

CANONICALLY RECOGNIZED FRUITS OF HOLINESS IN THE JUBILANT SYRO-MALABAR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Abstract: The ultimate goal of all laws in the Church is to attain salvation of souls. Christian faithful are called to bear witness to Christ and his message and to imitate the holiness of Yahweh in the Old Testament and that of God the Father as Christ the Lord of New testament teaches us. Here this short article explains briefly the canonization process and on the occasion of the silver Jubilee of the SMMAC, presents the fruits of sanctity in the SMMAC. The author draws attention to some of the canons which indicates indirectly the goal of laws - salvation of souls. The article reveals the richness and examples of sanctity that is seen in the SMMAC by referring to the number of her saints, blessed, venerables and servants of God.

Introduction

In the Holy Scripture, both Old Testament and New Testament there is the invitation to be holy. In the Old Testament Yahweh invites the chosen people, "Be holy as I, Yahweh am holy" (Lev. 19:2). In the New Testament also we see the same invitation in different words. Jesus commands his disciples to "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 7:43).

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1. "Salvation of Souls" in the in the Oriental Code

The last canon of the Latin Code, states: "Salus animarum suprema lex est" (*CIC* c. 1752), that is, the salvation of souls is the supreme law in the Church. This canon is not having, in fact, an exact equivalent one in the Oriental Code, though canon 1400 (c. 1519 seems to be still more suitable in my opinion) is presented in the index as its equivalent. The first part of *CIC* c. 1752 is treated in *CCEO* canon cited above.

Eastern code, however, refers to the salvation of souls, indirectly, as the main objective of all laws in various other canons. For example, *CCEO* mentions about the right and duty of the authority of the Church to provide for everything needed for "the salvation of souls" (c. 595 §2); *CCEO* c. 727 states that "in order to provide for the salvation of souls it may be appropriate to restrict the faculty to absolve from sins and reserve it to a determined authority"; in view of the "good of the souls" parish priests have to be transferred (*CCEO* c. 1397); another canon cautions that while issuing extra-judicial decree one has "to see keep in mind and aim at what seems to lead best to the salvation of souls" (*CCEO* c. 1519 §1); Code provides that in case a church of divine worship cannot be any longer used for that purpose it could be reduced to profane, but the bishop has the grave obligation to ensure that "the good of the souls suffer no harm thereby (c. 873 §2); again the code stipulates that while issuing decrees suspending the execution of something, the author of the decree should ensure that "salvation of souls suffers no harm (c. 1000 §2); and finally the code obliges a judge also to be mindful of the "salvation of souls" in penal cases (c. 1110). Thus we may say that the ultimate aim of all laws is the salvation of souls.

St. Chavara Kuriakose Elias of the Holy Family once lamented, in reference to Syro-Malabar Church that there fails saints in it, Kerala Church is barren as far as declared sanctity or saints are concerned: "And as any close observer can perceive, the holy way of life and exemplary conduct has not yet taken root in our Malabar. For this Malabar which had received faith from St. Thomas, the Apostle, remains barren, not having produced even one saint, while other countries and islands which received faith much later have brought forth several saints. From those lands have come many missionaries prompted by good intentions and absolute charity leaving their

relatives and homelands with the sole motive of teaching the true religion and the way of Salvation."¹

Today the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church is rich in models of holiness for the imitation of the faithful and intercessors before God on behalf of people's varied needs and intensions.

Though all are called to sanctity some merit it by being open to the gratuitous gift of the Grace of God and through their personal efforts, in submission to God's will, to grow in holiness. Thus there are infinite number of those who enjoy the beatific vision of God. Holy Catholic Church venerates these holy persons under the titles Martyrs, Confessors and those who attain the beatific vision through the "heroic offering of life"² for others.

2. The Canonization Process in Brief

In the Codes of Canon law we see only one canon each on the process of canonization: *Codex Iuris Canonici* (CIC c. 1403) promulgated on January 25, 1983³ and Eastern Code, *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (CCEO c. 1057) promulgated on October 18, 1990.⁴ It is not because canonization is of less importance that there are not many canons in either of the Codes to deal with its process, instead as it is a complex one, it needed to be dealt with in detail and minutely. Hence the legislator mandated the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints (CCS) to make particular laws to treat the canonization process. Therefore, the in conformity with the canons of Codes, the CCS promulgated particular laws which govern the said process: "The Norms to be Observed in Inquiries made by Bishops in the Causes of Saints" (*Norms*) and it was approved by the Roman Pontiff on

¹*Complete Works of Bl. Chavara*, Vol. I: The Chronicles (Nalagamangal, K.C Chacko and Others (eds.) Mannanam, 1990, 146 as cited in Varghese Koluthara, "St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and His Charism," in *Herald of the East*, Vol.10/2 (2014), 292.

² Pope Francis, *ap. let. mp. Maioremhacdilectionem*, 11 July 2017, L'Osservatore Romano

³*Codex Iuris Canonici*, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus, AAS 75 (1983) Pars II, 1- 317) For the English translation see, The Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, *The Code of Canon Law*(Bangalore: Collins for Theological Publications in India, 4th print, 1991), p. 250.

⁴*Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus, AAS 82 (1990) 1033-1353. For the English translation see Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Latin-English Edition New English Translation*, Washingto, DC 20064.

February 7, 1983;⁵ In addition there is the *Regolamento*, the “Bye-laws of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints” (*Regolamento della Sacra Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi*) approved by John Paul II on March 21, 1983.⁶ After the experience of about one and a half decades the CCS promulgated the Instruction, *Sanctorum Mater*, on 17 May, 2007⁷ for conducting diocesan or eparchial inquiries in the Causes of Saints. Both the Codes, having only one canon each on canonization, refer to these special norms established by the Roman Pontiff through the CCS.⁸

The canonization process of the Catholic Church is a long and complex one, comprising mainly of two phases - the diocesan and the Roman. The latter, for convenience’s sake, may be further conceived to be having two stages: study stage and judgment stage.

2.1. The Diocesan Phase

The cause of canonization of a person presumed to have led a genuine holy life or to have undergone martyrdom for the sake of faith from the part of the martyred and hatred of faith (*odium fidei*) form the part of the persecutor or murderer begins in the home diocese or eparchy where the concerned person lived, worked for the major part of his life and died. The diocesan bishop is the competent person to officially initiate a process. Once the bishop officially initiates the cause the person in question will be called Servant of God (SG).⁹

⁵Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, *Normaeservandae in inquisitionibus ab episcopis faciendis in Causis Sanctorum*, AAS 75 (1983) 396-403. For the English translation, see the “Norms to be Observed in Inquiries Made by Bishops in the Causes of Saints,” in *New Laws for the Causes of the Saints*, pp. 10-17.

⁶In an audience granted to the then Cardinal Prefect, Pietro Palazzini on 21 March 1983, John Paul II approved this *Regolamento*.

⁷Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, *Sanctorum Mater* Instruction for conducting diocesan or eparchial inquiries in the Causes of Saints, in AAS 99 (2007) 465-510.

⁸CIC c. 1403 §1 states: “Cases for the canonization of the Servants of God are governed by special pontifical law. §2: The provisions of this Code are also applied to these cases whenever the special pontifical law remits an issue to the universal law, or whenever norms are involved which of their very nature apply also to these cases.” CCEO, c. 1057 says: “In causes of the Servants of God whereby they are inscribed among the saints, the special norms determined by the Roman Pontiff are to be observed.”

⁹ There is a wrong practice in the SMMAC now that this initiation of the cause is somehow projected as the celebration of declaring a person Servant of God. In fact,

However, without someone promoting it, no cause will come up and hence it is the actor or petitioner who makes this initial move and conduct preliminary inquiry. As the actor cannot present himself legitimately in the tribunal for further proceedings he does this inquiry through a postulator nominated by him as per the norms of the law and confirmed by the competent bishop.

Once convinced of the sanctity or martyrdom of the person in question, the actor and the postulator together present the official written petition, as per the norm of law, to the competent bishop. Along with the petition the postulator presents all the documents, edited and unedited - written by the SG, or about him, a biography or chronologically arranged life of the person - related to him and a list, mainly, of eye-witnesses (in recent causes) who can help the bishop verify the sanctity of the SG. It is the bishop of the diocese where the presumed holy/martyred person died who initiates the cause by constituting a special tribunal for it after having conducted a preliminary inquiry from his part to verify the genuineness and the probable positive outcome of the cause.

In the meantime the bishop has to obtain the *nulla osta* from the part of the CCS. The bishop after having studied the documents with the help of a historical and theological commission and having collected the depositions and testimonies of the witnesses, if convinced, closes the diocesan process in the last session of the tribunal and send the dossier, with his report, to the Holy See, that is, the CCS for the Roman Phase.

2.2. Roman Phase

Once the documents reach Rome, first of all the CCS verify the validity of the diocesan process and issues a decree to that effect. There shall be a postulator for the Roman phase nominated by the actor and confirmed or appointed by the Prefect of the CCS. With the decree of the validity of the diocesan process, the preparation for the study stage begins, that is, the postulator with or without the help of an external collaborator and under the supervision of a Relator appointed by the CCS prepares the *positio* in compliance with the requirement and methodology of the CCS. It will be studied first by the historical commission and then by the theological commission. Provided these commissions are positive, the cardinals and theologians will discuss the case in its congress for the final judgment. If congress is convinced

the title is added to the person as a consequence of the initiation and the event is not to be published as if it was for declaring one Servant of God. It happens.

that the SG practiced the virtues to a heroic degree then the prefect of the congregation proceeds to prepare the final decree. With the signing of the decree by the Holy Father, the SG is entitled to be called *Venerable* which, however, does not concede any permission to render any cult to the *Venerable*.

3. Miracles and Beatification or Canonization

For a SG of to be declared blessed the Norms require a miracle. The canonization process could be briefly explained as the recognition of three voices: *Vox populi*, *vox ecclesiae* and *vox dei*. *Vox populi* is the spontaneously generated popular acclamation of the faithful regarding the fame of sanctity of a person. Subsequent to the death of a such a person, the people generally talk about his or her sanctity, and as a sign of their reverence towards him or her and to pray to him they frequent his or her tomb and as a result there occurs favours, signs and miracles in response to people's prayer for their varied intensions. *Vox ecclesiae*: If the people's voice is so genuine, strong and credible, the Church takes up the cause and the competent authority, as mentioned above, after conducting a thorough inquiry, recognizes the people's voice officially and this is the *Church's voice*. As these both voices are human and hence could go wrong, the Church legislates that there should be a third voice as the final confirmation of one SG's sanctity, that is, the *vox dei*: If God performs a miracle through the intercession of a particular SG, as in the case of the miracle occurred at Cana at the intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary the Mother of God, then that is the the ultimate guarantee for the sanctity of the SG. In short, *God's voice* (*vox dei*) undersigns the *voice of the Church* (*vox ecclesiae*) that officially recognized *the voice of the people* (*vox populi*).

In the case of a confessor like, for example, St. Chavara Kuriakose Elias Chvara, St. Alphonsa and St. Euphrasia, Church requires one miracle for beatification and another for canonization that happens after beatification. In the case of martyrs, for example, Blessed Rani Maria, for the beatification no miracle is required but for canonization one miracle is needed that occurs after beatification.

4. Models of Holiness in SMMAC

The other articles of this special issue have specified some of the main achievements the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church accomplished in the past 25, that is, years after its elevation as Major Archiepiscopal Church in 1992. As in many other grounds, the Syro-Malabar Church is also flourishing in the number of declared saints, blessed and venerables. God helped the Syro-Malabar Church to

come out of her sterility as far as canonized sanctity was concerned by raising the very person who lamented about it, to the honours of the altar, first by declaring him a blessed along with St. Alphonsa FCC in 1986 and later a saint in 2014.¹⁰

4.1. Saints of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscoapl Church

At present the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church is blessed with three saints of her own Church *sui iuris*: St. Alphonsa FCC, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and St. Euphrasia Eluvathinkal. Saints are those who are canonized and thus their cult, in difference with the Blesseds, is expanded to the universal Church

4.1.1. St. Alphonsa FCC

St. Alphonsa who was born on 19 August 1910 was a religious sister belonging to the Franciscan Clarist Congregation. She died in holiness at the age of 36 with the fame of holiness. Without much delay the diocesan process for her beatification and canonization began. It was Cardinal Eugène Tisserant who inaugurated the process, on 2 December 1953. John Paul II declared *Venerable* on 9 July 1985 subsequent to due process. Venerable Alphonsa was beatified along with Kuriakos Elias Chavara on 8 February 1986 by the same pope at Kottayam, Kerala - India. Later at the completion of the miracle God worked through her intercession Pope Benedict XVI canonized her on 12 October 2008 at St. Peter's Square in Vatican. She is the first Indian and the Syro-Malabar woman to be canonized. The tomb of St. Alphonsa is at the St. Mary's Forane Church Bharanamganam. Her feast is celebrated on 28 July, the day of her birth into heaven.

4.1.2. St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara of the Holy Family

St. Chavara Kuriakose Elias was born on 10 February 1805 and died on 3 January 1871 at the age of 66 years. He was a diocesan priest and along with Palackal Thoma Malpan and Porukara Thoma Malpan He founded the first indigenous religious congregation *Carmelites of Mary Immaculate* (current name of the then TOCD) in 1831 at Mannanam. He was a great spiritual leader and an active social reformer. He, along with Fr. Leopold missionary from Italy, also founded a religious congregation for women, the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel

¹⁰Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Sr. Alphonsa FCC were declared blessed by St. John Paul II on 10 February 1986. Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara was, later canonized by Pope Francis on 23 November 2014 at St. Peter's Square in Vatican. He was the first Vicar General for the Oriental Catholics of the Verapoly Vicariat at that time.

(CMC). The process of his canonization officially in 1955 and on 7 April 1984 Pope John Paul declared him Venerable approving his heroic practice of virtues. Later the same Pope beatified him on 8 February 1986 at Kottayam along with Venerable Alphonsa FCC. At the completion of the process on the miracle God worked through the intercession of Blessed Chavara Pope Francis declared him sain on 23 November 2014 along with his spiritual daughter Blessed Euphrasia CMC at St. Peter's Square, Vatican. He is the first male saint from India. St. Chavara's feast is celebrated on 3 January in the Syro-Malabar Church.

4.1.3. St. Euphrasia of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

St. Euphrasia was born on 17 October 1877 and died on 29 August 1952. She was a religious sister belonging to the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel. The process of her canonization began officially on 27 August 1987. After due diocesan and Roman based process her practice of the virtues to a heroic degree was confirmed by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints and the same was approved by Pope John Paul II on 5 July 2002 conceding to her the title *Venerable*. At the completion of the Roman as well as diocesan process on the miracle that happened through her intercession the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints issued the decree and with Pope Benedict XVI's approval of the same Cardinal Varky Vithayathil declared her blessed at a celebration held in St. Antony's Forane Church, Ollur on 3 December 2006. The miracle that God worked through Blessed Euphrasia's intercession subsequent to her beatification was processed and verified by the CCS and the Holy Father approving the same, canonized her a saint for the universal Church on 23 November 2014 along with her founder St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara. St. Euphrasia is the third fruit of recognized holiness from the Syro-Malabar Church.

According to CCBI statistics there are around ten saints having connection with India which from all the three Churches *sui iuris* together.

3.2. Blesseds

Besides the saints at present the Indian Church in general and Kerala Church in particular is very rich with a number of Blesseds, Venerables and Servants of God. Blesseds are those who have been beatified and whose cult, in difference with that of saints, is limited to a diocese, a Church *sui iuris*, a region or to a nation as per the decree of beatification.

3.2.1. Thevarparampil Kunjachen

Blessed Kunjachen was born on 1 April 1891 died on 16 October 1973. The process of his beatification and canonization began in the eparchy of Pala on 11 August 1987 and after due process at the eparchial and Roman phase, the *positio* on the heroic practice of the virtues was prepared and submitted to the Congregation for further study and judgment in 1997. On 22 June 2004 Pope John Paul II signed the decree of the congregation approving the heroic practice of virtues by the Servant of God and thus he was given the title *Venerable*. Subsequent to the approval of the miraculous cure of the club foot of a boy through the intercession of the Venerable, Pope Benedict XVI signed the document and Mar Varkey Cardinal Vithayathil, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church celebrated the official beatification ceremony at Ramapuram where the Servant of God was born, worked, died and was buried, raising him to the honours of the altar.¹¹

3.2.2. Blessed Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan

She was born on 26 April 1876 and died on 08 June 1926. She was a religious sister belonging to the Holy Family Congregation. The process for her beatification and canonization began in the eparchy of Iringalakuda on 14 May 1983 and the eparchial process was concluded on 25 September 1983. At the Roman phase the *position* was prepared by the postulation and submitted to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints for its further study and judgment in 1997. St. John Paul II approved the judgment of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints on the heroic practice of the virtues by the Servant of God by signing the decree on 28 June 1999 and declared her Venerable.

The process on miracle happened to Mr. Mathew Pellissery through the intercession of Mariam Thresia took place in the Trichur eparchy from 28 April 1992 to 26 July 1993. Subsequent to the approval of the miracle by Pope John Paul II, on 27 January 2000, she was beatified on 09 April 2000 at St. Peter's Square Vatican. The cause is now progressing now towards its final stage, that is, canonization. The process on the miracle that happened after beatification is almost over and the medical board and the theological commission of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints have approved it in March

¹¹ Now for the canonization the cause is awaiting another miracle to happen through his intercession. On 16 October his feast is celebrated according to the Syro-Malabar Liturgical calendar.

2018 and October 2018 respectively. What is left for the imminent canonization is the approval of the same by the Holy Father. Thus hopefully without much delay she would turn out to be the fourth fruit and model of holiness that SMMAC contributes to the Universal Church.

3.2.3 Blessed Rani Maria FCC

Sr. Rani Maria was born on 29 January 1954 and was brutally stabbed to death on 25 February 1995 on account of her work among the poor educating them and enabling them to argue for their rights. The canonization process began in 2003 and Pope Francis on 23 March 2017 signed the decree of the congregation for the causes of the saints approving the martyrdom of Sr. Rani Maria. Thus she becomes the first martyr of the Syro-Malabar Church.¹² As is well known in the case of martyrs no miracle is required for the beatification. It is enough that the martyrdom of the Servant of God is proved beyond doubt and with moral certainty.

3.3. Venerables

The Venerable technically are those heroic practice of the theological as well as the cardinal virtues have been, subsequent to the endorsement by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, approved by the Roman Pontiff by signing the decree of the CCS. They cannot be given any cult.

3.3.1. Venerable Mathew Kadalikkattil

Fr. Mathew Kadalikkattil was born on 25 April 1872 at Edappady in Pala Diocese and died in 1935. As a devotee of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he considered "Spread of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was one of the most important aims of beginning the new congregation"¹³ and he is the founder of the Sacred Heart Congregation.

¹²Sr. Rani Maria is a member of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation who had been serving in North India amidst the poor for their uplift. (cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariam_Vattalil, accessed November 2017).

¹³ Fr. Mathew Kadalikkattil "was a fervent devotee of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and a man of compassionate heart." As a parish priest he was very much like the 'Cure De Ars' who spent long hours in the confessional and brought about changes in the lives of many sinners. Cf. <http://www.kadalikkattilachen.org/>

The process of his beatification started on 24 January 1989 in the eparchy of Pala. The Diocesan phase was closed on 12 January 1991. At the completion of the Roman phase Pope Benedict XVI approved the decree of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints on the heroic virtues of the SG and thus Fr. Mathew Kadalikkattil, was declared 'Venerable' on 27 June 2011.

3.3.2. Venerable Mar Thomas Kurialacherry

Mar Thomas Kurialachery was born on 14 Jan 1873 and died on 06 February 1925. Cause of beatification and canonization started in 1935 and was given the title Venerable at the completion of the Roman phase on heroic virtues in 2011 when Pope Benedict XVI signed the document prepared by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.¹⁴

3..3.3 Venerable Fr. Joseph Vithayathil

Fr. Joseph Vithayathil, born on 23 July 1865, was ordained priest in 1884, and died on 8 June 1964. His cause of canonization began on 18 May 2004 earning him the title Servant of God. At the completion of the Roman process on the virtues, Pope Francis honoured him with the title *Venerable* by signing the decree on the virtues on 14 December 2015¹⁵

3.3.4. Venerable Fr. Varghese Payappilly

Fr. Varghese Payappilly was born on 8 August 1876 at Thevara and died on 5 October 1929. His cause for beatification and canonization began on 25 August 2009 and the cause was officially instructed on 6 September 2009 giving him the title Servant of God. At the close of the Roman process on 14 April 2018 his heroic practice of the virtues was approved by the congregation for the Causes of the saints and with the signing of the document by Pope Francis, he was entitled Venerable.¹⁶

3.4. Servants of God from Syro-Malabar Church¹⁷ There are about twelve Servants of God in the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal

¹⁴ cf. https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Thomas_Kurialacherry#Cause_of_Canonization, accessed November 2018.

¹⁵ cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Vithayathil.

¹⁶Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varghese_Payyappilly_Palakkappilly.

¹⁷ No criterion is followed in the order of the Servants of God enlisted here - it is a random presentation. For some of the information here I have depended on the electronic media without any specific reference to them. This study does not claim to be an exhaustive one.

Church whose causes are actively progressing, either at the diocesan phase or at the Roman Phase.

3.4.1. Bp. Mathew Kavukatt

He was born on 17 July 1904 and died on 9 October 1969. As the process for beatification and canonization began in 1994 in the diocese of Changanachery he was known with the title Servant of God Bp. Mathew Kavukatt. He was the first bishop of Arch bishop of Changanachery.

3.4.2. Fr. Canisius Thekkekara

He was a professed member of the Congregation Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI). He was born on 12 May 1914 at Anandapuram and died on 21 December 1998. His mortal remains are at Ambazhakadu monastery chapel. His cause was officially initiated on 29 March 2014 granting him the title Servant of God.

3.4.3. Thomas Poothathil

He was a priest of the Kottayam eparchy. He was born on 24 October 1871 and died on 4 December 1943. He was the founder of the congregation, Sisters of St. Joseph of Kottayam eparchy. He was declared Servant of God on 26 January 2009.

3.4.5. Fr. Antony Thachuparampil

He was born on 8 December 1894 at Chalakudy and died on 9 June 1963. His concern and work with and for the poor earned him naturally the name "Missionary of Chalakkara." He was declared Servant of God in 2009.

3.4.6. Bro. Forthunatus Thanhäuser

About his it is said that he is born as a German in Berlin and died as an Indian in Kattapana. He was born on 27 February 1918. He was a member of the John of God congregation. At the request of Mar Mathew Kavukattu he came to India, Kattapana, especially for the health care of the poor there around. He established a hospital and founded the Congregation "Sisters of Charity of St. John of God" at Kattapana on 8 September 1977.

3.4.7. Augustine John Ukkann

He was born on 19 December 1880 and died on 13 October 1956 at the age of 75 years. He is the founder of the CSC congregation (1944). The cause for his beatification and canonization began in 2008 and the

Congregation for the Causes of the Saints approved his virtuous life on 21-12-2018.

3.4.8. Puthenparampil Thommahan

He was born on 8 July 1836 at Edathua. He is a model of sanctity from among the lay faithful. He was married and had children. The Franciscan Third Order founded by him speaks about his pious and religious life. His cause for canonization was initiated on 19 June 2012.

3.4.9. Msgr. Joseph Panjikkaran

He was born on 10 September 1888. His love and concern for the poor inspired him to found a hospital and later the religious congregation known as Dharmagiri Sisters or Medical Sisters of St. Joseph. He died on 4 November 1949. The diocesan process of his canonization began in the Kothamangalam eparchy on 18 July 2010. Now the cause is at the second phase in Rome under the study and judgment stage.

3.4.10. Maria Celine Kannanaikal UMI

She is originally a member of the Syro Malabar Church *suiiuris*. However, she entered a Latin Congregation to become a sister and hence she is Latin as well as Oriental. She was born on 13 February 1931. Became a professed religious in 1957. Thirty-five days of her profession she was called for her eternal reward. She had diabolic as well as divine or angelic visions, tests and ecstasies of mystical experience. Her cause of beatification and canonization was officially instructed on 29th July 2007. The diocesan process was concluded on 28th May 2014. Now the cause is at the Roman Phase.

3.4.11. Fr. Varkey Kattarath

He was born on 13 December 1851 and left for his eternal reward on 19 July 1927. He is the founder of the Vincentian Congregation (1904). His cause for canonization began officially on 24 October 1931.

3.4.11. Mother Mary Celine Payyappilly CMC

She was born on 10 December 1906. She was a professed member of the Congregation of Mother Carmel and its first Superior General (unified CMC). She was called for her eternal reward on 23 April 1993. Accepting the proposal to take up her cause for canonization, Cardinal George Alenchery initiated it on 9 April 1993.

3.4.12. Mother Mary Francesca de Chantal SABS

Sr. Chantal was born on 23 December 1880 and died on 25 May 1972. Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam initiated the diocesan process of her

cause for canonization on 4 August 2018 at Athirampuzha where her mortal remains rest. She is the co-foundress of the SABS congregation.

Conclusion

The Kerala Church was not, perhaps, familiar with promoting models of sanctity in the beginning. The reason for the lament of St. Chavara Kuriakose Elias was not on the lack of holy persons in the Church, instead he lamented the lack of canonized saints. Coincidentally it was his cause for beatification and canonization that, in a sense, gave inspiration and impetus to promote the causes of many others in the Church subsequently as we have seen. Venerable Chavara Kuriakose Elias and Sr. Alphosa were beatified by St. John Paul II in 1986, before Syro-Malabar Church became a legitimate Church *sui iuris*. It is to be noted that the canonization of all the three saints of the SMMAC occurred after the elevation of the Syro-Malabar Church to Major Archiepiscopal Status. Thus the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church is now having three saints, three Blesseds, twelve Servants of God.

Another fact that needs to be recognized and highlighted is that in many of the Syro-Malabar eparchies there are well-trained, or rather expert personnel to conduct the diocesan process of beatification and canonization. This is a fact that the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints also admit.

Besides the above-mentioned Servants of God from the Syro-Malabar Church there is one in the Syro-Malankara Church and around thirty Servants of God in the Latin Church in India whose causes of canonization are actively progressing at different levels of the process. Let these models of sanctity motivate and inspire the faithful to imitate the Heavenly Father's perfection and may their intercession be a help and consolation to many in need.