

Reflections at 85!
By: Mr Abraham.T. Ninan
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As one of the older- perhaps the eldest- member of the Azhikkakathu family- I complete 84 years tomorrow- let me convey some of my reflections to the younger members.



It is with a great sense of gratitude to God Almighty who led me and the whole family through various experiences in life that I write these words.

I am sure that the positive values of Christian faith that our fore fathers and mothers passed on to us is the foundation on which this Kudumbam is based and I hope this will continue in the younger generations too. Generations pass on but the values imbibed live on in the younger ones.

My memories of the Kudumbom begin with the stories I have heard about the five brothers including my grandfather- Avarachen, who set up home in Thattarethu. He was blessed with one son Kunjucherkan (T.A.Ninan)- my father- and five sisters. After his early schooling in Ayroor he was sent to Kottayam M.T.Seminary where the Head Master was Mr. C.P.Thomas. He

was commended for his English Language proficiency, unique handwriting style and athletic performances. He distinguished himself in the Rubber plantations in Thodupuzha and Malaya. My industrious, efficient and God fearing mother was a good influence to the entire clan in her life time.



Valsa and I are spending our retirement at the moment in Kuala Lumpur. We have been traveling quite a bit recently and had some almost unexpected and blessed experiences apart from the joy of spending time with our children, grand children, many relatives and friends. The trip took us around San Francisco, Laguna beach in Orange County, Las Vegas- the sites around that rocky desert were surprisingly amazing, including the Red rock Canyon, the Hoover Dam and of course the Casinos- Then on to Vancouver in Canada including even a one week long cruise to Alaska- the highlight of our trip. It is sad to think that the glaciers are being diminished by the global warming. We saw the glaciers floating all around the ship. But we were told that some glaciers keep growing also. It was an absolutely surreal experience to pick up and hold a large piece of glacier in my hand! We also saw very many sea animals- orcas humpback whales, porpoises etc and some black bears in the forests. It was amazing to see how the Canadians take care of the Salmon in their rivers.

We were also up on the high mountain at Whistler Park- the site of the Winter Olympics 2009. The waterfalls and lakes were breath taking. Also visited Vancouver Island - two hours journey by ferry.

We got to see the skeleton of a huge whale in a museum at the University of British Columbia. We were told its heart was the size of a small car. It was easy to imagine Jonah in the whale's belly kneeling and calling out to God.

The Church we attended in Las Vegas was like a huge theatre. The service was attended by thousands- like a convention. They still have outreach programs and smaller bible classes and cell groups etc. We usually attend a Baptist Church in Vancouver whenever we are there and this time also attended a Lutheran Church in San Francisco. They all make you really comfortable worshipping in their midst.

Sure this was a small part of the American continent that thrilled us. There are still plenty of exciting views in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, China, Japan, all over the world, even in India to be seen and enjoyed.

I have no doubt, travel is very educative- even at my age(!) It enlarges one's perspective about life in general and it is my advice we should all widen our horizons, see the variety in nature and learn about how other people live and understand their circumstances too. So I would advise our younger generation to make the best use of any opportunity they get to travel around.

It has been my wish these past few years to see a web site for our family and am glad it has taken form and am grateful to those who initiated it. Let us continue to keep it alive and interesting for the younger members too.

Another disappointment I used to feel is that there are no ordained members of the clergy from our family. But now when I see how a number of our members have served the government and in the private sector creditably and with absolute integrity even in difficult circumstances, I feel, perhaps that is even a better witness.

Let me conclude with a quotation from 'Fit Me In Somewhere', by G.Kelly in Spoken Worship:

"Fit me in somewhere, in this giant jigsaw, God, somewhere in this work of art you're working. Select a space my shape can fill"