

## OBITUARY



### **Rev.Fr Sebastian Thuruthel MST**

*Vaidikaratnam* Very Reverend Fr Sebastian Thuruthel (98), a member of the Missionary Society of St Thomas the Apostle and assigned to St Thomas Mission Region, Mandya, is called for his eternal reward at 9.25 pm on February 8, 2024 at IHM hospital, Marygiri, Bharananganam. Rev. Frs Joseph Thekkekarott, Jomon Ayyankanal and Lonappan Arangassery, Fathers from Deepti Generalate, Deepti Minor seminary and *Aaraam* as well as doctors and the nursing staff of the IHM hospital were present at his death bed praying as he passed away.

The mortal remains of Rev. Fr Sebastian Thuruthel are kept at IHM hospital and the body will be received and brought to Deepti Generalate at 4.00 pm on Sunday (11-02-2024) for the public to view and pay homage. The funeral service will start on Monday (12-02-2024) at 9.30 a.m. His Beatitude Mar Raphael Thattil and His Eminence Cardinal Alencherry will officiate at the funeral services assisted by their Excellencies Mar Joseph Kallarangatt (Pala), Mar Sebastian Vadakel (Ujjain), and Mar James Athikalam (Sagar), Mar Bosco Puthur, Mar George Madathikandandathil, and His Grace Archbishop Susai Pakiam (TVM). A few bishops have agreed to come to Deepti to pay last homage to their friend and mentor.

The MST community is saddened by the demise of Rev. Fr Sebastian Thuruthel who was very close to all the members of the MST as their Minor seminary Rector, Formator and the Director General of MST. He had been healthy and jovial all through his life till he was admitted to the IHM hospital on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024, due to fever, cough and general weakness of old age. In the diagnosis, it was found that he had urinary infection, respiratory problems and variations in the blood test results. He received consciously the sacrament of the anointing of the sick at his own request, administered by Fr Vincent, the Director General, on 18<sup>th</sup> January as his condition was deteriorating. However, he insisted that he is not shifted to any other hospital or ICU, for he was all prepared to meet the Lord and wanted to be close to his dear and near ones till the last moment. Since he wanted to celebrate his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday at Deepti, he was brought to *Aaraam* for a few hours on 25<sup>th</sup> January. After the birthday celebration he was taken back to the hospital and his condition improved slightly. He was both mentally and spiritually prepared for his journey to eternity. While he was in the hospital many of his dear and near ones were able to visit him. As per his wish he was taken to Deepti again on 30<sup>th</sup> January. After two days on February 2<sup>nd</sup> he collapsed and was taken by ambulance to the hospital. Although he overcame the critical condition, on 8<sup>th</sup> February afternoon, his condition deteriorated and he breathed his last at 9.25, quietly and peacefully assisted by the prayers of MST fathers, family members and the staff of the hospital who were beside his bed.

Rev. Fr Sebastian Thuruthel was born to Devasia Thuruthel and Rosa Kunnel as the last and the 6<sup>th</sup> child, in Chempilavu, Cherpunkal, on January 26, 1926 and was baptised on February 2, 1926 at Cherpunkal. All his siblings, Mariam, Thomas, Annamma, Joseph and Aleykutty

are already with the Lord to receive him in the eternal abode. He had his primary and secondary education at Holy Cross School, Cherpunkal, St Antony's School, Mutholy and St Mary's School Kidangoor. He passed SSLC from St Mary's School, Kidangoor in 1944. He did his intermediate at SB College, Changanachery from 1944-1946 and secured BA (Hons) & MA in English literature from Madras Christian College (1955-1958). He joined the Minor Seminary at Changanachery in 1946 and was promoted to Major seminary in 1948. He was ordained deacon by Cardinal Tisserant in 1953 at Alwaye (Mangalapuzha) Seminary and was ordained priest at Alwaye seminary for the Eparchy Palai on March 15, 1955 by Mar Sebastian Vayalil, the first bishop of Palai and the founder of MST. He made the perpetual promise of incorporation in the Missionary Society of St Thomas the Apostle on May 18, 1975.

He served the Church particularly in the field of formation as professor of English at Pontifical Seminary Alwaye and St Thomas Seminary Kottayam and as the first Rector of Deepti Minor seminary from 1969 to 1975. He was instrumental in organising the Kerala Catholics in Mumbai on behalf of the Syro-Malabar hierarchy from 1976-1978. He served the MST as General Councillor for two consecutive terms and headed the MST as the Director General from 1988 to 1993. He was conferred the honorary title *Vaidikaratnam* on July 3, 2016.

He endeared himself to all who came in contact with him and has hundreds of priests and over 25 bishops among his students. He was intelligent, disciplined, a man of personal integrity and a good formator. The noble, loving, charming and dignified behaviour of Fr Sebastian attracted and inspired many in their lives. Above all, he had strong faith and trust in the Lord. In his last will he writes: "*Goodbye! Everything is fine! Jesus did not die in vain. The Merciful Lord is My God and Redeemer. Jesus, I love Thee, Trust in Thee; Thou art my portion and inheritance.*" Let us thank the Lord and bow before His will and entrust Fr Sebastian Thuruthel into the hands of the Lord whom he served faithfully as a priest for the past 69 years.

Fr Vincent Kadalikattil Puthenpura  
Director General MST

## Curriculum Vitae

### Rev. Fr Sebastian Thuruthel (Jan. 26, 1926-Feb. 8, 2024)

Bate of Birth: January 26, 1926  
Date of Ordination: March 15, 1955  
Conferred *Vaidikaratnam*: July 3, 2016  
Eternal Reward: February 08, 2024  
Funeral: February 12, 2024



#### Personal Details

Name: Sebastian Thuruthel  
Place of Birth: Chempilavu Kara  
Date of Baptism: February 2, 1926  
Baptismal Name: Devasia  
Place of Baptism: Cherpunkal Parish  
Name at School: T.D. Devasia  
Pet-name: Kunju (Pappan)  
Parents: Devasia Thuruthel-Rosa Kunnel  
Siblings: Mariam, Thomas, Annamma, Joseph & Aleykutty

#### School Education

Primary School (I-IV): Holy Cross School, Cherpunkal,  
Middle School (Fourth Form): St Antony's School, Mutholy  
High School: St Mary's School, Kidangoor.  
SSLC: 1944  
Intermediate (1944-1946): SB College, Changanachery  
BA (Hon) & MA, Eng. Lit.(1955-1958) Madras Christian College

#### Seminary Formation

Minor Seminary: Changanachery 1946-1948  
Major Seminary: Alwaye (1948-1955)  
Diaconate: Alwaye (1953), Cardinal Tisserant  
Priestly Ordination: Alwaye (1955) Mar Sebastian Vayalil  
Perpetual Promise of Incorporation: May 18, 1975  
MST Regional Ascription: St Thomas Region, Mandya

#### Appointments/Priestly Ministry

Year	Place	Title
1955 Apr-May	Lalam old Church, Palai	Assistant Parish priest
1958-1969	Alwaye Seminary	Professor, English & Syriac
1969-1975	Deepti Minor Seminary	Rector
1975-1976	St Thomas Ap.Sem. Vadavathoor	Professor of English
1976-1978	Mumbai	Chaplain to Kerala Catholics
1978-1979	New York (Yonkers)	Asst. Parish Priest
1978-1988	Melampara, Deepti Bhavan	General Councillor
1980-1985	Deepti Minor seminary	Teacher
1985-86	Mettupalayam (Karamadai)	Parish priest
1986-1987	Coimbatore- Lourdes Church	Parish Priest
1987-1988	Kallenahalli, Mandya	Missionary
1988-1993	Deepti Generalate	Director General
1993-1996	Ganjam, SR Patna - MOC	Spiritual Director
1996-2007	Aaraam (MST Priest home)	Teacher at Deepti College
1996-2024	Aaraam (MST Priest home)	Retired Life