

FR. ABRAHAM PUTHUMANA, SJ (92/72)

Fr. Abraham Puthumana was born on 31 July 1933 in Ponkunnam, Kerala. His parents were Mr. Philip and Annamma. He entered the Society of Jesus on 20 June 1953 and was ordained a priest on 09 June 1966, and took his final vows on 15 August 1971. He lived a healthy and dynamic life all through his life. Towards the end of his life, he retired to Xavier Bhawan in the year 2018. One day suddenly his blood pressure went down, he felt very weak, and he was rushed to the Holy Family Hospital, Patna. He was in the intensive care unit for one day and went to his eternal reward on 09 February 2026. He had his primary and secondary education in his native town of Ponkunnam and had his higher secondary education from Thevara, Kochi. After entering the Society, he took his graduation from St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. He did his B. Ed from Regional College and M. Ed from M S University, Baroda. He had his Philosophy studies at JDV, Pune, and Theology studies at West Baden College, USA. After his studies, he served the Society of Jesus as Co-Pastor, Hostel Superintendent, Administrator, Superior, Rector, Vice-Principal, Principal, Provincial, and Assistency Delegate for Formation.

Fr. Abraham Puthumana was called affectionately as Abe by the Jesuits. He was loved and respected as Superior, Provincial, Educator, and Spiritual Guide. Large number of Jesuits, Priests, Religious Sisters, and Catholics from Patna and other parts of Bihar attended his funeral service. The main Celebrant at the Eucharist was Most Rev. Sebastian Kallupura, Archbishop of Patna Archdiocese. Most Rev. William D' Souza, SJ, the Emeritus Archbishop of Patna Archdiocese, Fr. Vimal Kishore, Provincial of Patna, along with a large number of Jesuits and diocesan Priests concelebrated with Archbishop Sebastian Kallupura. In his Introduction, Fr. Vimal Kishore gave a short account of Abe's life, studies, and apostolic activities and highlighted his important contribution in giving a new vision and direction for the Province. Fr. Joe Kunnumpuram in his homily emphasized Abe as a man of hope for the future and encouraged new creative ventures for the Province. Archbishop Kallupura recalled the wonderful collaboration Abe fostered between the Jesuits and the Archdiocese. Abe's nephew, Mr. Stephen Puthumana, gave a few words of thanks and told the congregation how his family supported him in his vocation to be a Jesuit. At the end of the Eucharist, Fr. Jose Thayil thanked the congregation, relatives and friends, medical personnel, and all who collaborated in the funeral service.

Abe was a man deeply committed to social justice, option for the poor, and liberation of the poor and marginalized. This deep commitment found expression in the new education policy of Patna Province 1979, while he was the Provincial. This gave a new hope and a new vision for the Patna Province. The policy envisaged opening our schools to the poor and the marginalized, encouraging local language and culture, and aligning with the government education policy. This new policy revolutionized the very culture of Patna Province from a colonial mind-set to a more authentic Indian culture and ethos. The ripples of 1979 Patna Education Policy have gone far beyond Patna Province to other Provinces of various Religious Congregations and Dioceses in India.

Later Abe was appointed the Director of Atmadarshan, Centre for Counselling and Spirituality. Before he took up the assignment, he visited the Department of Spirituality at Loyola University Chicago, many other spirituality centers in America, Europe, and India and set up a unique spirituality centre in Patna, called Atmadarshan. He opened up new experiments and in-depth experiences in Counselling and Spirituality in Atmadarshan. He initiated Inner Processing, Emotional Healing, and Empowerment before going into any retreat. He supported the starting of major holistic programs like Atmadarshan Experience lasting four months and other integrated programs and outreach programs in India and abroad. Abe, Atmadarshan staff, and Resource Persons worked tirelessly for many years for conducting Atmadarshan Experience and other Programs, appreciated by participants from all over India and abroad.

As Director, Superior, Rector, Principal, Provincial, and ADF, Abe helped thousands of priests, religious, and lay people with his wisdom and knowledge, encouraging words, counselling, spiritual direction and retreats. In his presence, people were challenged to a new hope, a new vision in their thinking, feeling, and acting for the spread of the Kingdom of Christ. His love for the poor and the marginalized was outstanding. He envisaged a new world order based on love, freedom, fellowship and justice, heaven on earth. Truly, Abe can say proudly, "I have fought the good fight; I have completed the work the Lord has given to me to do; now the Lord will reward me with eternal glory in the presence of God."

Fr. Joe Kunnumpuram, SJ