc eam pateat in beatae mentis aeternitatem. Non obstat quod est ut eum ait
et gratias in festis eiusdem beatorum omnes excedat. Non obstat quod est ut eum ait
et gratias in festis eiusdem beatorum omnes excedat.

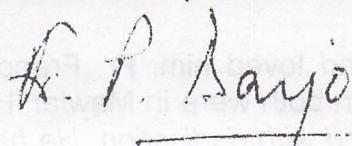
Conclusion

I thank His Grace Dominic Jala, Archbishop of Shillong for presiding at the Eucharist at the funeral of Fr. Sanglura. I want to thank his Lordship Bishop Stephen Rotluanga for being very close to Fr. Sanglura, both in life and as well as in death. I want to thank him for being at his side, assisting him when the time came for his departure. I want to thank Fr. Sebastian Kuricheal, the parish priest of Haflong and all sisters and doctors who helped Fr. Sanglura when the end came. I thank Fr. Abraham journeying in the middle of night with the Ambulance to fetch the body to Shillong.

I want to thank the Community of Don Bosco, Shillong, for their ready help. We always rely on their help and they are always ready to come to the assistance of the Province. Thank you Savio Juniorate, Mawlai, for seeing to the singing for the funeral of Fr. Sanglura. Thank you Fr. Aloysius Hemrom for taking care of the Liturgy. I am grateful to all of you who have come from near and far for being with us and praying with us for the repose of the soul of Fr. Sanglura. I thank his family members in a special way and the clergy and laity from Mizoram. Thank Fr. Victor for making the Cathedral Church available for the funeral liturgy.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote: "And our hearts ... like muffled/drums are beating funeral marches to the grave." We are all journeying towards the grave but the grave is not our destination. We are believers in life beyond the grave. Let this belief guide the way we live our lives.

*Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him.
May he rest in peace. Amen.*



Fr. Philip Barjo, SDB
Provincial