

**God Alone!**

St. Ann's Provincialate,  
Melamiyur  
04-08-2015

***“Be like those who are waiting for their Master to return, So that they  
May open the door for Him as soon as he comes and knocks.  
Blessed are those whom the Master finds alert when He comes “***

(Lk 12 : 35 – 36).



Dearest Sisters,

The departure of our dearest Sr.Zita from amidst us was like a ripe fruit, being knocked off by a swift breeze. The suddenness of her parting has left us shocked and pained. Yet, those of us who have witnessed her passing away are certain that she was like the faithful servant in the Gospel, whom the Master was pleased to find ready and watchful to open the door of her heart and let His Holy Will be done unto her. There was no resistance, not much struggle but a peaceful surrender to the inevitable.

It was July 26<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of our Glorious Patroness St. Ann, a day of Celebration for our Congregation. At St. Ann's Animation Center, Melamiyur, the day dawned bright and colorful with an aura of festivity. There was much joy and elation as the Sisters from the neighbouring communities gathered together for the morning prayer, exchanged greetings and participated in the concelebrated Holy Mass followed by the feastal lunch. Our dear Sr.Zita participated in all the events with joyful Spirit upto the evening prayer. At supper time she expressed certain feelings of uneasiness and requested permission to go to bed early and wanted to take rest. To our suggestion to go to a doctor she said, “ I will be alright. This happens now and then, when the sugar level rises”. Sr. Sheila, the Sister nurse administered to her the tablets for sugar and she felt better. At 9:00 P.M Sister complained of chest congestion and difficulty in breathing. Immediately she was taken to the Hospital at Chengalpattu. The doctor who examined her said that there was not much hope as her pulse rate had gone very low. Within few minutes we witnessed Sr.Zita, breathing her last, making her humble surrender to the Divine Will. It was 9:30 P.M on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

Sr.Zita (Irene) D'Souza, the daughter of Mr.Marcel and Mrs.Dulcine Fernandez was born on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1936 at Kemmannu, Mangalore. She entered the Novitiate on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1956, made her first profession on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1959 and final Commitment in 1965 at Secunderabad. Having obtained the Certificate of Secondary Grade training in 1961, Sr.Zita began her apostolic journey as a teacher in cordite factory school at Aruvankadu. After her final commitment in 1965, she was transferred to the community of Rampur as primary school teacher. In 1967, she was sent to the community at Sanquelim, Goa to teach in the parish school. In 1980, Sister was appointed as Junior Mistress at Tarnaka, 1983 shifted to St. Ann's Novitiate as Mistress of Juniors and Head Mistress of Primary School for Boys at

Bolarum. Transferred to St. Ann's Convent Aruvankadu in 1987 as Head Mistress of primary school and in 1996 was appointed as Animator of the community of Aruvankadu . In the year 2001 Sr.Zita accepted her transfer to Melamiyur, to teach English to the postulants and to carry out family apostolate, which she continued willingly and joyfully, till she received her final summon from her Divine Master to wind up her mission on earth on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

Sr.Zita was a zealous missionary at heart. The ardent zeal , that kindled within her at the time of first profession, to proclaim the Word of God and to make Christ known, kept her spirit alive and active all through the 56 years of her religious life. She never took a break from this Mission. Whichever community she had been placed, her primary endeavour was to make regular visits to all the families of the locality, instruct them in Catholic faith and tell them of the love of Jesus. Through her ministry, she has reconciled many broken relationships, settled family disputes, helped the unemployed youth to find jobs and prepared numerous persons to seek forgiveness for their sins. The people of Melamiyur, keep recounting her kind and compassionate ways as she had become part of their families and had taken great interest in their welfare during the 14 years of her stay at Melamiyur.

The Parish Priest of Vallam remarked "Sr.Zita was my de facto Assisstant". Acknowledging her goodness and genuine concern, some of the villagers have named their daughters Zita. She was fondly called "the Apostle of Melamiyur". Though not proficient in local language (Tamil), Sr.Zita had won over the hearts of people with the spiritual language of love and communicated to them in her own simple ways, more through action than words. She had treasured a Tamil Bible which she carried along with her during her family visits. She would make the people read passages from the Bible and would instruct them in the Way of the Lord and pray the Rosary with them and thus had drawn many souls closer to the Lord. This tamil Bible was brought to the Altar in a symbolic manner at the request of Rev.Fr.John Bosco, who officiated at the funeral Mass. In his homily, Fr.John Bosco narrated various incidents from the life of Sr.Zita focussing on her compassionate heart, love for the poor and her untiring effort to make Christ known to the people, Referring to the beatitudes in the Bible, he said that Sr.Zita is blessed as she has lived her life as a true witness of the beatitudes.

Sr.Leelamma, the Superior of Animation Center, in her introductory words recalled thus "Sr.Zita was the binding force of broken marriages, consoler of the weary and councillor of drug addicts and alcoholics. A saintly soul, born on the earth on the feast day of Bl. Mother Enrichetta and reborn in heaven on the feast day of our heavenly Mother St. Ann."

Sr.Eleanor who had Sr.Zita as her close confidante, writes thus

“ Dearest Sr.Zita! you are true to your name  
Zealous for the Word of God  
Indeed a consellor for young and old  
Tangible witness of compassion to the needy  
All surrendering to the Will of the Almighty.”

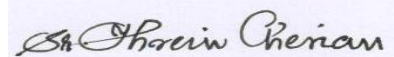
A pilgrimage to Italy was the long cherished desire of Sr.Zita.Her happiness knew no bounds when she got her passport in her hand.She had completed all preparations to undertake the journey including a write up for personal sharing with the group in Italy and was waiting eagerly for the 2<sup>nd</sup> August to take her flight.But God had mysterious plans for His loved one and diverted her flight to the eternal home in heaven, where she can view the whole world free of charge.

On hearing about her sudden demise,people from the surrounding places of Chengalpattu , from parishes, and from places she had worked earlier, came to pay their last respects.The funeral Mass was held on 28<sup>th</sup> July at 9:00 A.M which was participated by a good number of Sisters from Communities of Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.Her own Sister Jessy and 9 of her family members ,teachers from Institutions and large crowds of faithful from Chengalpattu and nearby parishes were also present.Her mortal remains are laid to rest in the Diocesan Cemetry, at Chengalpattu.

We offer our deepest condolences to Sr.Zita’s Sister, Sr.Rosanna of Central Province and all her family members.We thank them for the the blessings that our Congregation has received through the virtuous life of Sr.Zita. I wish to express my sincere thanks to all our dear Sisters, for their moral support and prayers. In a very special way I thank Sr.Mercy Sebastian, the Superior, and all the Sisters of the Provincialate, Sr.Leelamma, Sr.Giovanina and the members of Animation Center, Sr.Sheela, Sr.Fatima Philip and the Sisters of Madonna Villa, and all the Sisters of the neighbouring communities of Chengalpattu, Mambakkam and Mangadu who volunteered to keep vigil for two nights praying for the repose of the soul of Sr.Zita.

As we thank God for the dedicated life of Sr.Zita, we invoke His merciful love and compassion that she may be granted a share in the heavenly inheritance and that Sr.Zita may obtain blessings for all of us to live our life of Consecration fruitfully.

Yours Affectionately,



Sr.Theresa Cherian.  
Provincial Superior.