

SALESIAN MISSIONARY DAY NOVEMBER 2014

PRAYER SERVICE:

Theme: Called to Proclaim the Kingdom of God

(Duration: 45 min)

(It would be good to remember all the missionaries who have worked in our provinces.

It may not be possible to name each and every one of them and remember them.

We can at least remember those who have worked in our community or in a neighbouring community. Someone can share his experience of that missionary.)

Procedure:

- Introduction
- Hymn and Exposition
- Prayer of praise & Surrender
- Bhajan
- Penitential Rite
- Opening Prayer
- Gospel Reading
- Reflection
- Missionary for Imitation
- Intercessions
- Prayer for Missionaries and Missionary Vocation
- Concluding Prayer
- Final Hymn

Introduction

Dear friends in Jesus Christ, it is 139 years since the first missionary expedition. Hence, it is a great moment of joy and celebration as we have gathered here to commemorate the **Salesian Mission Day**. Today, as we remember the first missionary expedition, let us thank God for the aspect of Missions in our Salesian vocation and for guiding us all in our mission.

During this prayer service let us pray in a special way for the missionaries in various mission lands that they may find ultimate joy in serving God amidst all trials and difficulties. Missionaries are not only those who leave their countries to work elsewhere but every one of us is called to be a missionary wherever we are. Let us also pray to God that he may inspire all of us to be good missionaries. With these sentiments, let us take part in this prayer service.

Hymn & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Hymn: The world stands in need of Liberation

Prayer of praise & Surrender *(The congregation can repeat after the leader)*

Dear Lord, / you have said /where two or three are gathered in my name, / I am there in their midst. /With the assurance/ that you are in our midst, /I am here /to adore and praise you. / I bow to your infinite majesty/ and lift up my heart and mind to you./ Make this moment holy / and sanctify me/ with your presence and blessings./ I surrender my whole self to you/ please accept/ the homage of my heart./ Lord, I don't want to be a holy man,/ but Lord I do so much want to be your man./ To touch the ones,/ you call me to touch,/ to hear your words/ whispered around me / to feel the need of all your children/ when they cry./ Lord,/ I don't want to be a holy man/ but just want to be/ wholly human,/ wholly alive/ and most of all/ wholly yours/ because/ when I am wholly yours/ I cannot but be holy./ Amen.

Hymn

In silence of our hearts let us surrender ourselves to God the Father, the Master of Creation, Jesus, the light of the world and the Holy Spirit, the source of all strength and wisdom. Let us adore the triune God by singing, "All to Jesus I surrender....."

Penitential Rite

We are sent to this world for a purpose. All our actions demand of us a result proportionate to the talents and gifts we have received. We have all received the Spirit of Christ at our baptism and are duty-bound to proclaim Christ by our way of life and in whatever way we can. Let us then make a serious examination of conscience and ask God's pardon for the moments when we have failed to proclaim Him as the Master and the Lord of our lives. (Silence – Lord have mercy)

Opening Prayer

Ever living God, the source, content and sustenance of our faith, we thank you for this moment of grace. We thank you for your abiding presence on our midst. Give us the grace so that we who share the common mission of Christ may go out to spread the Good News to those who are ignorant of it. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

Gospel Reading:

Invoking the Holy Spirit, let us open our hearts and minds to listen to the Word of God that we may be able to understand it in depth and live it faithfully.

Mt 28: 16-20

Reflection

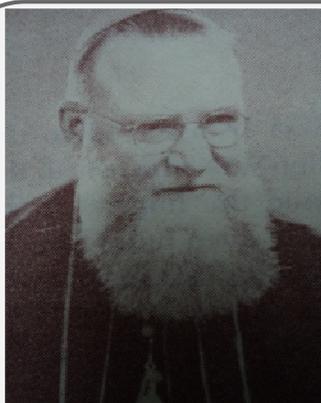
The Gospel of Mathew ends with this all-embracing command of Jesus to his disciples: Go to the very ends of the earth and tell the good news to all peoples. As long as there are people who haven't yet heard of the Good News, our mission will not have been accomplished and hence there is so much to be done.

Missionary Day is an opportunity to remind us of our duty of proclaiming our faith to those who have not yet heard about it and to strengthen those weak in faith. We need to take the reminder seriously not just for today but always. It is a lifelong duty. If we neglect our task and fail to reach out, people may perhaps remain ignorant of God's tremendous love for them. If today we are Christians, experiencing deeply the love of God, it is because someone took his missionary duties seriously and passed on the torch of faith to us. Sense of Gratitude must draw us to make Jesus known and loved, relying also on his promise: I will be with you always.

Those who are touched by the grace of Christ cannot sit idle. They cannot but share what they have received. For example, St. Paul, who was touched by Jesus, proclaimed Christ with such a passion to the extent of saying: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel." And today he stands as the greatest example for all of us in our mandate of preaching the Good News.

We shall stay in silence for a few moments and allow God speak to us so that He might alert us to something that needs to be done right away.

Missionary for Imitation Archbishop Louis Mathias, SDB



Archbishop Louis Mathias

Birthday:	20-07-1887	Paris
First Profession:	1905	Sicily (Italy)
Ordination:	20-07-1913	Italy
Died:	03-08- 1965	Legnano (Italy)

Early Life

Louis Mathias was born on 20th July, 1887 in Paris, France. He received his early education in the Salesian School at La Marsa in Tunis. Later, when Religious Orders were persecuted in France as well as in Algeria, young Louis left Tunis and went to Sicily and joined the Salesian Novitiate. He made his religious profession in August 1905. After his initial formation, he was ordained a priest on July 20, 1913.

Ministry

Young Fr. Louis' first priestly assignment was to teach in the studentate of St. Gregory (Sicily) and to work in the Oratory attached to the Institute as well as in that of Pedara. During World War I he served as a soldier and a Military Chaplain. Thinking of the hard and dangerous life of Salesians called to arms, he started a small news bulletin to give them information about the congregation and keep them united, an idea he took up again in the missions to keep the missionaries united. He was wounded twice and taken prisoner by the Germans in 1918 near Rheims. His services were duly recognized and he was decorated on two occasions.

In 1921 when the Salesian Congregation accepted the Assam mission, the Rector Major chose Fr. Louis as the leader of the first missionary expedition to Assam. He landed in Bombay on 6 January 1922. He started forming the candidates for Salesian life in Assam itself. It produced excellent results. On December 15th 1923, he was made Prefect Apostolic of Assam, Manipur and Bhutan. Endowed with rare administrative capacity, leadership, indefatigable energy and genius for organizing, he led the prefecture to phenomenal progress and expanded Salesian work to many parts of India in a few years time. Many institutions were founded in quick succession. Mgr. Mathias was appointed Bishop of Shillong on 9 July 1934. After the death of Mgr. Mederlet, Bishop Mathias was transferred to the archdiocese of Madras in 1935. Archbishop Mathias became a familiar figure, a name to be reckoned with in Madras, nay in India. He was held in the highest esteem both by Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Characteristics

1. Dynamic Pastor

Within the span of 30 years the archdiocese of Madras had a tremendous growth. Catholic population, number of priests, religious and students who were educated as well as the number of churches and institutions that he built grew enormously to the awe of everyone.

2. Promoter of lay apostolate:

Lay apostolate owes him a very deep debt of gratitude for his valuable service as Director of the Catholic Action section of the Bishop' Conference of India. Archbishop Mathias was the inspirer and patron of many new organizations such as the Catholic Social Guild, The Madras Cultural Academy, the Catholic Worker's association, the Young Christian Workers, The Catholic Educational Council, the Catholic Medical Guild, the Catholic Nurses' Guild, the Employment and Information Bureau, the School of Labour Relations and the Catholic Association of Madras.

3. Great Church Leader:

He was certainly a leader among the bishops of India. In fact, he was one of the founders of the Catholic Bishops conference of India. It was he who started the Theological Review "Clergy Monthly" (Later renamed, 'Vidyajyothi'). Cardinal Gracias said in his funeral oration: "In a sense, with the death of Archbishop Mathias it is the end of an era in the history of the church in India, for, by his personality and achievement he did set a definite stamp on the long period in which he lived, worked and died..."

4. Dare and Hope:

Dare and Hope was his motto. Indeed 'he had astonishing courage, intrepid faith and an unconquerable hope – else he would never have been able to achieve all that he accomplished" (Card. Gracias).

5. Prudence and tact:

Archbishop Mathias had consummate tact, as was evidenced by the success of the difficult mission entrusted to him by the Holy See, as Visitor to the Church in Eritrea, the unification of the archdiocese of Madras and the diocese of Mylapore, together with the clergy and the people belonging to two different jurisdictions, not merely juridically, but in mind and heart. His prudence and tact were very much helpful in tiding over the difficult situation of the Second World War years.

Intercessions

Response: Lord, guide your Church in her mission.

1. For our Holy Father Francis and all his helpers: that they may be conscious of the mission entrusted to them and carry it out with love and dedication. **Resp.**
2. For all Christians: that they may bear witness to Christ through their life of faith, hope and charity. **Resp.**
3. For all missionaries: that those who face difficulties and opposition and struggle in remote and isolated places may find their strength and consolation in you. **Resp.**
4. For Vocations: may God inspire more and more young men and women to surrender themselves to the light of God's love and to become messengers of his light and love. **Resp.**
5. For each one of us: that the Lord may enlighten us in our prophetic mission so that we too may do our best to spread the message of salvation to all around us. **Resp.**

Let us pray for a moment to pray for local and Personal needs...

Prayer for Missionaries and Missionary Vocation:

God, our Loving Father, you desire that all men and women come to the knowledge of your truth and be saved. You sent your son as your messenger to bear witness to the truth. He preached the kingdom of God by his words, actions, life and death. To continue that mission Jesus called the disciples, prepared them and sent them out so that the Gospel could be preached everywhere. Behold the harvest is yet plentiful and the labourers are few. We beseech thee to send labourers into your harvest. Inspire many young men and women to become missionaries to take your word to the ends of the earth. Strengthen the missionaries in their toil and stress. Bless their work and bring it to fruitful completion. Through Christ our Lord, Amen!

Our Father ...

Concluding Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for having brought us together, to reflect on our particular calling and to pray together as a community for the realization of this mission. May the love of Abba Father, which you manifested during your earthly life and later through the marvelous deeds of the Holy Spirit, be shared with every human being! May we all know, acknowledge and love you as our Lord and Saviour. We make this humble prayer in your name, you who live and reign with the Father and the Spirit. Amen.

Final Hymn: Follow me Follow me or any other suitable Hymn.