



MISSIONARIES OF FAITH



Supporting Diocese and parishes whenever help is needed in Mission

MISSIONARIES OF FAITH: Pictured in St Catherine of Siena Church in Birmingham are, left to right, Father Prabhakar Pamisetty from St George's in Worcester, Father Subba Rao Perumalla, from St John the Baptist in Tamworth, Father Srinu Bonthu from our Lady of Perpetual Succour in Birmingham and Father Jagadishmario Kurapati from St Catherine of Siena in Birmingham and Ss John and Martin in Balsall Heath.

On most Sunday afternoons four Archdiocesan priests of Indian heritage gather together at St Catherine of Siena church in inner-city Birmingham to share a sense of community and deepen their faith (Covid regulations allowing, of course).

They have spiritual discussions, celebrate Mass, exchange ideas, chat about their respective churches across the Archdiocese and even cook together. The four devotees are members of the religious congregation of Missionaries of Faith and they are serving their vocation in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Fr Jagadishmario ("Mario") Kurapati, Fr Prabhakar Pamisetty, Fr Srinu Bonthu and Fr Subba Rao Perumalla all originally served as priests in St Peter's Province in India, where they were based in the city of Eluru, Andhra Pradesh.

It was there that they first pursued their calling as Missionaries of Faith, a religious family established by Mother Anna Maria Andreani.

She was a Carmelite nun in Italy, also known as Magdalene the Divine Martyr, who in 1982 set up a small sacerdotal community where an intense life in religious consecration aimed to help priests in crisis with a lifestyle of deep faith and fraternal reception.

Within 25 years her congregation had been

extended as far and wide as the Philippines, Samoa, Ecuador and India as priests went out to answer the need for mission in remote parishes.

The first of the four Fathers to arrive in England from the subcontinent was Fr Mario, responding in 2014 to a request for help by the Diocese and with permission from his order. On arrival he worked as an assistant in St Christopher's parish to Fr Dominic Chukka, who had acted as a link between the Diocese and the Missionaries of Faith superiors and who frequently attends the "community house" meetings at St Catherine's.

"I am learning so many things about the English language and culture – everyone was so generous to me when I arrived in Birmingham it felt like my home town."

Fr Subba Rao Perumalla

Fr Mario is now parish priest at St Catherine of Siena church and Ss John and Martin church in Birmingham.

"As Missionaries of Faith our charism is to help the Diocese and parishes whenever they need our help in Mission," he said.

"Alongside my priestly duties I teach and give sacraments in four schools and I am a school chaplain."

Fr Srinu, who arrived in England in 2017 and is priest at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in Rednal, said: "We practise complete obedience to our order and we never say 'no' when we are asked to travel anywhere in the world to take up a ministry.

"My evangelisation includes work in schools and at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital"

Fr Prabhakar, assistant priest at St George's church in Worcester who arrived in England in 2018, said: "As well as my church duties I have also given sacraments to the housebound and I am helping with sacramental activities in the parishes"

Fr Subba Rao, assistant priest at St John the Baptist in Tamworth who arrived in England in 2019, said: "I am learning so many things about the English language and culture – everyone was so generous to me when I arrived in Birmingham it felt like my home town."