

Bio of Fr. Sebastian Myladiyil, SVD

I was born on May 26, 1971 in the Southern State of Kerala, India. (I became a US citizen in 2009). I have five sisters and two brothers. My parents Philip & Leelamma have been married for 54 years. I am truly blessed with a wonderful and loving family. I am number 5 of 8 children. After the completion of my high school I joined the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). The journey to priesthood was rather long, 12 years of formation. I was ordained in my home church parish on April 19, 1999.

During my formation in the seminary, I dreamed of working in Brazil. However, I was appointed to the Southern Province in USA. There were 28 in my class and 16 of us are currently working in 12 countries. Along with my classmate Fr. Jaison George (pastor of Holy Ghost in Opelousas, LA), I came to USA on the 9th of August 1999. I served as associate pastor at St. Edward/St. Jude Church in New Iberia for 2 years and then was assigned as pastor of St. Rose de Lima Catholic Church in Bay St. Louis, MS.

I came to St. Rose in June of 2001. Soon I fell in love with the congregation and the community. As Hurricane Katrina brought in insurmountable pain and suffering to all, St. Rose community responded immediately in ways that were possible by opening our school as a distribution center and as a shelter. We established St. Rose Outreach and Recovery to coordinate our efforts in an effective manner. With the help of over 5000 volunteers we were able to help with repairs and rebuilding of over 500 homes. I have been inspired by the dedication of so many people in the community and from across the nation, who stepped out of their comfort zone to make a difference. As contributions and volunteers dwindled, we ended our rebuilding efforts in December 2009.

Along with my pastoral duties, I began attending classes to complete a Master's degree from Notre Dame in New Orleans, LA. I completed the degree in Moral Theology in 2010 and I knew time had come to move into a new parish. In July, 2010 I was appointed to Immaculate Conception Church in Liberty, TX. It was a multi-cultural community (English and Spanish) of about 1100 families. Along with the Pastoral duties, I took classes at Lamar University and obtained a Master's Degree in Counseling. Currently, I also serve as Vice Provincial of the Southern Province of the Society of the Divine Word.

I have published two books. My first book is titled *His Instruments – If God Could Use Them, He Can Use Us*. It is a series of meditation and inspirational material based on the Biblical characters. My second book is *Blown Together – Trials and Miracles of Katrina*. This book powerfully captures many powerful stories of miracles in the midst of trials.

I am honored to be assigned as pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Lafayette, a community of great importance and significance to all SVDs. I am humbled to know that I will be following the footsteps of many great SVD priests (including Fr. James, my mentor) and many Holy Family sisters who ministered at the church and Immaculate Heart of Mary School. I am excited to be with you and work with you as we continue our faith journey. May the good Lord bless us, our families, and our community.