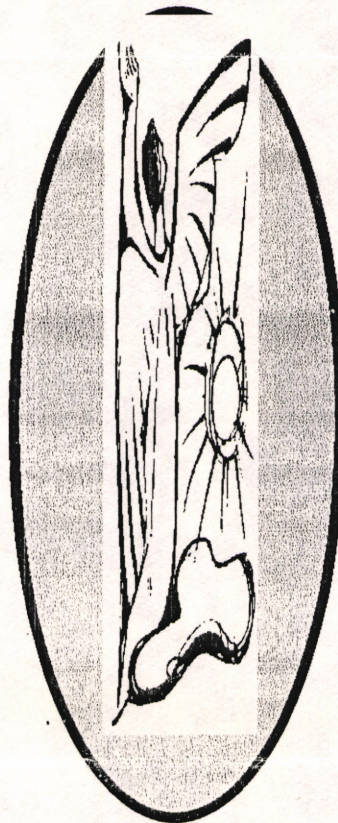


Salesian Provincial House

Citadel - 18 Landons Road - Chennai 600 010



The Salesian Province of Chennai
announces with deep sorrow the passing away of
Mgr. Lazar Sournaraj sdb
of Citadel Community
at 19.35 hours

on September 18, 1997 at St.Thomas Hospital - Chennai

First in the family - was born of Mr.Joseph and Mrs.Anthoniammal
on 01.02.1916 at Chennai

He made his first profession on December 25, 1938 at Tirupattur
and ordained on 07 September 1948

1955-1971 He was Vicar General and Prefect Apostolic and Diocesan Administrator during the vacancy of the
see

**ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO HIM O LORD
AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM
MAY HE REST IN PEACE. - AMEN**

For Necrology:

Born: 01.02.1916

Professed: 25.12.1938

Died: 18.09.1997

Place: Don Bosco - Citadel - Chennai 600 010 - India.



Provincial Circular

Province of St.Thomas the Apostle - Chennai 600 010

OCTOBER

NO 10

Dear Confreres,

38B298 m.1997

FR.LAZAR SOURNARAJ SDB

01.02.1916 - 18.09.1997

Fr. Lazar is no more with us. We are indeed saddened by the demise of one of our confreres who served the congregation and the Church for 59 long years. Fr.Lazar had not been well in the recent past. Knowing that he was becoming weaker day by day, we had sent him for a medical check-up during the last month. After about 10 days of treatment and rest at St.Thomas Hospital, he came back exuberant and invigorated. So much so, for a few days, he was in high spirits and continually came out with witty remarks and did not hesitate to pull the legs of young confreres. He kept saying that he was 81 years old in age but that his spirit was 18 years young. He had already suggested in a lighter vein, that we set up a committee that will look after the Golden Jubilee celebration of his priestly ordination to have been celebrated next year.

But, we were shocked to find that this exuberance and good health were short-lived. Already from the 11th of this month, he had no appetite, was constantly troubled by cold and cough. He started confining himself to his room more and more and avoided eating solid food. When we suggested that he must be admitted to the hospital, he declined saying that he was alright.

On the 17th, we convinced him that he needed hospital treatment and so he was admitted in St.Thomas Hospital on the 18th. Even then, he remarked that he would remain there only for 4 or 5 days and then he would return to the community. In the evening, he spoke to the sisters, salesians and the relatives who were around him and then told them that he wanted to rest. It was around 7.30p.m. He just lay back on the pillow and breathed his last.

Fr.Lazar had expressed his wish that he be buried near the tomb of his mother in St.Rock's cemetery. So, on the 19th, funeral mass was celebrated at St.Francis Xavier's Church, Broadway at 4.30 p.m. Our Bishops M.Rev.Chinnappa and M.Rev.Joseph Antony were there to celebrate the Eucharist. And at 7.00 p.m. the mortal remains of Fr.Lazar was buried at St.Rock's cemetery.

Fr.Lazar Sournaraj was the eldest of the two sons of Mr.Joseph and Mrs.Anthoniammal. He was born on 1st, February, 1916 in Chennai. He made his first profession on 25th, December 1938. He was ordained by Msgr.Thomas Pothakamury on 7th September, 1948. His priestly ministry was begun as the parish priest of Tirupattur.

After serving in Don Bosco, Vellore for 11 years, he was made the Vicar General of the diocese of Vellore from 1966 onwards. During the vacancy of the See, he was entrusted with the responsibility of being the Prefect Apostolic and Diocesan Administrator upto the year 1971. The priests, sisters and lay people of Vellore diocese remember him with gratitude and fondness for the wonderful service he had done there. Then he served as parish priest in Ayanavaram, Peravallur and at St. Mary's Co-Cathedral. It was from 1988 that he was appointed as confessor first at Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamalle and later at Don Bosco, Tirupattur. From 1994 onwards, due to ill-health and old age, he has been residing at the Citadel.

We have lost a very committed and zealous religious in Fr. Lazar. His whole life was one of commitment and service for God's kingdom. The oft-repeated words on his lips were fidelity and commitment. Fidelity to Christ was the motto of his life. His whole life was centred around this principle. He would say that the whole of his priestly ministry was geared towards spreading God's kingdom. Many priests and sisters say that they owe their vocation to Fr. Lazar. It was not rare to find sisters and lay people asking Fr. Lazar, "Thandhai, do you remember, you were my catechism teacher?", "Thandhai, it is you who sent me to the convent".

Fidelity to our charism was another important aspect of his character, whether he was working for the Diocese or as a parish priest, the salesian charism was very evident in his apostolate and in the way he dealt with the people.

Fr. Lazar was a very good leader. He did a wonderful job as the Diocesan Administrator of the diocese of Vellore. Along with his meticulous administration and emphasis on disciplined life, there was one other quality for which people remember him- the fatherly way he fulfilled all his duties. Many priests, sisters and the lay people, especially in the diocese of Vellore, fondly remember him for his fatherliness and befittingly called him 'Thandhai'. This quality was most expressed in the confessional, wherein he was very much sought after.

Rousseau had remarked, "When a man dies he clutches in his hands only that which he has given away in his life time." Fr. Lazar had given so much of himself, his energy and service to the Congregation and to the Church. His hands must now be very full, as he stands before his Master, with all that he has done and achieved for the kingdom. We are sure that God will render him the 'hundredfold' that He promised his faithful and committed followers. May he rest in God's love and peace. We are grateful to The Citadel community for their love and care and especially to Mr. Dass who looked after him. Let us continue to pray for the soul of Fr. Lazar.

Trichy Delegation

I am happy to announce the formation of the council for the Trichy delegation. We congratulate these confreres and wish them God's choicest blessings to render fruitful and selfless service for the delegation.

Councillor	- Fr. Amalraj Susai
Councillor	- Fr. Vincent Sebastian
Councillor	- Fr. O.K. Mathew
Delegation Economer	- Bro. George Joseph

Provincial Chapter '98.

You have been receiving the questionnaire from the Moderator to prepare us for the chapter. I wish that all of us take this study seriously in our communities and do send your responses in time.

In view of having a good report on the state of the province, we are organising meetings for the confreres in different age groups. We had one for 61 years and above confreres. It was a joyful and fraternal gathering. I wish that all of us take part in these meetings.

Welcome back and all the best

We welcome back Fr. Arulandam Devasagayam and Fr. Devapragasam Joseph who have returned from USA after completing their studies. Fr. Arul takes charge as the Asst Director of Deepagam - Chennai and Fr. Deva takes charge as the Co-ordinator of Youth Animation in the Archdiocese of Pondicherry.

Fr. Edward Xavier and Fr. Vincent Sebastian are attending a course for Missions from October '97 to January '98 at UPS in Rome. We wish them all the best.

Mission Sunday

We are living in the aftermath of the passing away of Mother Teresa., a legend of our time. She is one of the greatest personalities of this century. What a profound influence she has had on the world. She had crossed all the barriers of religion, race and nationality. Today, she is admired as 'Apostle of the slums' and acclaimed as a saint at her death. She is a 'spiritual wonder', 'rarely comes one such in history' said our President.

Her life is a powerful invitation for us to live faithfully the call to serve the poorest of the poor in India. Mission Sunday that will be celebrated soon is a reminder that our work for the poor and the downtrodden does not begin and end in material help. It is an attitude that has to be developed to express our predilection for the poor and stand by them at all times. May this year's Mission Sunday lead us to live by this principle. May our Lady of the Rosary whom we invoke in a special way during this month lead us to launch fully into our vision and mission.

Yours affectionately,

Camillus sdb.

Fr. Camillus sdb

Provincial

