

MY LIFE WITH MOTHER MARY

INTRODUCTION

I am Sr. Pauline D'Silva fma. I am 69 years old. I was born and brought up in the Parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Chathiath, Ernakulam, Kerala State. Don Bosco Church, Vaduthala is a sub-station of the same parish. My love and devotion to Mother Mary began right from my childhood. My maternal grandparents were great devotees of Our Lady. They used to celebrate the month of the Rosary very fervently, decorating the altar with flowers and singing hymns to Mary. At the time of the birth of my younger brothers and sisters, I have seen my grandmother praying the Rosary with tears in her eyes, until the baby was born.

DEVOTION TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

My parents were very devoted to Our Lady and faithful to the daily Rosary. People in my neighborhood kept up fervent devotion to Mary. During the month of the Rosary each day, the rosary was prayed in one family where the rest of the families would gather. The month concluded with a solemn Mass in honour of Mary in the church. As a child, while waking up from sleep in the middle of the night, I have seen my mother kneeling down with outstretched arms praying the Rosary. My birthplace is surrounded by several Marian Shrines – Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Our Lady of Vallarpadam, Our Lady of Snow etc. We used to participate in the devotions in these places.

As we were closely linked to Don Bosco Church, we participated in the daily Mass and evening services which were well animated by the Salesians. All the Marian Feasts and the novena to Mary Help of Christians were well animated and made meaningful. The feast would end with a candle light procession in the campus. When the Salesians arrived there was a little statue of Our Lady called by the people "Thattazhathamma". It is still venerated and loved by the people. Some people regularly bring candle and oil to light near Mother Mary. Marian Sodality was there for women. ADMA started only now. I was animator of ADMA for one year. Our School teachers were members. We used to have meetings and I used to share with them about Marian devotion and Our Lady's interventions in my life.

The presence of Mary is so real in my home; she is tangibly present in our home and takes part in our home affairs. Our heavenly Mother is ever with all my family members and watches over us, helps us, guides us and corrects us when needed. She is alert at all our spiritual and material needs. The following narrative is a proof of this reality.

My Sister Treasa's marriage was delaying. She started a novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. Within the novena days itself her marriage was fixed. After marriage she did not have a child. She again had recourse to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. After attending the novena she used to go to the picture of Our Lady and say "Give that child in your hand to me." A girl child was born on the birthday of Our Lady and she was named Maria Venessa. Before taking her home from the hospital she first went to church and offered her to Our Lady. Once Treasa saw Our Lady in her sleep calling out to her and telling her "Your children are in danger. Pray" Soon her elder daughter travelling in a bus to college had an accident and her fallopian tube was injured. She had to undergo a surgery. At the eve of the surgery Our Lady again called my sister and said the girl will be cured. Without the removal of the fallopian tube the girl was completely cured.



My grand nephew Leon was born pre-mature. He is now studying in LKG. He had a problem with his eyes and could not see properly. So he was taken to doctor and started treatment. After returning from the first visit to the Doctor he went to sleep in the afternoon. When he woke up he told my sister Gladys, Jesus' Mamma told me I need not go again to Doctor. My eyes are alright. My sister thought this is his imagination. So she asked him about it after 4 days. The boy said the same thing. Then he ran and took a small statue of Our Lady of Velankanni standing in a boat and said. This Mamma only told me I am alright. After few months I went home. I too asked him about it. He said the same thing. When the Doctor tested him on the appointed day he found him well. He told them there is no need of any treatment as he is perfectly alright. Then we watched him and it was true. Last January his mother got Covid and was in isolation. Missing the mother for 3 days the boy took a picture of Thattazhathamma (Our Lady of Vaduthala Don Bosco) and ran to the mother and put it on her saying Jesus Mamma will heal you.

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF MARIAN DEVOTION

When I was in another community in Thope, Kerala I was supervising the tailoring school of the Salesians. There was a poor girl attending the class. When she has no money, she would not come to class. I used to go in search of her and call her to come back to attend the class. She was very grateful. When I was transferred from there, one day, this girl came with her husband to wish me and presented me a little statue of Our Lady of grace. When I went for a retreat to Potta, I carried this statue in my bag with the intention of getting it blessed. During the counseling session the counselor told me that I have a statue of Our Lady in my bag and she sees grace flowing from it. She told me never to give it up to anyone but keep it with me always. I still have the statue with me.

A few years ago I visited Erumeli, Kerala, where oil was flowing from a statue of Mother Mary. When I reached there I too saw the strange phenomenon. I asked the family to give me little oil. She gave me just a few drops. On my return while going for family visits, I used to take this oil with me. I went to a family where there was a 9-year-old girl whose kidneys had failed. Her body was swollen. Doctor was doing a series of checkups before sending her to Trivandrum Medical College for treatment. She was in Std. IV. I asked this girl, Sneha, do you believe that Our Lady can cure you. She said yes. I said Our Lady has healed you. Then I put a drop of the oil I had on her tongue. I asked the family to read the Bible and pray the Rosary daily and keep their hand over her and pray. When they went for the next check up the Doctor asked them. Where did you take the girl for treatment? They said nowhere. We prayed to Our Lady. The Doctor said she is completely healed.

A 60 year old fisher man who was a drunkard, whose liver was affected and who could neither eat nor sleep was cured with the oil. Doctor had given up hope and told the family not to bring him to hospital any more. The family members were in tears. I asked this man whether he believes that Our Lady can cure him. He said yes. I put the remaining oil into his tongue and said Our Lady has cured you. I told the family to read Bible, pray the Rosary and all together to pray over him daily. After some days I visited his family. I did not find anyone in the house. I enquired about him to a woman. She said that he is completely all right. He has gone to the seashore. I send word for him, spoke to him, and found him completely cured.



Another extraordinary phenomenon is the Jasmine perfume I get whenever Mother Mary visits me or after I pray to her. One afternoon I felt very tired and so I went to rest for an hour. As I was lying down a voice asked me “Why can’t you teach in an elementary school?” I replied automatically “I am not trained for that”. Then again, I was asked, “What do you want?” I replied, “I want Holy Spirit”. The voice did not speak any more. I feel it was Mother Mary as there was perfume of Jasmine flowers.

From my aspirantate and later as a sister I am used to hearing a woman’s voice, during my sleep calling me by my name ‘Pauline’. But the voice would not speak anything further. Later during a charismatic retreat at Potta, a counsellor asked me whether I hear someone calling me during sleep. I said yes. I was told that it was Our Lady awakening me to get up and pray. I asked “What prayer should I say”. I was told to say any prayer for many intentions, preferably at 3 a.m. Once as I was to travel the following day I decided not to wake up to pray that night as I needed to sleep. But during the night I heard the voice calling me “Pauline”. I turned to the other side and slept. The voice called me from that side. I turned again to the other side and slept. The voice called me again from that side. So I got up and prayed. I shared with the sisters that the voice is calling me “Pauline” and not “Sr. Pauline”. From that day onwards the voice started calling me “Sr. Pauline”. Often this happens when some negative things would happen to me the following day, either to my people or to those connected with me. Thanks to Mother Mary for her caring intervention.

When Sr. Mercy Ittoop FMA was ailing with cancer she had a great desire to honour Our Lady. She wanted to prepare a room full of flowers and keep Our Lady in the midst of it and pray the Rosary as a community. As she was unable to do it herself, she asked me to do it for her. I willingly did it for her and on 15th August I conducted a Rosary service as a community there. I asked Superior to crown Our Lady. Later during a charismatic counseling the person asked me if I ever honoured Mary and crowned her. I said yes. Then she told me that Our Lady is pleased with that gesture. She told me that she sees Our Lady with a crown and shawl of the national flag ready to honour me. Thanks to Mother Mary.

MY MARIAN HEART IN A SENTENCE

Mary is my Mother and my Family’s Mother. We run to her in all our needs. I keep praying the Rosary through the day. I do not count. I pray as much as possible. When I need graces, I keep flowers at her feet as a request. She loves us as we are. We can never love her enough. Our earthly mother passed away at the age of 65.



FOTOGRAFIE

