



BROTHER

# THOMAS DUNG DUNG

S.D.B.



The joyous melodies of Christmas morn in most of our salesian houses in the province came to a standstill, as the news of the death of Bro. Thomas Dungdung flashed across. Bro. Thomas, a man who had lived a silent life, passed away in a silent way on a "silent night" – 25th December 1984 – 15 minutes after the day had begun. Only the previous evening he had been admitted to the Nazareth Hospital having had an internal hemorrhage and no one imagined that within a few hours he would join the choirs of angels in heaven, to sing glory to the 'new-born King'.

He was born of Cecilia and Julius Dungdung in Koinartoli, Bihar, on 28th March 1924 and was baptised three years later. He was confirmed on 26th March 1935. Little Thomas entered the salesian house of Catholic Orphan Press in Calcutta. His first contact with the salesians was very impressive and the seeds of a vocation were sown during those years. His first spiritual director, Fr. Piasecki, helped him to overcome the initial difficulties and doubts and showed him the salesian way to holiness. His aspirantate years were spent in Sonada. His companions at the college were greatly impressed by his inclination to piety.

The novitiate was in Tirupattur and Rev. Fr. Gutierrez guided him to ascend the first steps to holiness in the Salesian Society. He made his first profession on 6th Dec. 1944 and the final commitment on 8th Dec. 1950.

The first years of religious life were spent in C.O.P. as a compositor. After nine years of arduous and dedicated service he took ill and was transferred to the cooler climate of Shillong. In the then newly-opened house at Sunnyside he gave his 'very best' in spite of his many ailments. Soon his sickness got the better of him and he



was forced to retreat from active life to a life of prayer and union with God. In 1965 he came to Sacred Heart College where he continued his life of prayer, mortification and sacrifices, edifying everyone in the theologate. In 1975 he returned to Sunnyside, more determined than ever to achieve sanctity through devotion and prayer.

In 1983 he willingly accepted to come over for a second time to Sacred Heart College. During the cold days of winter the superiors sent him to Umran from where the Lord called him to eternity.

It won't be an exaggeration to say that Bro. Thomas was profoundly a man of God. His deep sense of prayer, commitment to the Congregation, loyalty to the teachings of the church, reverence for the superiors, exact observance of the rules and devotion to the Blessed Trinity and the Sacred Heart are qualities that we cannot but admire in him. He built no monuments, accomplished no great tasks, but his example will always remain in our minds.

Sometime ago Fr. M. Pulingathil had entrusted him with the precious work of praying for the Province. Bro. Thomas considered it as his sacred mission. He had to pray for the needs of the province, its superiors and members. He would often speak of this inalienable duty. He could not tolerate opposition when it was a question of defending the orthodox teaching of the Church and the Congregation and would sometimes become emotionally upset. Yet by nature he was a simple and authentic person. His only wish was that a prayer of offering which he carried about his person be buried with him so that it might praise the Lord even after his death.

Probably people are still unaware of the sufferings Bro. Thomas had to undergo during his earthly sojourn. For almost thirty years he suffered from acute bodily pain in one form or other. The wound on his leg occasionally sent him to heights of agony and pain. This indeed



had become his 'unbearable cross' – a cross which he most graciously accepted and lived. Those who witnessed his sufferings were wonder-struck at the way he bore them. He literally dragged himself to the church, especially the "Upper room" in Sacred Heart College.

He was fond of singing and he used to sing everyday the Te Deum, the Magnificat, the Ave Maris Stella and the Gloria Patri, to honour the most Holy Trinity to whom he prayed and made others hear him pray in season and out of season. He had composed a long prayer in which he repeatedly offered his life and his works for the glory and praise of the Trinity.

There is something we have to learn from the simple life of Bro. Thomas. He did everything for the glory of God. Let us try and do the same.

May the Spirit inspire many to imitate him and become "working contemplatives."

I request your prayers for him and for the many needs of the missionary province of Gauhati.

Fr. JOHN KALAPURA, S.D.B.  
Provincial

Gauhati – India  
15-4-1985



**Born** on 28. 3. 1924  
at Koinartoli, Bihar, India

**Professed** on 6. 12. 1944  
at Tirupattur, India

**Died** on 25. 12. 1984  
at Shillong, India