

Father Anthony Saji VC

Father Anthony Saji is a priest in the Indian Vincentian Congregation (VC). He was born the first of four children in India on the 1st of May 1977 to a devout Catholic family and felt called to be a priest since his childhood. His vocational path was difficult with a lot of rejections and obstacles but with God's help and blessings he persevered and fulfilled his desire.

In 1999 he began to study Philosophy in Bangalore, India, and in 2002 he was sent to the Vincentian Congregation's Mission in East Africa which was developed by Father Joseph Bill. He studied Theology at one of the most renowned universities in Africa, the 'Tangaza College' in Nairobi (CUEA). Students of more than 77 nationalities studied there, which gave him a wonderful opportunity to experience different cultures and worldviews as a seminarian.

After his priestly ordination on December 29, 2006, he was sent to Entebbe, Uganda, where Father Joseph Bill became his superior. After the death of Father Bill in March 2008, his provincial appointed him as successor to Father Bill to continue the worldwide movement of annual retreats where people from all walks of life are welcomed.

Since April 2008 Father Anthony has travelled all over the world giving five-day silent spiritual renewal and healing retreats, as well as popular missions and special youth programs. Because of health concerns, he primarily resided in Uganda from 2014 to 2018, during which time he oversaw operations at the Vincentian Retreat and Prayer Center in Entebbe. In addition to the pastoral and preaching ministry, he taught in the minor seminary in Mitemula-Masaka and preached numerous retreats all over the country, especially for bishops, priests, and various religious orders.

Since February 2021 he has been the Retreat Director of the Vincentian Prayer House in Lavington-Nairobi in Kenya. More than 3,500 people come each Saturday to the prayer day and between 1,000 and 1,400 participants attend the monthly retreat. Further to this appointment he is also the spiritual father of the major seminarians of the Uzima Vincentian Study House in Ngong.

The core aim of the retreats is to guide individuals towards a conversion to a life centred on devotion to God, to lead a life based on the Holy Sacraments and Holy Scripture, and to apply the ten commandments to modern-day living.

Many attendees of the retreats throughout the world testify that they have been transformed by the love of Jesus which they experienced through Father Anthony's teaching and his love for people. They found lasting inner peace and the way back to confession after a long time of neglecting their spiritual life. Some learned forgiveness, others to accept their illnesses and many found healing for their addictions and both psychological and physical illnesses.

Even as a new addition to the priesthood Father Anthony possessed a diverse and rich life experience. He had encountered a variety of hardships throughout his life: poverty, hunger, and toil (at the age of twelve, he had to provide for his family for five years), the illness of his mother, and other significant challenges.

Despite all this, he naturally radiates the joy and love of Christ and illustrates how happily you can live with Jesus here on earth and he earnestly desires to share his life-transforming experience of God's presence with others.