

Fr. Arokia Sebastian Peter, sss

**SSS Community of
Siolim
India**



BRIEF CV

Father Arokia was born on 20 April 1975 in Coimbatore, India. He made his first profession on 1^{er} May 2013 and was ordained a priest on 3 July 2020 in Salem. He has been a provincial consultor since 2022 in the Province of Kristu Jyoti.

Father Arokia shares his experience based on the summary of the Congregation's acronym SSS: Spirit - Sacrament - Service.



Dear Fr General and His Team, Capitulars of the chapter
and My dear friends in the Eucharistic Lord,

On this day of prayer and reflection, we are called to reflect on the central theme of the Chapter: **SSS Religious: together, faithful witnesses of the Eucharistic mission**. I am indeed feel glad and privileged to share my experience with the Rule of Life. I shall emphasize more on the aspects of the Eucharistic mission, in view of my three years of intense priestly life based on this dimension.

I would like to summarize my reflection based on the experience with the Rule of Life in 3S or triple SSS.

The first 'S' stands for "SPIRIT"

the second 'S' stands for "SACRAMENTS"

and the third 'S' stands for "SERVICE".

SPIRIT

The word Spirit here means the ‘Spirit’ of God that animates us to practice the ‘Spirit’ of our congregation. Rule of Life (I.4) says that “*We cannot live the Eucharist unless we are animated by the spirit which led Christ to give his life for the world*”. Therefore, it is very important for us to allow the Spirit of God to prompt us, in order to listen to the promptings of the spirit you need to spend some quiet time in personal prayer which I have experienced in the prayer before the Blessed sacrament.

Spirit is indeed the breath of God and that reminds me of my struggle for breath during Covid 19 pandemic. During the second wave of covid, I was tested positive and was admitted in a hospital in Delhi. My lungs were affected and I had oxygen support for a few days. During those days of fear, anxiety and loneliness, it was the Spirit of God and the Eucharistic presence of the Lord that gave me strength, courage and hope.

I was reminded of the beautiful story that we find in the book of Daniel. King Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon. He made a golden statue and commanded that all people must bow down before the golden statue and worship it. People, out of fear, obeyed what he said. But there were three young men. They were firm in their conviction to worship only their True God and would never bow before an idol. The angry king ordered that the three youth men be thrown into the fiery furnace and the fire of the furnace was increased seven times hotter than the usual. After few minutes, when the king looked into the furnace, he saw not just three men but four men and they were all unharmed in the furnace and the Word of God says the fourth man had the appearance of a god or the Son of God. So God is with us not just in our good times but also in our bad times and that was my experience too as I spent my days in Covid-19 pandemic.

It is only when we are open to the summons of the Spirit, we can pay attention to the needs of the human family and make our communities places of prayer, reconciliation and service. And so let us be open to the Spirit of God that we may follow the spirit of the congregation.

SACRAMENTS

“Formed by the Sacrament of the New Covenant, which frees us from the domination of sin, we commit ourselves to building up the Body of Christ”, says the Rule of Life no (I.3).

The central theme of the chapter is **“SSS Religious: together, faithful witnesses of the Eucharistic Mission”**.

Our ideal is to live the mystery of the Eucharist fully and to make known its meaning, so that Christ’s reign may come to the glory of God and be revealed to the world. (I.1)

We seek to understand all human reality in the light of the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the life of the Church. We discern in this sacrament a call to share in the life and mission of the Lord, and we give priority to activities that manifest the riches and demands of the Eucharistic mystery in all its dimensions. (cf. General Statutes 34.02)

So, the sacrament of the Eucharist must urge us to build up the Body of Christ by making ourselves available for the celebration of the sacraments in the parishes as well.

While our mission extends to the whole Church it is carried out within the pastoral program of a diocese or region. We need to work in close union with bishops, priests and laity, eager to offer our own particular contribution of spiritual life and apostolic initiative.

While living my first two years of priesthood and serving as the minister at Catholic Bishops Conference of India in Delhi, I tried to be available for the parish in all ways possible. I made myself available for the celebration of the Eucharist, listening to confessions of the people in the parish. After a year, I could hear parish fathers and people telling me that I was like one of the assistants in the parish as they have seen very often serving at the parish. Their appreciation and gratitude encouraged me to grow in my pastoral work especially in celebration of the sacraments. So I try my best, never to say ‘No’ to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

SERVICE

When our Eucharistic Lord proclaimed the New Covenant by the gift of his Body and Blood to his disciples, it was out of love that the Lord gave himself up. Sharing in this gift of himself to us, we place ourselves at the service of the Kingdom. (I.4)

Code of Canon law, 607, states that religious life is a call to be the sign of the kingdom of God.

As mentioned in Rule of life (I.2), our Founder was convinced that a life cannot be fully Eucharistic unless it is consecrated to both God and our fellow human beings, and so he left us with an example of contemplation and apostolic activities. His intense life of adoration, his mission centred on the Eucharist and his constant efforts to lead the people to adoration of the Lord in the setting of solemn exposition, his activity in the service of all, with a preference for priests and the poor, indeed his whole life, witnesses to the gift of himself to Christ.

Firstly, we need to place ourselves at the service of parishes and communities: We need to make our parishes into authentic communities shaped by the Eucharist, which is the source and submit of their life. They shall be: places of proclamation, places of prayer, places of sharing and fellowship, places of freedom and human development and moreover, the living of the Gospel, Eucharistic adoration and festive celebration. (IV.41)

Secondly, we need to place ourselves at the service of priests: We recognize the importance of the mission of priests. We seek to share with them a life of faith, prayer and friendship and exchange pastoral plans and experiences. We place ourselves at their service by offering hospitality, animation and formation, encouraged in this by the example of Father Eymard who used to say, “I would leave everything for priests.” (IV.44)

Thirdly, we need to place ourselves at the service of our brothers and sisters:

Our rule of life admonishes us saying, *“We become witnesses of Christ by making ourselves servants of our brothers and sisters. The Lord calls us to live his Passover day by day in this way”*. (II.7)

It further says, *“To celebrate the “Supper of the Lord” in truth is to place ourselves at the service of others, as the Lord Jesus showed by washing the feet of his disciples.”* (IV.27)

United in the Spirit with those who are poor and weak, we need to oppose everything which degrades human dignity and we proclaim a more just and brotherly world as we await the coming of the Lord. (I.3)

I conclude my sharing with the words of St. Theresa of Avila, *“Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”*



May St. Peter Julian Eymard and Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament intercede for us and may the blessings of the Almighty God be with us always!

Siolim, August 31st 2023