

Testimonies

Testimony of a Lithuanian psychologist

I, Vilma, psychologist by profession, would like to present my most sincere respect and acknowledgment of Fr. (Prof) J. Mariakumar SVD & Ms. M. Pereira for the retreats and private counselling.

I am very happy that for three years in a row I have an opportunity to participate in the retreats and observe private counselling with their permission.

It is a wonderful opportunity given to me. First of all – it's a big assistance for me to grow in faith and holiness; and secondly, as a result of it, it is an opportunity to look at the problems of other people and its deep roots with the new look.

While studying and working as a specialist of employment, teacher and finally a psychologist, I often meet with very superficial attitude (definitely, without the perspective of faith). Because of this I did not want to raise my qualification studying at any psychotherapy college, or to continue my studies in doctorate. In Lithuanian universities psychology programmes are overloaded with the analyses of theories, statistics; there is a huge lack of practical occupations; played or recorded situations are demonstrated for students. Such thing as a possibility for a junior specialist to watch senior, more experienced, counselling in Lithuania is absolutely impossible.

Observing Father's and Mary's private counselling helped me to experience the material of conferences, see problems of people through the Word of God and witness quick recovery from traumas and emotional wounds. It was very interesting to observe how the information of the problem is collected. It

was new for me, that people have wounds from the mother's womb and infancy stage, and that it has after-effects.

I would like to learn counselling like this myself, because it is sincere, honest, and brings good fruits.

Spiritual and psychological problems constantly become more complicated, because Lithuanians have a lot of negative feelings, influences from other religions, as well, the amount of occult practises is rising every year. The number of suicides is rising (Lithuanians lead in suicide statistics in Europe and World). The work done by Fr. (Prof) J. Mariakumar SVD & Ms. M. Pereira is very needed for our country, so we hope, that they will come to Lithuania for this beautiful mission for more times.

Sincerely yours,

2014.06.14

A testimony addressed to the Provincial Superior of the India Mumbai Province – Fr. Paul Vattathara SVD

Dear Fr. Provincial!

During the last month I could participate in a retreat guided by Fr. James Mariakumar SVD and Ms. Mary Pereira. Since I was used to personal guided exercises in individual form or small groups for many years, I had to familiarize with the charismatic stile, many hours of conferences and common prayer in a big group during the whole day.

I'm impressed on the deep and lively biblical impulses given to a big and varied group by Fr. James an Mary, on their well-chosen appropriated advices for spiritual discernment and their indefatigable commitment, not only during the conferences, but also during all the hours of personal counseling – surely supported by their prayer and the prayer

of many others. During these days, by the conferences, sacraments and the counseling, I received healing in such a manner that I could not expect or foresee it.

Therefore I want to thank, first of all God, but also Fr. James Mariakumar and Mary Pereira as well as the organizers of the retreat, and at the same time also the Society of the Divine Word, specially your province, for the significant ministry you enable to be done by Fr. James and Mary Pereira for our church. It's really a continuous ministry in the service of the Divine Word, a faithful labor in the harvest field of the Lord. And I hope that it will be possible during the next years to grow also with the help of this ministry, so that even my life and effort can be more and more fruitful in the service of the Lord.

In gratitude and joy,

Raphaela Pallin

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I attended a retreat preached by Fr. James Mariakumar SVD and Ms. Mary Pereira on June 3 to 9, 2013 in Telsiai, Lithuania.

On the 4th day of the retreat Ms. Mary was speaking about different problems which are rooted in childhood and manifest themselves in people's present day. When she said that in order to eliminate the consequences it was necessary to find the causes, I remembered one event which threatened my life. As a grown-up person I sometimes would remember it, but not in the way I did while listening to her teaching. In faith imagination I saw myself in the then situation hiding under

the bed trembling from fear. The next moment Jesus bent down, reached me out and taking me into his arms carried me away. I could visualize Mother Mary there as well.

I am thankful to God for this experience during the retreat. May God bless both preachers and their mission which surpass the most professional psychotherapy.

With great appreciation and respect

Irena Daubariene, a participant of the retreat in Telsiai

**Testimony of a participant of the retreat, 11 – 12.08.2012
Süsterseel, Rhineland, North Rhine-Westphalia**

I just have to say, yes simply ... God's Holiness was last weekend in Süsterseel noticeable, tangible ...

It penetrated into me deeply and invaded me completely. Being like an earthenware vessel I was filled with the "Spirit of God", the power of the Holy Spirit flooded me totally – my whole personality being taken in possession by the power of God. Just as one of the water jugs at the Wedding Feast at Cana, (here the wedding celebration usually took several days, and they celebrated day and night) was my whole being transformed into something different / better and it got noticeably changed.

The whole atmosphere was from the first moment to the last one like a hymn of worship, filled with God's love.

This love was palpable by each retreat participant. The mutual communication was very friendly and cordial, even very confidential and respectful.

The words proclaimed by Fr. Mariakumar, and Mary Pereira, were "highly enjoyable". Every syllable was as a single note in a song of praise. And at the end of each class one got a perceptible impression of not only having heard a text, but

rather a precious symphony.

The wonderful and simultaneous translation of the spoken word was also a great pleasure.

These words penetrated warmly and confidentially into heart and mind.

My heart experienced happiness during the adorations and the Eucharistic celebrations. In the moments afterwards to be our Lord and Creator, his Son and our Savior and Redeemer, through the power of the Holy Spirit, entirely intimately close, was for me like I would float.

For these moments of happiness of my heart, and my whole being, I thank the Lord my God, I thank Fr. Mariakumar and Mary Pereira, thanks to all the priests who were present for the confession and thanks all who have contributed to this "heavenly" and unforgettable weekend for me.

An extraordinary sensation for me was when I could see that my two boys were attending the Holy Mass, my eldest was even at the healing prayer, and my wife is highly impressed with this experience of mine. (unfortunately she had to work, because she works in a nursing home).

May the Triune God grants us a good night and a good ending in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Maria with the lovely Child , send your Blessing upon all of us.

Best Regards
Joseph Mertens

We got together with Andrew

This is a testimony about how great is God and how miraculously he works in our lives

We have one common friend named John. I told him that I like Andrew and asked him to talk to him and find out if there is some chance for me. He indeed talked to Andrew and told him that I like him (not only his appearance but his character as well). Some three days later Andrew wrote me an e-mail saying that he finds me sympathetic as well, but he'd like to get to know me better. I was already in Paris. So we had long discussions through gmail every evening in order to find out more about each other. And we realized that we have a lot in common, most importantly, our attitude to life, goals, values and deep faith in God. We talk about God a lot and we share our experience, what we pray for and how God works in our lives. Also, I was praying every day to God so that his will be done in this matter – whether it would mean that we would stay just friends, or we would get together in love. And I was ready to sacrifice my love for the sake of God's will, if He had a different plan for me. So I prayed every day for this and my hope was growing. Also my love and appreciation of him was growing.

I told Andrew that I was going to spend a week in Taizé (the Christian community here in France) and I told him how much Taizé enriched me in my spiritual growth two years ago. So he decided to come to Paris and together with me to visit Taizé. He came to Paris two weeks ago on Friday, we spent a very nice weekend together and then we went to Taizé. The atmosphere in Taizé impressed him a lot. And it was there that he realized he likes me and appreciates me for my behavior, my good qualities and he gradually started to feel love for me. So last Monday we got together and since then we've been trying to build our relationship. Every day we pray for each other and we plead with God to guide us the right way and to bless

our relationship. And we also pray that God enables us to love each other with sincere and ever deeper love. We are both very happy to be together and we are very thankful to God for this gift that we've found each other.

Anne

From anxiety to joy

A testimony from Slovakia

My name is Lucia Palusova, I'm twenty-six and I would like to share with you my testimony.

For the first time I met Father James Mariakumar and Miss Mary Pereira in April 2010. I helped them as an interpreter during their retreats in Slovakia. I can say that from that April my life changed immensely. The previous months I had been rather frustrated and depressed because I was unable to get a job after finishing my university studies. Also, I suffered from many fears, such as fear from travelling to unknown places, meeting unknown people, fear that I will act silly and feel embarrassed, I was full of anxiety... And what was most paradoxal, I was afraid of interpreting!

The first change in my life was when Father James led me to a prayer before my first interpreting. When I stood up beside him and looked at the church full of people, to my amazement I didn't feel fear and I started interpreting – and I did it! Even though my interpretation wasn't perfect and from time to time I had to check if I understood right, people were listening attentively, with interest and they were thankful for my interpretation. I was very happy that God made me able to do it, because without Him I just couldn't do it.

As I was interpreting and listening to Father's and Mary's

classes, I came to realize many things and I changed attitudes in some areas of my life. For example, I stopped telling God in my prayers what He should give me (in my case it was a job I wanted), but instead I started to seek His will and surrender my future into His hands. I stopped saying: "God, please, give me this and that. Arrange this and that for me." I said to Him: "God, you know better what is good for me, you decide and I will accept your will." When I started thinking in this way, I felt no more anxiety and worries. My heart was filled with peace, joy and love. Believe it or not, as soon as I changed this attitude, in the very first week of my interpreting I got a job where I started to work from the following month. And that job was better than all other positions I had applied for before, so in the end, it was good for me that I wasn't successful in the previous job interviews, because now I got something better.

In the following months I felt very happy. I had a good job with a good team of colleagues, I was independent and free. Then I was accepted for a translation traineeship in Luxembourg. It was five marvellous months during which I made a lot of friends from all over Europe, I could travel with them around Luxembourg and the neighbouring countries (do you remember what I wrote that I used to be afraid of meeting new people and travelling?). I am very thankful to God for giving me this opportunity.

When I came back home from the traineeship, I was thinking again about what to do next, what job to get and so on. At first I sent some job applications and made one job interview, but then I decided that I want to do this interpreting for father James's retreat again this year. Practically it meant not getting any permanent job, but waiting for three months when Father James comes to Slovakia, and then interpret with him for three weeks. Sacrificing three months' job for the sake of three weeks for interpreting the retreat. Even though people around me might have thought I was crazy, I felt it was

a good decision because it was for God's glory. And now as I am again interpreting with Father James and Mary, it gives me a lot of spiritual strength and joy. One week when I felt a little nervous about interpreting, Father James again prayed with me, and since then I interpreted with much confidence and skill, with no fear or nervousness – because I knew it wasn't me, but the Holy Spirit who was giving me the right words on my lips. Without the help of the Holy Spirit I would never be able to interpret so well.

Now I look at my life and see that I am very much blessed and happy. There are so many things I am thankful for: I am healthy, I have nice relationships with my family members, a lot of trusty friends, interesting job and activities, I can travel and work in foreign countries, and still there is a tremendous peace, joy and love in my heart. See what miracles God made in my life!

And God healed not only me, but also my mother. Four years ago my father suddenly died because of a hidden sickness of his heart. My parents had lived twenty-five years in a happy marriage, so it was a terrible shock for my mother when she lost her husband. Of course, I loved my father very much as well, but I could cope with his death because I believe that he is now back in heaven with our Heavenly Father and one day I will meet him again in heaven. But for my mother this was a terrible shock which she couldn't bear. Even three years after his death she still suffered from deep sorrow. When Father James gave retreat in my hometown, I brought my mother to him for counseling. He explained to her that now she has to detach herself from her late husband, surrender him to the Lord and cling to her eternal husband – Jesus. Then he led her to a prayer and she was indeed healed from her sorrow. Now she is a joyful, lively person as she was before.

Lucia

“The purpose of our lives is to reveal God to man. Cast our nets deep into the sea of humanity and bring them to God. Each of us is called, unique and necessary for this task. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to realize the task of the fisherman”. (Pope Benedict XVI at his Investiture on 23.04.05)

I cannot lead a lukewarm Christian life. The blessings and gifts that I receive from God needs to be shared with others. The greatest blessing, I think, is the knowledge and experience that we have of God the Loving Father, the Salvation coming through Jesus Christ and the victorious living out of our Faith through the Power of the Holy Spirit and through the graces we receive through the Sacraments. Thanks be to God for the powerful intercession of the Mother of God and the Communion of Saints assisting us in this pilgrimage.

Am I keeping these blessings buried within myself ? What am I doing to share it with others so as to multiply it? Let us be reminded of what Jesus has taught us through the Parable of the Talents. We have no time to waste....

Sleeper awake; rise from the dead. And Christ shall shine on you. (Eph 5.14)

Mary Pereira