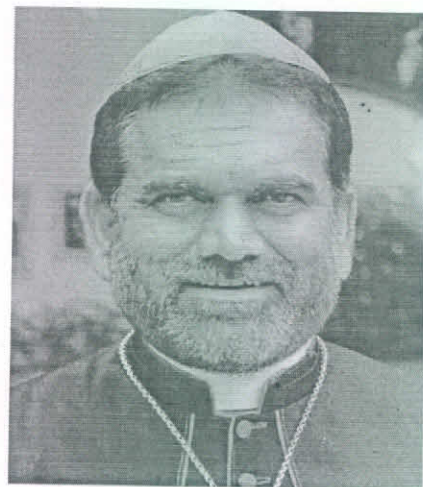


'Covid' Dealt A Deathblow To Young Bishop Basil Bhuriya Of Jhabua

March 8, 1956 to May 6, 2021

Bishop Basil Bhuriya, third bishop of Jhabua Diocese died due to cardiac arrest in St. Francis Hospital at 1:15 pm on May 6, 2021. He was re-admitted to St. Francis Hospital on the morning May 6, from Choiteram Hospital for nursing care and treatment. The end came rather suddenly.

Basil Bhuriya was born in the village of Bara-Gosiliya of the Panchkui parish on March 8, 1956. He was the eldest of eight children of late Mr. Yohan Dhansingh Bhuriya and Mrs. Agnes Dodiya. He has five brothers and two sisters. His initial schooling till the 5th standard was at St. Theresa's Primary School Panchkui.



As a young student of sixth standard, he joined St. Thomas Minor Seminary Mhow and completed his High School at Rajeshwar Vidyalaya Mhow in 1969. Following which, he proceeded to Catholic Ashram Palda for his juniorate and graduate studies at Indore. From there, he went to Catholic Ashram Khurda for his novitiate. He took his first vows on June 11, 1980.

He went on for his philosophical studies to Gyan Deepa Vidyapeeth Pune. After his philosophical studies, he spent a year as regent at Barwani. After a year, he went back to Divine Word Seminary Pune for his theology and while there took his final vows on June 12, 1985. On successfully completing his studies, he was ordained a priest on May 2, 1986 by Bishop George Anathil SVD at his home parish, Panchkui.

He started his pastoral activities as Assistant at Muvalia, Panchmahal from 1987-88. After a year, he was transferred to St. Thomas Minor Seminary, Mhow as prefect of students for a term. In 1992 to 1997, he served the same institution as its Rector. Following this, Basil was once again given a pastoral appointment, this time in charge of St. George church, Dhar. He served here till 2002. During this period, he also served as one of the members of the SVD Indore District Council.

In 2002, Jhabua was bifurcated from Indore Diocese and he moved into Thandla as the director of Vishwa Jyoti Hostel for students. He was also given an assistant and so, during this term, he was given additional responsibility as parish priest of Badi Dhamni. This was in view of SVD INC taking full responsibility of Badi Dhamni for missionary-pastoral activities. In 2008, he became for a term District Superior for the SVD Jhabua District.

On the following year, he was given the major responsibility as the parish priest of the largest parish, Thandla. He continued to be the parish priest of Thandla till 2015. During this period, he also served as INC Provincial Consultor for almost two terms from 2011. In the second term that began in 2014, he was also the Admonitor of the Province. From 2011 for a term, he also served as the Mission Secretary of the Province.

However, multi-tasking within Province came to an end when on July 18, 2015 Pope Francis chose him to be successor of Bishop Devprasad Ganawa as the Bishop of Jhabua Diocese. Bishop Devprasad Ganawa was transferred as the Bishop of Udaipur Diocese in Rajasthan. Bishop elect Basil Bhuriya was consecrated Bishop of Jhabua on October 10, 2015 by Nuncio, Archbishop Saldore Pinocchio. From then till his demise, he was the Bishop of Jhabua.

During his short period of administration, Bishop Basil concentrated his attention on education, health and social development of the poor parishioners. He also saw to it that several old buildings were repaired and maintained, and started constructions of new church at Rajgarh and a new cathedral church at Jhabua by demolishing the one that was almost hundred years old. For the renewal and consolidation of the faith of the local people, he paid special attention by promoting pilgrimages to important shrines in India and also within the Diocese. Through his contacts, he was able to organize plastic surgery camp successfully at Jeevan Jyoti Hospital by doctors from Germany.

He became a victim to Covid. Initially, he did not have any serious symptoms and was locally treated at Meghnagar. He was admitted to St. Francis Hospital Indore on April 5, 2021. His treatment was progressing well but due to non-availability of oxygen, he was shifted to T. Choiteram Hospital, Indore. At the end of the treatment, RTPC test indicated, he had negative symptoms of Covid.

However, Covid had seriously affected almost ninety percent of his lungs due to which, his Oxygen level was continuously going down and so, he was in the ICU and put on ventilator. Since, there was not much improvement and meanwhile, Bishop Basil expressed his wish to be shifted to St. Francis Hospital, where the supply of Oxygen was now better. In consultation with doctors at Choiteram, he was shifted to St. Francis on the morning of May 6, 2021.

Basil spent a simple, God centred life throughout. At the same time, he was a community person and loved the Society of the Divine Word and its members dearly. He was quite broad-minded and encouraged everyone to have a wider vision of life. As a formator for several years, he facilitated several young persons to become mature religious and priests. He was also very pastoral minded and spoke and did always in favour of the people among whom he worked. He was also quite approachable. These qualities were quite visible when he was working in Thandla. He was a mature personality, preferred to deal directly with people, in a sense, a genuine person without any sham or pretence. The diocese has lost a young dynamic pastor and the INC a promising confrere, Bishop!

His funeral was organized at the Holy Spirit church Palda on the following day. Archbishop Leo Cornelio SVD was the main celebrant. Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal SVD gave a short homily. Introduction to the Eucharist was given by Msgr Peter Kharadi, Vicar General of Jhabua Diocese. Other concelebrants were: Provincial Joemon SVD and Vice-Provincial John Wakhla along with a few priests from Jhabua and Indore Dioceses. A limited number of SVD brothers and S.Sp. S sisters were also present. After the funeral service in the Holy Spirit church, his mortal remains were buried in the Garden of Resurrection, Catholic Ashram Palda. The funeral service was telecast on line through the services of Fr. Antonykannu and his team.