

Letter from a Missionary in India

## Father K. Maria Arulappan

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September 8, 1997

Greetings from Fr. K Maria Arulappan, for the first time from the new parish of Aizawl. As I have informed you earlier, I am transferred to this parish of Christ the King, Kulikawn Aizawl on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, 1997.

I am very grateful to you for all your help, an encouragement and prayer support for me and for my old mission. With your help, I could do something for Christ and His Church there. With your help, we have a beautiful church there.

Now Bishop has brought me to this parish of Christ the King, Aizawl. First I was in the Mother's parish and now I am in the Divine Son Christ's parish. When I went to Serchhip the parish church and presbytery was in a state of collapse. By God's grace and through the intercession of Mother Mary, we have a beautiful church, presbytery, a hall and a hostel there. Now I am brought here to build the church in honour of Christ the King and the priests residence here in Kulikawn, Aizawl.

The first Catholic church was constructed here 50 (fifty) years ago by the Canadian Holy Cross Fathers, which was extended 3 times. It was a wooden structure. As you know, Mizoram is full of white ants and it is a place exposed to cyclonic storms. So the first church here had collapsed completely in 1993. Since then the



"Our hostel children - same as orphans, Kulikawn parish"

then parish priest tried his level best with the help of the people to build a church. The area is very sloppy and we have to build from the road below and have it up to get a level place for the church.

Due to financial difficulties the work is not progressing. Besides, now this church is going to be the Cathedral.



"This is Sabual village chapel. It is on the point of collapse. They got some money from MISSIO and could build only the pillars and beams."

So we want it to be big and beautiful. Both, Bishop and the people have put great hope in me.



"Fr. Arulappan with a small group of faithful in Sialsuk village 70 kms. away from the parish center. It takes 4 hours to reach there by jeep."

I, a penniless missionary put my trust and confidence in Providence and on our Heavenly Mother. As she helped me to build the church at Serchhip, so too she will help me to build this church in honour of her Divine Son, Jesus. So I count on your continued support and prayers, very much.

This was the biggest parish in Mizoram. Now it is divided into 3 parishes. Earlier when I was the assistant pries here in 1980-1984, we had 62 sub-stations. We were only 2 priests. At that time I had to visit there villages on foot only. But now to most of the villages, we can go by Jeep.

I remembered you all in my prayers and Holy Mass. I continue to do so and I request your prayers too, because this parish is not like Serchhip, it is almost dead spiritually. No prayers, no rosary. So I have to work hard to fight against the satanic powers. So I need spiritual strength. As I build the house of God with cement and bricks, I will have to build the living temple of God, the people of God.

Once again thanking you for all your support and assuring you of my prayers I wind up. God Bless you.

*Fr. Arulappan R. Mania - PARISH PRIEST*



"Fr. Arulappan offers Mass in one of the village leader's house. The name of the village is Kanghmun."

April 22, 1998

Regarding Easter celebrations, we do not have anything extra as you have there. We begin the Holy Week with a procession, of carrying blessed palms leaves and the Holy Mass. Then the rest of the week is spent for reconciliation (confessions). Then on Holy Thursday we have the service at 7:00 p.m. followed by Eucharistic adoration till midnight. On Good Friday at 12:00 noon we gathered in a place 5 Kms.

Away from the Church for a Way of the Cross to the Church, followed by the Veneration of the cross and communion in the Church. Then people gather in one of the houses and pray and sing passion songs at night. Then the vigil service at 11:00 p.m. on Saturday. Then on the Easter day after the mass we have a common meal. The food (cooked) will be served on leaves (rice and meat).



Easter meal at Melriat village, Kulikawn parish.

People sit around in 7-10 and eat. This is the traditional way of eating. Then at night a candle procession shouting and singing Alleluia, is held. That is all.

Our young here are fond of imitating. They follow anything that comes from the west, through TV. The TV channels 'MTV' and 'V' TV project a lot of evils and the youth and the children are fond of watching them. Drug addiction is too common. I am facing a lot of problems from them. They just get into the house and carry away anything that they see. Last month I came back from a village and kept the mass kit in the sitting room and in the evening during the Benediction they carried my mass kit away. They expected to find money inside. Since they did not find any, they left it in the street and some children found it and brought it to me. Day before yesterday a youngster (fully drunk) forced himself into my office (he was a stronger to me) and demanded money, for drinks.

How could I give. I refused. He would not go. At last I managed to get him out. We have to pray a lot for the youth.

*Fr. Chandyappan K. Maria - PARISH PRIEST*

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November 9, 1999

This year the month of Rosary was a memorable one for me. I managed to collect so many protestants in houses for the Rosary prayer. I preached about the power of the Rosary. Many of them were touched and the want to pray the rosary. I have also distributed about 300 rosaries to people, many of whom are protestants who love Mother Mary.

On 31<sup>st</sup> Oct. we had a solemn Marian Procession with lighted candles. It was very impressive. Many people took part in it. At the same time I was sad to hear about my previous parish, where we had annual Marian procession in a very impressive manner for the past 12 years. Now the present priest is against it. This year he did not want it and so he went away somewhere.



"This photo is just before the start of the Marian Procession at night"

The people had the procession, but only a very few took part in it as the priests preached against it. Where as here, they did not have procession, last year I started and this year (second year) it was glorious. Praise the Lord. So please pray for this mission.

Fr. Arulappan K. Maria - PARISH PRIEST

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Fr. Arulappan is currently working in St. Joseph's parish in Kolasib, Mizoram, and serves the needs of a dozen outlying missions. He deeply appreciates any and all help -- spiritual and financial. He may be contacted at:

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