

HISTORY OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF RELIGIOUS BROTHERS, INDIA

by Bro. PIUS C. KIZHAKKEBHAGAM, C.M.S.F

INTRODUCTION

The second Vatican Council brought about the long awaited renewal in the Church, including the renewal and adaptation of Religious life as a whole. In its efforts at renewal, the Church in India has been trying to cope up with this process of renewal. The Church in India Seminar of 1969 was a definitive stage in this attempt at renewal of the entire Church in India. The Religious in India as a whole have been in the forefront of this renewal and adaptation. Yet Religious Brothers in India, needed some specific steps to be taken in this regard. There has been a great need to create a greater awareness of the richness of the Vocation to Brotherhood and to articulate their concern for and involvement in the need of the Church and Society. After a long genuine search and prayerful reflection the Brothers in India arrived at the decision of launching a movement: The National Assembly of Religious Brothers, India (NARBI). This assembly was the main achievement of the First National Convention of Religious Brothers which was held at Papal Seminary, Pune from 20th to 25th May 1979.

Today, on the occasion of the 38th anniversary of NARBI, it is but fitting that we bring out a historical survey and the origins of this assembly. It is a fact that today NARBI is well - established not only at the national level but also at the regional levels.

We shall, first of all search into the origins of the movement and look into the different National Conventions, to a great extent, to disseminate the process of renewal of our life, clarify our Vocation and re-define our apostolic concerns in the Church and Society in India.

1. The Beginnings of the Movement

Prior to the creation of NARBI, a long period of reflection and preparations had taken place. The ball began to roll from the CBCI meeting held at Hyderabad in January 1976.

(1) The Bishops formally requested the National Vocation Service Centre (NVSC) Poona, "to do something for the Brothers." Consequently Brothers' Vocation came up on the agenda of the annual meeting of the CBCI - CRI joint commission for Vocations in June 1976. At the invitation of Fr. E. Zeitler, SVD, Director of NVSC, Bro. Mani Mekkunnel attended this meeting. From this meeting the idea of holding a National Consultation of Religious Brothers emerged.

Fr. Zeitler, SVD Fr. Thomas Thyporampil (Asst. Director, NVSC) and Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, SG met together in early August 1976 and gave shape to the proposed National Consultation to be held at NVSC in December 9-13, 1976. On August 12, 1976, Fr. Zeitler, SVD sent out a Circular to all the major Superiors of Clerical and non - clerical Congregations requesting them to send one representative from each Congregation to take part in the National Consultation. The purpose of this Consultation was to discuss as a first step the Vocation of Brothers and the entire problems connected with the promotion of vocations to Brotherhood and the formation of Brothers, within a restricted circle of Brothers and some invitees.

(2) In the meantime Bro. Mani was, on a part time basis, assigned to handle the Brothers' Department at NVSC, and as the Organizer of the Consultation sent out two Questionnaires, one to the Chairman of the Regional Vocation Centres, with 5 questions, mainly centred around the problems in promoting Vocations to Brotherhood and the participation of Brothers in Regional and Diocese and Vocation Promotion Programmes. (3) And the other one with 10 questions to the representatives of Brothers in all the Congregations. Many answers were received and got them tabulated by the times of the Consultation. Meanwhile on 27th September 1976, the Organizing Committee met with the Chairman of the CRI Brothers' sub-section and finalized a detailed programme and agenda which was sent out to all the participants of the Consultation jointly by Fr. Zeitler and Bro. Mani. (4)

2. The National Consultation of Brothers:

It was during this National Consultation that the very idea of holding a National Convention of Brothers and subsequently the creation of NARBI emerged. Here we shall give a brief description of this Consultation.

The Consultation, held at NVSC, Poona on 9th - 13th December 1976, was attended by 28 delegates and invitees representing 20 Congregations, including this author. At the opening session, which was presided over by Bro. Columban Keller, the Superior General of C.M.S.F. and Brothers' representative on the CBCI - CRI Vocation Commission. Fr. Thomas Thyparambil, Assistant Director of NVSC welcomed the participants. He observed that this Consultation was a historic event for the Brothers and the Church in India. He pointed out the main objectives of the meeting: to clarify the distinction between Vocation to Priesthood and Brotherhood; to understand more deeply the meaning of the vocation of the Brothers; to show the relevance of the Brother - Vocation in today's Church and world and other challenges. He expressed the hope that this meeting would put forward creative, fundamental and foundational ideas on the vocation of the Brother. For this task, different approaches were mentioned: an analytical approach through a study of the theology of Brother's Vocation, which would clear out doubts and prejudices against this vocation among the people of God; a historical approach and a phenomenological approach.

2.1 The objectives and dynamics of this Consultation was spelt out by Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, the organizer of this meeting:

1. To discuss the vocation of a Brother and the entire problems connected with the promotion of vocations to Brotherhood and the formation of Brothers in our Indian situation:
2. To crew up a future plan of action based on the above discussion:
3. To initiative a joint national effort by all the Brothers.

He also recommended that during these days of Consultation was divided into three parts. The first stage consisted of a theological study of the Vocation to brotherhood by means of a studied paper, followed by group discussions and general sessions. Hence on the second day of the consultation, on 10th December 1976, the input was given by Bro. Pius Kizakkebhagam, C.M.S.F. Dean of Studies of C.R.I. Brothers' Dean of Studies of C.R. I Brothers' Institute, Bangalore by presenting a paper on " A Theological Understanding of Religious Brotherhood." And Fr. Thomas Thyparambil presented a paper on Vocations in general. At a second stage, the participants had a look at this form of life from the

sociological and historical point of views. Fr. E. Zeitler presented a paper on: "Brothers' Vocation at Cross Roads - lessons from history." These two stages surfaced a number of issues and problems faced by the Brothers which led to the third phase, the stage of concrete planning.

As a concrete follow up programme of action this author himself suggested that in order to create a greater awareness and richness of the Brothers' Vocation, a National Congress (Convention) be held as early as possible, during which the National Assembly of Religious Brothers (NARBI) could be formed. This suggestion was unanimously accepted by the participants of this Consultation.

2.2. Theological Aspects of Religious Brotherhood:

The theology of Brotherhood is based on none other than the theology of religious life. The fundamental biblical basis of religious life is the very "Words and example of the Lord." The evangelical Counsels, through which the Brothers consecrate themselves entirely to God and to the service of humanity, are divine gifts which the "Church has received from her Lord and which she ever preserves with the help of His grace" (L. G. 43). The Acts portrays an ideal Christian community wherein the believers had all things in common and the sense of Christian charity and brotherhood were the outstanding characteristics.

The religious brotherhood is a total self-giving in faith which is the deepening of the Christian baptism. While the hierarchical and Charismatic aspects of the Church are recognised, it is acknowledged that men of different categories are endowed with the special charism of religious life. The inner dynamism of this charism impels the Brothers to follow Christ in the service of his mystical body in His kingly, priestly and prophetic functions. The life of religious Brother hood is a special sacred sign and a unique symbolism, since it is lived out not only in response to the invitation of Jesus but also to the Father's call and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: it is a life style radically for the sake of the eschatological kingdom and a way of life meant to give witness here and now, to proclaim and serve the full coming of God's rule of peace, justice and love. through the charism of consecrated celibacy, vowed poverty and total obedience, and thereby transcending the material things, the Brother becomes a sign of the resurrected Christ to the people of God.

The Brothers commit themselves to a particular religious community to love God and to serve His Kingdom and they are conscious that the community will stand by them in this search and service. From personal and liturgical prayers, the centre of which is the Eucharist, the Brothers gather strength for their personal fulfilment and openness to one another.

In short, the religious brotherhood is a vital part of the Church's lived response to the invitation of the Lord. A special way of life by which a person consecrates himself totally and unreservedly to the service of God and his fellow - men. The Brothers should constantly be aware that they profess to follow Jesus in His Paschal Mystery and have chose to live a life-style in harmony with the Gospel challenge.

2.3 Problems Faced by The Brothers:

While the Brothers' Vocation may be defined in the above terms, all the same his image is not being projected accordingly. In the Consultation it was felt that Brothers were considered as an inferior and an uneducated class, the causes being:

1. Lack of theological understanding of the Brothers' Vocation.
2. Identification with menial work in certain quarters.
3. Lack of opportunities for personal growth and human development.

4. While CBCI and CHI have not done enough to define the role and mission of Brothers and while some Clerical Congregations have not helped their own Brothers sufficiently, the Brothers themselves have done little in this regard.

Brothers on the other hand have created a social impact in certain milieux e.g. educational work, social liberation, agricultural improvement etc. However, the challenge of the Brothers' Vocation is not recognized and people are not willing to commit themselves to it.

We must also admit that there is the identity crisis and therefore the goal and mission should be distinctly established and thus create an awareness of the Brothers' identity through sound formation. It was also suggested that Brothers should take up a more challenging style of life and apostolate.

2.4 In view of the above situation, the following remedies are suggested:

1. That Brothers be first and foremost men of prayer.
2. Proper explanation of the theology of the Brothers' Vocation should be given to seminaries and nuns during their formation period.
3. Better appreciation of the Brothers' Vocation by the Hierarchy.
4. Higher criteria for selection of candidates to Brotherhood.
5. That Brothers be present and take an candidates to Brotherhood.
6. That Brothers be present and take an active part in Parish Liturgies and Pastoral Activities.
7. The Brothers' life should be a challenge to the youth of today.
8. Programmes for on-going formation of Brothers should mapped out.
9. Sharing of trained personnel for formation among Brothers' Congregations.
10. CBCI has to be requested to raise the standard of Diocesan Brothers.
11. In those clerical congregations, where there may exist a certain disparity between priests and brothers, this National Consultation earnestly requests the Superiors concerned to see that such differences be removed in accordance with Vat. II - P.C. 15

2.5 Concrete proposals for Implementation:

1. The presence of a Brother at the NVSC is a necessity. While Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, S.G. carries on the good work he is doing at present, this Consultation should convince the CRI Brothers' section to appoint a full time Brother to work at the NVSC. Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, S.G. himself should contact the CRI Brothers' Section to make this deliberation a success.

2. a) A supplement to "The Search" under Brothers' Section is to be published. The CRI Institute, Bangalore should be incharge of its preparation. Eventually it could become an independent bulletin.

- b) The Brothers should take upon themselves the duty of publishing articles on Brotherhood in the local bulletins. To materialize it, Bro. Columban, CMSF, has accepted to collect materials for a book on Brotherhood. Bro. Dias, SDB, will finance and see to its printing.

3. In order to create an awareness of the Brothers in the Church and in the Society of India, we unanimously propose to hold a national Congress of Brothers in India.

A Committee is set up to study the possibilities of holding such a Congress.

This Committee is to send a memorandum to the CRI Brothers' to CRI Brothers' Section requesting them to take up the Organisation of other Brothers and priests. This memorandum should contain the reasons, objectives and nature of this Congress and it to be sent also to the other members of the CRI.

4. a) Short courses in theology for Brothers could be conducted at CRI Brothers' Institute at Bangalore.
- b) The NVSC could offer courses for Vocation promoters and for formators of Brothers.

Conclusion:

During this National Consultation great openness and sincerity was in evidence among the Brothers. Many issues were discussed and some of them have been mentioned in this paper. This consultation has been a beginning. Since a definitive follow-up programme has been envisaged only suggestions of a practical nature have been included here. It is felt that these recommendations can be implemented with the whole hearted cooperation of the Brothers and with the support of the CBCI, CRI and NVSC.

The Brothers wish to express their heartfelt gratitude to the CBCI for prompting them to hold this Consultation. They are grateful to the NVSC for hoisting the same. (5)

3. **An Executive Committee for The National Convention:**

An important recommendation of the National Consultation was to organise a National Convention of Brothers with a view to conscientize the Brothers and the Church at large about the meaning and relevance of this form of life in today's India. This suggestion was placed before the CRI Brothers' Sub-Section in April 1977. It agreed to sponsor the Convention and appointed Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, S.G. as the Convener with the powers to co-opt members to form an Executive Committee for planning the details of the Convention. The final plans would need the approval of the CRI Brothers' sub-section. Bro. Mani and Fr. Zeitler met together at NVSC Poona on 18th June 1977 and discussed some details of the Convention. With Committee was formed with the following members:

Bro. Mani Mekkunnel,	S. G.	Convener
Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam,	C.M.S.F.	
Bro. Gabriel,	S.H.J.	
Bro. Benedict,	F.S.P.	
Bro. Joseph Tort,	S.J.	
Bro. M.B. Finn.	CFC	
Bro. Robert Dias,	S.D.B.	

The first meeting of the Executive Committee was held on 5th 6th September, 1977, at NVSC, Poona with all the above members present together with four special Invitees, namely Bro. Felix, S.G. (Chairman, CRI Brothers' Sub-Section) Fr. Thomas Thyparambil (Director, NVSC) Fr. Zeitler (Executive Director NVSC) and Sr. Adel, U.M.I. (Secretary NVSC)

A brief Report of this meeting, which was circulated to the members and CRI Brothers' Section, can be summarized as follows:

3.1 **The Plan for the Convention:**

1. Time and Duration: Third week of May, 1979. Probably from 20th to 24th May.
2. Place : The Papal Seminary, Poona
3. Participants : a) 10% of the Brothers from each Congregation, selected by their Superiors
- b) Representatives of Priests, Sisters and Laity
- c) Delegates from the National Assembly of Brothers, U.S.A., the Congregation of Religious, Rome, CBCI, etc. (The total number not to exceed 250)

4. **Organisation:** Sponsored by the CRI Brothers' sub-section, the NVSC will organize the convention. The person directly responsible and to be contacted is Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, NVSC, Poona - 411 014.

3.2 **Preparation for the Convention:**

The Executive Committee which met on 5th and 6th of September felt that the preparation should be thorough in order to give depth for the Convention. Hence it fixed up the aim, the theme and a number of commissions to work towards the realizations of these.

1. Aim: To create an awareness of the richness of religious brotherhood among the laity, religious, priests, hierarchy and above all among the Brothers themselves.
2. Theme: "**RELIGIOUS BROTHERS IN THE CHURCH OF INDIA**"
3. Study Groups: The following commission have been set up to study important issues connected with the life and apostolate of Brothers. The Commissions are expected to submit their study-papers by the 1st of June 1978, so as to be printed and circulated to all the Brothers for further study and reflection.

Commission I: "Image of the Brothers To-day" Chairman: Bro. Robert Dias, SDB

Commission II: "Formation of Brothers" Chairman: Bro. Benedict FSP

Commission III: "Ministry of Brother in the Church" Chairman: Bro. J. Chinnappa SG

Commission IV: "Role of Clerical Brothers" Chairman: Bro. Tort SJ

Commission V: "Education Apostolate" Chairman: Bro. Finn CFC

Commission VI: "Missionary Apostolate" Chairman: Bro. Columban CMSF

Commission VII: "Theological approach to Brothers' Vocation" Chairman: Bro. Pius CMSF

The Chairman of each commission is to co-opt sufficient number of members to constitute a full-fledged commission. The papers will be rather elaborate and have a national perspective.

Finance:

- a. The office expenses will be met by the NVSC
- b. The expenses of Convention will have to be met by the participants
- c. The bulk of the other expenses will be for the commission work: printing and publication of the material. It is estimated to cost about Rs. 20,000/- The Committee feels that this could be collected from the Congregations who have Brothers.

Conclusion:

At the present juncture in the church the Committee expects enthusiastic co-operation from all the religious congregations. As soon as the final approval is given by the CRI, more publicity will be given to the project and request for prayers will be made to all the Brothers and other well wishers.

The above plan for the Convention could be supplement as and when workable suggestions are made.

4. **Live - in Session for Major Superiors of Brothers**

As a response to the desire of C.R.I. Brothers' Section, a "Live-in" Session was organised at N.V.S.C., Poona from 12th to 17th November 1978. The main objectives of this Session, as pointed out by Bro. Mani, was to create a common vision leading to a common mission for all the Brothers in India and to discuss the details of the National Convention,

which was to be held in May 1979 (7). This session was attended by 19 Brothers from 12 Congregations, including this author.

The Session included inputs by experts, discussions on important issues that concern all the Brothers, Panel Session. During the Sharing Sessions, the members got to know about the apostolic involvements of each Congregation and pioneering commitments of individual Brothers. The overall thrust was towards a wider and more effective involvement of Brothers in the Church in India.

4.1 **Important Decisions and Recommendations**

1. Co-ordination of post-novitiate programme, especially through the exchange of formation personnel and making the existing formation houses available to other Congregations wherever and as fast as possible. Co-ordinating Committee was set up to follow up this resolution.
2. More active participation in C.R.I. meetings and programmes at the National and Regional levels. This is possible only when all the major Superiors make it a point to attend the C.R.I. General Body Meetings.
3. Greater involvement in the activities of the local Church by their active presence in the Diocesan Pastoral Councils and Parish Councils Vocation Centres, Youth Organisations, etc.
4. A "Brotherhood Day" could be organised wherever they are working. The emphasis must be on Christian fellowship and so a cross section of the Church must be invited. Brothers must take a leadership role in creating a sense of brotherhood among all the sections of people in the Church.
5. The suggestion to discontinue addressing the seminarians as "Brothers is to be followed up. The Chairman of the C.B.C.I. Seminary Commission himself is interested in this suggestion and has asked for an official letter from the C.R.I. Brothers' Section.
6. Possibilities of Brothers from clerical Congregations participating in C.R.I. meetings must be explored. One suggestion is to invite them as observers until provisions are made for their full participation.
7. Short courses could be organised for Brothers at the CRI Brothers' Institute, Bangalore. The final day's Sessions were devoted to discussing and finalising the details of the National Convention. The Superiors gave whole-hearted support for the Convention. Apart from valuable suggestions, they decided to collect the money needed by way of contributions from the Brothers.

4.2 **Detailed Plans for the First National Convention**

on 16th November 1978, the detailed plans in preparation to the First National Convention was drawn up:

1. Publications on Religious Brotherhood for free distributions; the Reports of the Commissions.
2. **Advertisements.**

A permanent column in the New Leader, Herald and the Examiner for about 3 months; at least once in all the Catholic magazines; a 4 pages issue on Brotherhood at the time of the Convention by means of paid greetings; a folder with all the particulars of the Convention, to

be sent to all the Brothers, Bishops, Convents, Seminaries, diocesan Vocation Directors etc, a prayer card in the occasion of the Convention.

3. **Other Preparatory work:**

- Regional level Conventions wherever possible;
 - Essay Competition in all the Formation Houses of Brothers and for junior Brothers;
 - Essay Competition in all our Schools on the theme of Brotherhood;
 - A questionnaire to the participants;
 - Preparation of a few exhibits about each Congregation, to be displayed at the time of Convention;
4. List of Speakers and Invitees from abroad and within the Country was tentatively agreed upon.
5. The Procedure and dynamics of the Conventions was also finalized (9)

6. **Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee of the Convention was formed with the following members.

1. Bro. Felix SG Chairman, CRI Brothers' Section: President of the Convention.
2. Bro. Mani Mekkunnel SG, Convenor
3. Fr. Thomas Thyparampil (Director, NVSC)
4. Fr. Peter Lourdes SDB.,
5. Bro. Pius Kizakkebhagam CMSF
6. Bro. Bernard FSP
7. Fr. F.C. Rodrigues SJ.
8. Bro. Joseph Tort SJ.
9. Bro. A. Thottam SVD.

This Committee would be responsible for the day-to-day programme of the Convention. Its decisions would be final on any controversial matter.

In the meantime in February 1979, Bro. Pio Kottackal CMSF was appointed to the Brothers' Section at the NVSC to assist Bro. Mani. He organized the different competitions for School children and information houses for creating a symbol for NARBI and on different themes regarding Brother's Vocation.

5. **THE FIRST NATIONAL CONVENTION: 20th - 25th May 1979**

5.1 **Organization**

This Convention was held at the Papal Seminary, Poona from 20th to 25th May 1979. It was sponsored by CRI Brothers' Section and organised by NVSC, Poona under the guidance of Fr. E. Zeitler SVD and Fr. Thomas Thyparampil and by Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, assisted by Bro. Pio Kottackal CMSF.

5.2 **Theme and Objectives**

The theme of the Convention was: Religious Brothers in the Church of India. The main Objectives were:

- to encourage the process of renewal and adaptation of all Brothers;
- to create a greater awareness of the richness of the Vocation of a Religious Brother among the laity, Religious, Priests and Hierarchy;

- to provide a corporate voice for Brothers in shaping the future of Religious life in the Country;
- to heighten the Brothers' Concern with and involvement in the needs of the Church and Society (10)

5.3 **Participants**

220 Brothers from clerical and non-clerical Congregations, the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, Most Rev. Luciano Storero, 4 Bishops and 50 selected invitees representing the Priests, CRI, Nuns and the Laity took part in the Convention. It had an international flavour with the participation of representatives from Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Philippines and U.S.A.

5.4 **Publicity**

Wide Publicity was given before - during and after the Convention in order to make the Convention a Church - event. Sufficient literature was circulated among the Brothers in advance in order to help the Brothers to take part meaningfully and fruitfully in such a historical event.

5.5 **THE INAUGURAL SESSION:**

The Inaugural Session and all other general sessions were held in the Papal Seminary Auditorium. Bro. Felix Sg, Chairman, CRI Brothers' Section presided. Bishop Basil D'Souza, Chairman, CBCI - CRI Vocation Commission inaugurated the event by lighting the lamp. Words of welcome were addressed by Bishop Valerian D'Souza of Poona and Fr. Thomas Thyparampil, Director NVSC. Then the Pro-Nuncio wished the Convention all success; The Key-note address on "Called to be a Religious Brother in the Church" was given by Bro. Felix, the President of the Convention. He hoped that this First Convention would bring about renewed vigour and acknowledgement on the part of various sections of the People of God, especially the Indian Church.

The after-noon Session was presided over by Archbishop Antony Padiyara of Ernakulam. He declared that he holds the Brother's Vocation in high esteem and that the Brothers have a great role to play in the modern Church. Then Bro. Mani, the Convenor gave out his thinking on: "Historical background Aims and Dynamics of the Convention. Threfeter Fr. E. Zeitler, SVD, Secretary FABC, spoke on "Challenges before the Brothers in India." throwing light on some relevant ideas on the uniqueness and identity of the Brother's Vocation and role in the Church. Fr. Bernard Pereira C.S.S.R., who was the last speaker of the day, stressed the need for prophetic witness by Religious Brothers by a radical living of the Gospel.

5.6 **Contributors and Papers Presented**

On the second day, 21st May, Fr. D. S. Amalorpavadass presented a comprehensive and scholarly paper on: "The image of a Religious Brother". Another speaker of the day was Bro. Joseph Tort SG, who presented a paper on the Role of the Brothers in a Clerical Religious Body". The evening session was devoted to clarifying the "Image of the Brothers - Present and Future" by 5 Panel Speakers. The speakers were Br. Jeane Devos I.C.M., Mr. Derick Ward of Montfort School Yercaud, Mrs. Maria Curia, Professor in Bombay University, Fr. George, D.F. of Trivandrum and Chottabhai, Bishop George Saupin of Daltonganj was the moderator.

On 22nd May Bro. Andrew Gonsalvez, President of De La Salle University, Manila gave an exhaustive exposition of the theme, "Education in the Development of the Third World Countries and the Brothers". Bro. Paul Bela of the Christian Brothers enlightened the audience on the Church's responsibility to educate its members and others and community building. Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, C.M.S.F. presented a meaningful paper on "The Missionary Apostolate of the Brothers in India".

The first speaker on 23rd May was Bro. Damian Carroll, representative and founder of NARB, U.S.A. Elaborating his topic "Challenge and be challenged", he brought out the evolution and development of the "Brother Movement" in U.S.A., where a new image of Brotherhood has incarnated as a fruition of untiring efforts since the foundation of the National Assembly of Religious Brothers' (NARB) in 1972 onwards. "Ministry of a Brother in the Church" was the topic on which a paper was presented by Joseph Chinnappa, S.G., Bro. Benedict, P.S.P. presented his views on "Formation of a Religious Brother".

"Is there a Vocation to Brotherhood?" Was the topic elaborated by Fr. Thomas Thyparampil on 24th May. Bro. A. Thottam, S.V.D. presented a paper on "Brother Formation Programme", Draft Resolutions and Draft Proposals were presented to the General Session, and after sufficient discussions, were passed by the Assembly.

5.7 Creation of NARBI

A general session was devoted to the discussion and approval of the Draft Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Proposal National Assembly of Religious Brothers, India (NARBI), Convention unanimously launched voted for NARBI. The next day on 25th May, 1979, the elections to the NARBI National Board took place as follows:

President	: Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, S.G.,
Vice - President	: Bro. Apollinaris Pinto, S.J.,
Secretary	: Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, C.M.S.F
Board Members	: Bro. Maurice, S.D.B
	Bro. Aloysius, F.S.P
	Bro. Emmanuel, O.F.M. Cap
	Bro. A. Thottam, S. V.D.
	Bro. Bernard, F. S. P
	Bro. John of the S.H., S.G
	Bro. M. Pereira, S.J.

Conclusion:

The Convention, which its in-depth preparation of the themes dealt with, meaningfully arrange liturgy, well planned group dynamics and scholarly papers created an atmosphere of a true brotherhood. It was a unique experience and memorable event, a launching pad to the future and an occasion for the Spirit to renew and call-out the Brothers to take their rightful place in the Church.

6. **THE SECOND NATIONAL CONVENTION**

6.1 **The Organization**

The NARBI National Board Meeting, held at Bharananganam, Kerala on 27th and 28th February 1981, decided to hold the Second National Convention of Brothers in May 1982. The next board Meeting held at Vijayawada fixed up the venue, dates and theme of this convention and planned out its details. Accordingly the convention was held at Dharmaram College, Bangalore from 20th to 24th May 1982.

6.2 **Participants**

Two hundred and five Brothers, representing 29 Congregations and hailing from various places in India participated in this Convention. The invitees included representatives of the CBCI, the CRI, Sisters and the laity.

6.3 **Theme and Dynamics**

The main theme of the convention was: The Mission of Brothers as Religious / A Future Vision. The organisers had planned for a gradual development of the theme during the five days, giving special thrust on creating a vision for the Brothers for the future keeping the year 2000 A.D. as the point of arrival. Different papers were presented by experts. These topics were followed up by 3 workshops of one hour and a half each duration. The reports of the workshops were further discussed in 4 general sessions. Every day during the convention, meaningful prayer sessions were organised too. Thus in an atmosphere of prayer and reflection, listening and sharing, discussions and deliberations, we attempted to articulate how best we can make our Religious Commitment meaningful to our contemporaries in an Indian Cultural context at the same time focusing our vision towards the year 2000. On the concluding day another general session came out with the 'Final Settlement' and the 'Recommendations' of the Conventions(11).

6.4 **The Inaugural Session**

The convention began with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by the Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorius, the Vice / President of the CBCI at 10.00 hrs. in the Syro-Malankara Rite in the large, airy, artistic chapel of Dharmaram College. The inaugural session started with a hymn to the Holy Spirit and the reciting the special prayer of the Convention by all the participants. Then Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, NARBI Secretary pronounced the words of Welcome to the presiding dignitary, Archbishop Mar Gregorius and to one and all. Thereafter Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, the President of NARBI read out a few messages received from the Cardinals of India, Mother Teresa and others. In his Inaugural address, Archbishop Mar Gregorius spoke at length, quoting "human Gentium" and "Perfectae Caritatis", on the Religious Brothers in the church in an Indian religious cultural context. Bro. Merlin Pereira, NARBI Executive Secretary and also to business matters.

6.5 **Contributors and Topics**

The important contributors on the 2nd day, 21st May, 1982 were Fr. Stan Louduswamy S.J, Director, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore, who spoke elaborately on "Religious Life as a response to the radical call of the Gospel in the Indian Context" and Fr. D.S.

Amalorpavadass, Director, NBCLC, Bangalore, who presented an exhaustive paper on "Religious Life and Indian Sanyasa, An attempt at Integration". The other contributors during the days of convention were Bro. Mani Mekkunel, who spoke on "Brothers and the Church" and Bro. T.A. Joseph, S.G., Who presented the paper on "The Brothers in the year 2000 A Vision for the Future".

A Panel Discussion was also arranged during which four Religious Sisters and a Lay Person responded their views on Brother's vocation and role in the church. They were Sr. Helen Mendonca, F.M.M., Principal, Mater Dei Institute, Goa, Sr. Angela Tigga, F.M.P., Novice Mistress, Sr. Collette, R.G.S., Formator and Social Worker, Sr. Marietta, S.C.N., Principal, Sudeep Institute of Theology, Bangalore and Miss. Reenie Correia, Theacher and Lay Missionary.

6.6 **The New National Board of NARBI**

During the Convention, the elections were held, and later a few members were nominated. The newly constituted National Board in 1982 comprises the following members:

Bro. Mani Mekkunel, S.G.,	President
Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, C.M.S.F.,	Vice - President
Bro. Conrad Fonseca, S.J.,	Secretary
Bro. Aurela Tessier, C.S. C.,	Treasurer
Bro. Apollinaris Pinto, S.J.,	Board Member
Bro. Thomas Puthur, S.D.B.	Board Member
Bro. Patrick Minus, C.F.C.	Board Member
Bro. Louis Manjaly, M.M.B	Board Member
Bro. Crispin, O.F.M Cap.,	Board Member
Bro. Cornelio, S.S.P.	Board Member
Bro. Anthony Cyprian, C.M.S.F	Board Member
Bro. Borgia, C.S.T	Board Member
Bro. Aidan, S.V.D.	Board Member
Bro. Arulpragasam, S.H.J	Board Member
Bro. Daniel, C.M.S.F.	Executive Secretary

7. **NARBI NATIONAL DIRECTORY**

The NARBI Secretariat, in Bangalore brought out this Directory in 1983. It gives the names and addresses of 17-7 Brothers belonging to 37 Orders and Congregations, hailing from all parts of India.

8. **THE THIRD NATIONAL CONVENTION**

8.1 **The Organization**

The third National Convention of Brothers was held at St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Always, Kerala from 16th to 19th May 1985. Kerala Assembly of Religious Brothers (KARB) who played the part of the host, had done elaborate preparations months in advance by setting up different committees, by wide publicity through various sections of the

press and arranging minute details of the convention. After the Convention KARBI brought an excellent Souvenir edited by Bro. Louis Manjaly, M.M.B.

8.2 **The Participants**

Two hundred and twenty five from 25 Congregations and hailing from different corners of India took part in this Convention. The involvement and participation of the Pro-Nuncio, Archbishop A. Cacciavillan, Cardinal Joseph Parkattil, three Archbishops and other Bishops were enriching and encouraging. Many Priests, Sisters, Laity and even Non-Christians did promote the convention by their inspiring enthusiasm and presence.

8.3 **The Theme and the Dynamics**

The theme of this Convention was : Ministry of the Brothers Today. The assembly became aware that Ministry is not the prerogative of the clergy, but the whole people of God are called to Ministry. We understand Ministry as the discipleship of Christ as the response to the needs of the people among whom we are sent. The convention called for the creation of new ministries in the Church, whereby the Brothers can respond to new challenges and be more relevant in a fast changing world (12).

As input for reflection and discussion, three main talks were given and a few prepared papers were circulated. These inputs led up to two workshops sessions, which took a realistic look at the Ministries in which we are involved and proposed ways and means of being more effective and to address ourselves to new forms of creative ministries. The General session gave a deeper reflection in the above points.

8.4 **The Inaugural Functions**

The convention commenced with the Executive celebration by Archbishop Mar Antony Padiyara, of Chungunacherry, President of Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council, at which the homily was preached by Fr. Paul Karunathy, C.S.T. President K.C.M.S.

The convention commenced with the Executive celebration by Archbishop A. Cacciavillan and was presided over by Mar Antony Padiyara. Words of welcome were accorded by Bro. Borgia C.S.T., Chairman of KARB and local Convenor as well as by Fr. Antony Mukkatt, Rector, Pontifical Seminary, Always. Guest speakers who offered felicitations for the convention included Mr. M. P. Joseph, District Collector of Ernakulam, Mr. Mohamed Ali, Local M.L.A. Dr. A.M. Chacko, Principal of U.C. College, Always and Sr. Borromeo, CMC Provincial of Ernakulam. Bro. Louis Manjally proposed the vote of thanks.

8.5 **Contributors and Topics**

The key-note address, on "Ministry of the Brothers Today" was read by Bro. C.M Joseph, S. G., President of CRI Brothers' Section. He spoke of 10 different ministries in which the Brothers are either already involved or could be involved in future. Another input was given by Bro. Mani Mekunnel, S.G., on the theme: "Ministry by the People - A Theological Reflection". Bro. Jacob Ezhanikath, S.G., spoke on "Campus Ministry". A Pannel Discussion on "various aspects of the Apostolate of the Brothers" threw further light on the theme under consideration.

Other prepared papers, circulated among the participants of the Convention for their study and reflection were on "Ministry of the Brothers in the World" by Bro. Pius Kizjakkebhagam, C.M.S.F., on "Towards a Theology of Ministries" by Fr. Kurian Kunnumpuram. SJ. and on "The Prophetic Ministry of the Brother" by Mr. Josantony.

This Session was moderated by Fr. Thomas Ayakara CMI. The Panelists were chosen from the laity, clergy and Religious: Prof Sr. Rosakutty Kappen SH, Fr. J. Thachil (editor 'AMMA' magazine), Prof. N.A. Ouseph (Vicar President, All India Catholic Union), Mr. P.C. Abraham (Kunjettan), Advocate Kurian Joseph (President, C.M.L.) and Mr. Iyppu Alapatt, I.F.S. (President, Kerala, C.L. C Federation). The Panelists gave their impressions on the Ministry and life of the Brothers and cautioned them not to forget the primary goal for which they have embraced Religious life.

The celebrant of the Eucharist on the second day was Archbishop Joseph Kelanthara of Verapoly and on the third day Archbishop A. Cacciavillan, the Pro- Nuncio.

The chief guest at the concluding session on 18th May evening, which was presided over by Archbishop Benedict Mar Gregorious (Vice President, CBCI), was His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil. Fr. George Kottackal accorded the gathering words of welcome. Felicitations were offered by Fr. Abraham Moloparampil (Superior General M.C.B.S.), Fr. Stephen Jayaraj (Capuchin Provincial), Sr. Delanie C.T.C. (St. Xavier's College, Alwaye) and Shri Satyadevan (Municipal Commissioner of Alwaye) Bro. Stephen, C.M.S.F. proposed the vote of thanks.

8.6 **The Statement of the Convention**

The 225 participants of the Convention brought out Statement as the fruit of their prayerful reflection and deeper study, entitled "Call to a Greater Ministerial Thrust" with 21 articles. It embodies deep insights into the whole question of ministries in the Church, the need for reviving different ministries and the creation of new ministries which the Brothers can exercise in the building up of the Kingdom.

8.7 **The NARBI National Board 1985 - 1988**

Bro. Alphonsus Thanicken, F.S.P. was elected at the Convention as the new President of NARBI, Bro. Borgia C.S.T., Bro. Conrad Fonseca S.J. and Bro. M.K. Francis F.S.P. were elected Vice-President Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The other elected / nominated Board member were: Bros Apollinaris Pinto S.J., Louis Manjaly M.M.B., Thomas Puthur S.D.B., Stephen C.M.S.F., Jai Prakas I.M.S., Abraham S.A.C., Patrick Minus F.S.C., Arulpragasam S.H.J., William Kerketta S.G., Faustin C.M.S.F., J.L. Macwan S.J., and Bro. Joseph Regis S.G. (Executive Secretary).

9. **THE FOURTH NATIONAL CONVENTION**

9.1 **The Organization**

The IV National Convention of Brothers was organised by NARBI National Board and hosted by Bro. M.K. Francis and his team of Patrician Brothers at St. Joseph's Boys' Higher Secondary School, Coonoor, Nilgiris from 19th to 22nd May 1988. The theme of the Convention was: "Towards a new Understanding of Vocations in the Church".

9.2 **The Participants**

About 200 Brothers from various parts of India participated in this Convention. Representative of other Religious and laity took part as special invitees.

9.3 **The Opening of the Convention**

The Convention began with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided over by Archbishop G. Casimir S.J., of Madras - Mylapore, (Vice - President C.B.C.I.) at 10.30 A.M. on 19th May at St. Joseph's College Church.

The chief guest at the Inaugural Session held at the spacious School Auditorium, which was presided over by Bro. Philip Pinto C.F.C. (President C.R.I. Brothers' Section), was Archbishop G. Casimir. He expressed happiness that he could be present in the midst of 200 Brothers from all over India. At the same time he did not hide his concern at the low number of Vocations to Brotherhood. The Archbishop reminded Brothers about the need for every Brother to be convinced of the specific character of his call and should not consider himself as a "diminished Priest". He also emphasized that we should give prime place to witnessing of true Religious life and uphold genius values.

Earlier Bro. M. K. Francis F.S.P., TARB Chairman and the Convenor of the Convention accorded a warm welcome to the gathering. Words of felicitations were offered by Fr. James Connolly C.S.S.R., Sr. Francisca S.S. J.T. and Col Soares. Bro. M.A. George S.G. conveyed to the assembly messages of Greetings and success received from the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, Archbishop A. Cacciavillan, Archbishop Simon Pimenta (President CBCI), Mother Teresa, National Assembly of Religious Brothers, U.S.A., Association of Religious Brothers of the Ireland, Bro. A.M. Thanicken F.S.P., President, NARBI presented a brief Report of its activities. Bro. F. Bessette C.S.C. proposed the Vote of Thanks.

9.4 **Contributors and Topics**

Bro. Joseph Regis, NARBI Executive Secretary briefed the Assembly with a summary of "the Expectations from the Convention". The key-note Address was delivered by Bro. Mani Mekkunnel S.G. His well prepared paper was entitled as: "Towards a New Understanding of Vocations". He emphasized the need for affirming the equality of all Vocations in the Church and that all Christians participate in the one Priesthood of Christ and that all Christians proclaim the Priesthood of the people. He pointed out that there is only one fundamental Vocation and that is Christian Vocation and called for the creation of new ministries towards the realization of the New Society proclaimed by Christ and the need for examining the role to be played by the Brothers in this process.

Bro. T.V. George C.M.S.F. presented a well prepared paper on "Biblical Experience of Vocation in Today's Context". He emphasized that a Christian's call is not only for himself alone, but also for the community and there is no distinction between Vocations. Sr. Bertille C.S.S.T. gave an inspiring talk on "Consecration life: A Radical Option". She emphasized the point that Consecration is a call for personal integration, which means to love the unloved unconditionally, She also pointed out the need to share and denounce the structures that dehumanize people. Mr. Josantony spoke on " The Fundamental Vocation - to be Christian and its Implications". Bro. Jose Vetty S.G. (Dean of CRI Brothers' Institute) spoke on "Vocation as Ministry", and Bro. Camillus S.G. on "Young people as on special concern". (13).

9.5 **Guests of Honour**

The Eucharistic celebration on the second day (May 20, 1988) was presided over and homily was preached by Fr. Bernard Pereira C.S.S.R. (former Provincial and ex CRI President): on the third day Most Rev. Aruldas James, Bishop of Ootacamund; and on the fourth day by Rt. Rev. Alhponsus Bertta (Retd. Bishop of Warrangal) The chief guest at the concluding session was Fr. Mathew Vedakedom C.S.C.,(Provincial Holy Cross Fathers.)

9.6 **Final Statement of the Convention**

This comprises two categories of documents: One, "NARBI Proclamation" with 11 points. These were intended to be circulated among the hierarchy, the clergy, the Religious and the Laity; Second, The Recommendations, meant to be implemented by the Congregations which have Brothers.

9.7 **The New NARBI National Board**

On the third day of the Convention (21st May), the assembly elected the following Office - bearers of the NARBI:

Bro. Pius C. Kizhakkebhagam	CMSF.	President
Bro. M.K. Francis	FSP	Vice President
Bro. Bastin Karuvelil	MMB	Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

Bro. Amaladass	SHJ
Bro. Mark Barco	SJ.
Bro. A. Jesudass	SSP

Later, this new Board nominated three more Board Members from Congregations that were not represented on it namely:

Bro. Carno Noronha	CFC	Treasurer
Bro. Benjamin Kerketta	SVD	
Bro. Reginald	CFM Cap	

10. **The Fifth National Convention**

The Fifth national Convention of NARBI was held on May 26th - 29th, 1991 at St. Pius X College Bombay, attended by about 200 Brothers. The theme was: "Leadership Role of Brothers in the Emerging New Society".

10.1 **The Speakers**

The Key - note Address was given by Bro. Philip Pinto, CFC, the President of CRI. Rev. Dr. Felix Wilfred, an eminent theologian presented a paper on "Christian Leadership in India Today, with Special reference to the Leadership of Religious Brothers". Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, SG Spoke on " Vocation to Leadership. The Concluding session was presided over by Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, CMSF, the President of NARBI.

10.2 **New National Board**

Bro. Pius Kizakkebhagam, CMSF was reelected as NARBI President Bro. Jacob Macwan, SJ was elected as Vice-President, Bro. J.A. Keane, CFC as Secretary and Bro. Borgia, CST as Treasurer, Bro. Joseph Regis SG was reappointed as Executive Secretary, Thirteen other Brothers were also formed the National Executive of NARBI.

11. **The Sixth National Convention of NARBI**

The Sixth National Convention was held on 21st - 25th May 1994 at Renewal Centre, Kaloor, Kerala. The Theme of this Convention was "Consecrated Life of Brothers in India Today".

11.1 **The Participants**

Wide publicity was made months in advance. The Theme was relevant. And thus 236 Brothers from 32 Congregations attended this Convention. (14)

11.2 **The Speakers**

Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, CMSF, the President of NARBI gave the Key-Note Address, many Bishops were present on different days and delivered homilies or Presidential Address. They include Most Rev. Archbishop Abraham Kattumana, Pontifical delegate Mar Joseph Powathil President of CBCI, Mar Joseph Kundukulam, Bishop of Trichur. The other speakers included Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Govt. of Kerala, Rev. Dr. Thomas Mampra, CMI, Rev. Fr. Antony Plackal, VC, The following Brothers presented papers: Bro. Paul Raj, SG, on "Origin and Development of Religious Brotherhood"; Bro. Mani Karott, LBJ on "Spirituality for Brothers Today"; Bro. Mani Mekkunnel on "Religious Life in Transition - Emerging Models; Bro. Victor Sahayaraj, SM, on " Ministry among the Rag-Pickers. Responses to different talks were given by Bros. Thomas Puthur, SDB, Bro. Joseph Kizhakkedath, CST, Bro. Xavier Alexandar, CMSF, Bro. J.A. Keane, CFC, and Thomas Cornelio codified the Reports.

11.3 **The National Board of NARBI**

The Convention elected Bro. Berchmans Athakkad, FSP, as the new President, Bro. P. Jayaraj, SHJ, as Vice President, Bro. J.A. Keane, CFC, as Secretary and the Board members Bro. Thomas Puthur, SDB, Bro. Louis Manjaly, MMB, Bro. Stephen Rego, OFM Cap, and Bro. Thomas Cornelio as Executive Secretary.

12. The Seventh National Convention was held at NBCLC, Bangalore on 16th to 19th May 1997. 170 Brothers from 24 Congregations participated in this Assembly.

12.1 **The Speakers**

The theme was "Religious Brothers of the Third Millennium". Bro. Berchmans Athakkad, the President delivered the Key-note Address Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, CMSF presented a scientific paper on "Contextual Formation of Religious Brothers for the Third Millennium".

12.2 **New National Board**

Bro. Paul Augustine, FSP, was elected as President of NARBI, Bro. Xavier Amal, SJ, as Secretary and Bro. Tony Keane, CFC as Executive Secretary.

13. The Eight National Convention was held at Yercaud in May 2000. The Convention elected the New National Board as follows:

Bro. N.S. Jesudoss,	SHJ	President
Bro. Giles Thekkemury,	CMSF	Vice - President
Bro. Xavier Amal,	SJ	Board Secretary
Bro. Tony Keane,	CFC	Executive Secretary

and other 9 Board Members.

14. The Ninth National Convention this Assembly was held at CRI Brothers' Institute, Bangalore on 22nd to 25th May 2003. The theme was: "Religious Brotherhood - A Call to Prophetic Ministry".

14.1 **The Speakers**

The Speakers included Bro. N.S. Jesudoss, the President: Key-note address, Mr. J. Alexander, IAS, Fr. Sundar Arok, OFM, Bro. Varghese Theckanath, SG, Sr. Vincent, AC, President CRI, Women's Section.

14.2 **The New National Board**

This Assembly elected the following Brothers on the National Board.

Bro. John Fernando	FSC	President
Bro. Mani Karott	LBJ	Vice President
Bro. Paul Raj	SG	Secretary

Bro. Roy da Silva	CFC	Board Members
Bro. J. Regis	SG	Board Members
Bro. T.V. George	CMSF	Board Members and Ex-officio Members

15. **The Tenth National Convention**

The Tenth National Convention of NARBI and the Silver Jubilee of NARBI were jointly held on 19th - 22nd May 2005 at CRI Brothers' Institute. 186 Brothers attended

15.1 **The Speakers**

Most Rev. Bernard Moras, the Archbishop of Bangalore, Celebrated the inaugural Mass with a meaningful homily. Other Speakers included Fr. Jose K, SDB, Sr. Bertille, CSST, Bro. George Thottiyil CMSF, Bro. John Gernando, CFSC, President of NARBI (Key-note) Fr. Bob Boufier, SM, Bro. Victor General. CMSF, Fr. Pradeep Sequeira, SJ (Vicar for Religious)

15.2 **The New National Board was elected:**

Bro. John Fernando	FSC	President
Bro. Joseph Das	SDB	Vice President
Bro. Jeyaraj	FMS	Board Secretary
Bro. Ravi	SHJ	Board Members
Bro. Roy da Silva	CFC	Board Members

This Convention produced a meaningful statement (15)

16 **XIIth National Convention:**

The 12th National Convention was held on 18th - 22nd May 2011 at CRI Brothers' Institute, Bangalore

16.1 **The Theme:** The Theme of this Convention was "*Creative Ministry of Brothers*".

16.2 The Eucharistic Celebration Most Rev. Bernard Moras, the Archbishop of Mysore was the main Celebrant at the Inaugural Mass on 18th May, and the next day his Vicar General Msgr. S. Jayanathan.

16.3 **The Speakers and Presenters:** They included Bro. Jesudass, SSP the Executive Secretary (welcome), Bro. T. Antony Raj SHJ (Report), Bro. K.M. Joseph, S.G. National President of CRI, Bro. Paul Augustine FSP, President NARBI (Keynote Address), Bro. Paul Raj SG, (Talk on "Re-inventing Religious Life"); Bro. Mani Mekunnel, SG (talk on "Creative Ministry for Brothers") Bro. N.S. Jesudoss SHJ, Superior General (Talk on "Challenges to Brothers Vocation); Sr. Josephine, SMI (Talk on " Individualism in the Community"); Bro. Pius Kizhakkebhagam, CMSF, Vice President NARBI (Talk on "Cosmic Brotherhood"); Fr. Xavier Arul Raj, Advocate, High Court of Madras (talk on "Minority Rights in the Field of Education).

16.4 **The New office-bearers of NARBI**

1. President Rev. Bro. Giles Thekkemurry CMSF
 2. Vice President Rev. Bro. CHANDY SG
 3. Narbi Secretary Rev. Bro. Anthony Raj SHJ
 4. Board Members 1 Rev. Bro. Jeyaraj SDB
 5. Board Member 2 Rev. Bro. Conrad Fonseca SJ
 6. Board Member 3 Br. Joy Kakkatil CST
 7. Board Member 3 Rev. Bro. Jesudass SSP
- (Also the Executive Secretary)

17. **XIIIth National Convention:**

This Convention was held at CRI Brothers' Institute, Bangalore on 22nd to 25th May 2014. The Theme was: **"Towards an Innovative Existence of Religious Brothers"**.

17.1 **Inaugural Session:**

The Inaugural Eucharist celebrated by Most Rev. Thomas Menamparampil, Archbishop Emeritus of Guwahati.

17.2 The Inaugural Thekkemury, CMSF, President NARBI presided over this session. The key-note address was delivered by Archbishop Thomas Menamparampil Bro. Lawrence Abraham, CMSF, President of CRI Brothers' Section and Bro. Pancras, SHJ, Director, Vidya Deep Spoke on the Occasion. Bro. Jesudass, SSP Executive Secretary welcomed the gathering and Bro. Jeyaraj, FMS gave the Report.

17.3 The Speakers & Presenters they included: Bro. Giles Thekkemury, CMSF (Presidential Address); Bro. Varghese an Innovative Existence of Religious Brothers") Mr. Michael Peria (Talk on "Read the signs of the time and move Forward") Mr. Michael Peria (Talk on "Mass Media, Social Media, Internet"); Bro. Mani Mekkunnel SG, Summed up the convention and proposed the action plan and Bro. Chandy, SG, Vice-President, Bro. Chandy, SG, Vice - President gave an evaluation of the Convention.

17.4 **The New National Board:**

Elected Members:

Bro Giles Thekkemury	CMSF	President
Bro. Christopher	FSC	Vice President
Bro. Solomon	FSP	Board Secretary
Bro. Joy Kakkatil	CST	Member
Bro. Regis	SG	Member
Bro. Conrad Fonseca	SJ	Member
Bro. James Karakkatil	MMB	Member
Bro. S. Rajan	SHJ	Member
Bro. Joy Kakkatil	CST	Member
Bro. Alphonso	SSP	Member

Ex- Officio.

Bro. JosephKongola	CST.	Gen.KRAB.Presi
Bro. Julius.	CMSF	DARB.President
Bro. ThomasKurian	CMSF	KRAB. Sec
Bro.Xavier Antony	CMSF	KARB. President.
Bro. Ambrose	MB	CRI Staff
Bro. Adaikalam	SHJ	CRI, principal
Bro. George	SG	CRI Director

Appointed

Bro. Jesudass	SSP	Exec. Sec.
---------------	-----	------------

18. **Conclusion:**

Today National Assembly of Religious Brothers, India (NARBI) is an accomplished fact. It is well settled with a National Secretariat and managed consistently well under the stewardship of the NARBI National Board with an able President and an efficient Executive Secretary. During the course of these years Regional Units have been started. The thirteen National Conventions and the Programs of the Regional Units have created better awareness and better impressions about the richness and uniqueness of Brothers' Vocation not only among themselves but also among the hierarchy, the clergy, the men and women Religious and the people of God.

we can clearly see in these developments the clear assistance of the Holy Spirit, who has been guiding the destiniers of NARBI during these years from 1976 onwards till today. May the loving Heavenly Father continue to bless NARBI and walk the path with Jesus, our Brother, and guide us to play our unique Role in building up God's Kingdom. May St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron of the Brothers be our Role-Model.

NOTES

1. Cfr. CBCI Report, Hyderabad, January 4-13, 1976. P.186
2. Cfr. Fr. E.Zeitler S.V.D. Circular NC/BR/CIRC/8/76, NVSC, Poona, dated 12th August 1976.
3. Circular NC/BRC/CIRC/17/76/, NVSC, POONA, Dated October 1976
4. Circular NC/BRC/CIRC/17/76/, NVSC, POONA, DATED October 1976
5. NC/VA/BR/616 - 618/35, NVSC, POONA
6. Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, NVSC, Poona
7. Cfr. NC/CRI/B/Con/CIRC/30/78, NVSC,POONA, dated 1st December 1978.
8. Ibid

9. Cfr. NC/CRI/B/CON/388/25. NVSC, POONA, DATED 16th November 1978.
10. Cfr. Mani Mekkunnel (ed.) You are All Brothers. NVSC. Poona, Introduction.
11. Fraternity, Vol 3, No.1. September 1982, pp.36 - 39
12. Souvenir, Call to Ministry, The Third National Convention of Religious Brothers, Alwaye, 1985, pp. 117 - 119.
13. Souvenir, Towards a New Understanding of Vocation in the Church, The fourth National Convention of Religious Brothers Coonoor, 1958
14. Souvenir, The Sixth National Convention of Religious Brothers, Kerala, 1994, PP.77-79
15. Cfr. Fraternity, vol 24, no. 2, September 2005, PP.6-10
16. Cfr. NARBI Souvenir 2014
17. The author does not claim that this article is exhaustive, as the needed source materials were not available, any inconsistency is regretted.
