



MSGR. FREEMAN

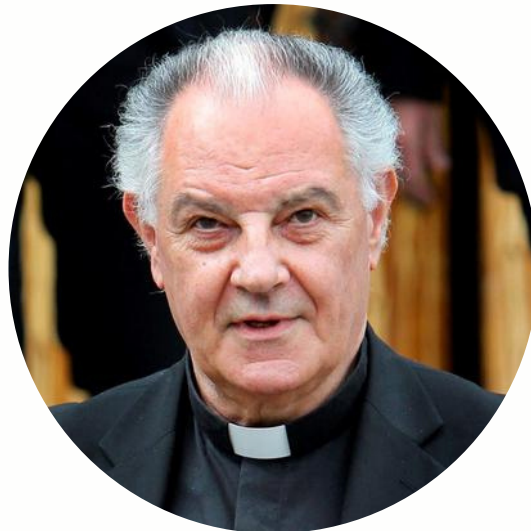


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"KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK"

Union of Catholic Apostolate

BISHOP SÉAMUS FREEMAN



TRIBUTE TO A TRUE PALLOTTINE

FR. JACOB NAMPUDAKAM SAC

Though the news of the loss of a dear one is always very sad,
some are particularly painful.

When I received the information from the Irish Provincial, Fr. Liam, about the end of the earthly sojourn of our dear confrere, Bishop Sèamus Freeman, so many memories passed through my mind. After God, St. Vincent Pallotti, and my mother, the Pallottine who has most influenced and shaped my life was, as I always called him, Fr. James Freeman. I would consider him with great respect a true friend.

When I reached Rome for studies in Spirituality and Psychology in 1987, it was he, as General Consultor and Director of our International College, who guided me to study at the Gregorian University. He appreciated this course, as he himself had done his Psychology studies in the U.S.A.

After I returned to India in 1992, he appointed me as one of the members of the General Secretariat for Apostolate; and in 1999, also as General Secretary for Formation, an office that I held until elected Rector General in 2010. The support that he gave to this Secretariat has been vital in creating the sensibility to Pallottine formation and international collaboration. He gave us the permission and impulse to move out to the Provinces and Regions to organize courses. The horizon of the Society was widened!

After his elected General Secretary resigned in 2001, he again turned to me; and it was the friendship with Fr. James that prompted me to accept, and return to Rome with this new position. I was very sure that I wasn't meant to be a Secretary, and wanted to go back to India after 3 years. But God is a God of surprises. I had the best time working with him.

Fr. Freeman had the universal spirit of our Founder. Even after tedious travels and meetings, he always had the right message, expressed with great calmness and dignity. He could address any group and give the most edifying message.

I have heard that he was an excellent and very competitive sports person. He was hard working, and seriously committed to his offices. He had visions and dreams. The approval of the Union and its Statutes happened so much due to his love for the Union; "the UAC is the child of Fr. Freeman", as so many of our confreres say. Besides facing the unceasing challenges of the Society, one of the main focuses of his mandates as Rector General was the pontifical approval of the Union.

I write these lines in gratitude to Msgr. Séamus Freeman, just to show how much I owe to this great Pallottine. Besides all the offices and works, what I wish to remember is his graciousness in personal relationships, the love for our charism, and the commitment and hard work for the Society and the Union.

I last saw him in February 2018, and he said, "keep up the good work." Let these words be a testimony to the greatness of Fr. Séamus Freeman SAC; and may this also be the wonderful story of his personal influence in forming my life and destiny.

Enjoy eternal peace, dear confrere Bishop Séamus Freeman.

Fr. Jacob Nampudakam SAC
Rector General & UAC Preident

