

EDITORIAL

# La Salette

VISION & MISSION



By Fr. Thomas Vellappallil, ms

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*Dear Co-missioners,*

The month of September is a special time for the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette throughout the world. We celebrate our patronal feast, the 166th anniversary of the apparition of our Blessed Mother to Maximin and Melanie, two shepherd children. Her message of Reconciliation remains ever so relevant in our world. We honor Mary, our Blessed Mother under the title of Reconciler of sinners. About 850 La Salette Missionaries, priests, brothers and sisters, also many Lay Associates around the world live the charism of Reconciliation in our lives. We continue to commit ourselves in serving God's people by making this message known to all God's people. We are in 27 countries today.

On this occasion, it is a joy for me to introduce to you those who have helped the Mission Center, whom we had the privilege to host during this summer. Besides these missionaries, many members of "Mary, Mother of the Americas" Province have contributed their time and service to the Mission Center. Words are not enough to thank them for all their continued support and help. Happy Feast!



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**Rev. Enrique Lapuebla, M.S.,** fondly known as Fr. Ike was born in Lingig, Surigao on the island of Mindanao, the Southern Philippines on February 6, 1941 as the eldest of nine children. His family settled in Aurora, Isabela in Central Luzon around the year 1947. He graduated from the elementary school and from the La Salette high school in this little town. He talked about what prompted him to become a priest. He said, “It was on a Sunday morning when I was in second year high school that I felt the spark of vocation. As I was waiting for my brothers and sisters to tag along to go to mass, I saw a seminarian dressed in white cassock. I said to myself I want to be like

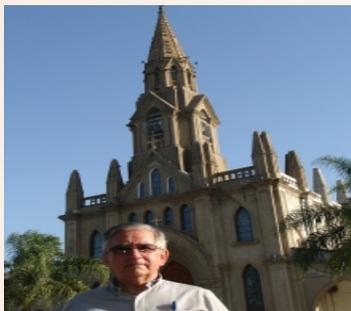
him someday”. Circumstances led him to become a missionary brother after his novitiate formation year in Center Harbor, New Hampshire. A few years later, someone asked him, “Are you going to be a brother for life Brother Ike?” This remark once again made him think of priesthood. After his theological studies, he was ordained a La Salette priest on April 15, 1980. Although he has served in the Philippines for several years, he spent many years serving in various La Salette parishes in Hawaii and California. He has also served as Chaplain at the Riverside Regional Medical Center in California for seven years. At present, he resides at St. Theresa Parish, Kekaha, Kauai and helps out both La Salette priests and diocesan priests in their ministry in the entire diocese. Fr. Ike helped with mission appeals from June through August and has returned to his regular ministry in Kauai.



**Fr. Sajive Maliakal, MS,** wrote: “.....to be with him and to be sent out...” (Mark 3:14) When I chose this Gospel verse as the motto of my ordination to the priesthood I was envisioning how my religious-priestly life should be. Having been born and brought up in a culture of Catholic Faith I was always attracted to the lives of priest and religious and most especially Missionaries. I am Fr. Sajive Maliakal from Kerala, India. I was born on April 6, 1977. I joined the La Salette minor seminary after completing the tenth grade in 1993 at the age of 15. The thirteen

years of formation in different places in India and Postulancy and novitiate in the Philippines helped me to mold myself as a religious priest for the work of Christ. I was ordained September 8, 2005 along with four other La Salette Brothers. It was a dream come true.

**My heart fills with joy as I complete my seventh year of priesthood this September. My time in the minor seminary as assistant Rector and later as Rector was spent helping our young seminarians to discern and prepare them to respond to God's call. My opportunity to serve the La Salette Community as Provincial Councilor for the last three years was quite an enriching and fulfilling experience. The last few months of preaching for the missions helped me to discover the culture, faith, and spirituality of this great country. People were generous and welcoming and encouraged me to go forward in my mission work and priestly life.**



**Fr. Robert Butler, MS** was born in Fitchburg, MA on August 16, 1941. Bob was the first child in a family that would give three sons to the service of God as La Salette Missionaries. He was ordained on May 24, 1969. He spent 6 years as Director of Formation. In November 1973, Fr. Bob left for language school in Peru to study Spanish and by February 1974 he was in Argentina where he has had a long and fruitful ministry. He says, “I have spent more than half my life in Argentina, 38 years in total, mostly in parish ministry.” At present he serves as pastor at Our Lady of La Salette Parish in Santa Fe, Argentina. I appreciate his willingness and kindness to help the Mission Center with some mission appeals while on vacation. He will be returning to his ministry in Argentina after his home vacation.



**Fr. John Higgins, MS** was born on December 3, 1944 in Woburn, MA. He writes, “My religious vocation was sown in my family. My parents were faith-filled people, two aunts were Sisters of St. Joseph and my uncle was Fr. Joseph Higgins, MS. I was ordained in 1972 and spent seven years teaching in the seminary and doing parish ministry. I had an urging to be part of a new way of being Church in Latin America – Basic Christian Communities. I arrived in Argentina during the last years of an oppressive military dictatorship that cost 30,000 lives including a bishop, priests and sisters.” After 21 years of ministry in Argentina, he spent 11 years in Bolivia. He now has returned to the United States permanently. Before he takes up a new assignment in his own homeland, he has requested to help out with mission preaching as a way of reintegrating to the country and the local La Salette Community. We are blessed to have him back.



**Fr. Bernard Taylor, MS** was born in Burma (Myanmar) in 1945. His name in Burmese is U Mya Thein. He entered the diocesan seminary in Akyab in 1962. But his heart was set on being a La Salette Missionary, so the following year the fathers sent him to our seminary in the Philippines. He was ordained there in 1971 and returned to his native land in 1972.

Here he ministered until 1979. When the La Salettes had to close the mission in Burma, Fr. Bernie returned to minister in the Philippines. Fr. Bernie has served as director of formation of seminarians and was actively involved with charismatic groups as their Spiritual Director. Then he took leadership in re-establishing the presence of La Salette in Burma. He has just returned to Burma after helping with mission appeals this past summer.



**Fr. Jeremy Morais, MS** was born in Nova Scotia, Canada on June 27, 1953. When his family moved to Red Lake, Ontario, he came to know the La Salette Missionaries. He studied at Olivet, IL, made his first profession in 1977 and was ordained in Milwaukee on May 22, 1981. Six years later he left for Madagascar. He writes, “I remember from an early age of 9 or 10 I had a desire to be a priest, and not just a priest but a missionary. That inspiration came from my family who were strong practicing Catholics”. He has shared with me stories of walking miles and miles to get to mission churches in Madagascar where there is no electricity, no running water and no means of communication. In 2010, he was asked by the new Bishop of Morondava to be the Financial Administrator for the Diocese and to be the Pastor of the Cathedral. Fr. Jeremy offered to help out the Mission Center while on vacation.



**Fr. Baiju Avittappilly, MS** was in the United States this summer and helped the Mission Center. He is currently serving as the Superior of a new local La Salette Community in Kerala, India. He has served at St. James Parish, Danielson, Connecticut and at Good Shepherd Parish in Orlando, Florida as associate pastor. He also has served as Director of Philosophers and Assistant Procurator of the Indian La Salette Province. We appreciate his dedication and commitment in the past 12 years of priestly life and wish him well in his new ministry.



You could continue your support of our Missions by including them in your will.

Should you wish to do so, our legal title is:

**North American La Salette Mission Center, Inc.**