

**Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,**

*A short note about the Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health, on her birthday.  
We wish you a happy **BIRTHDAY** dear loving Blessed Mother Mary - pray for us.*

In the year 1550, a shepherd boy named Tamil Krishnannesti Sankaranaranayam was performing his usual duty of carrying milk from Vailankanni to his master at Nagapattinam. Despite the morning freshness, fatigue overcame him as he was passing by a water pond at the Anna pillai street at Vailankanni. Placing the milk-pot near the banyan tree by the water pond, the boy fell into an unusual slumber, only to be startled to his feet by the sweet vision of a beautiful Lady holding in her hand a most charming child of divine appearance. As the boy was still taken by surprise, the Lady asked for some milk for her child which the boy then reverently offered.



The impatient master did not believe the story of the boy. But to the greater astonishment of all present, the milk began to surge over the pot and flow out. On reaching the place of apparition, the gentleman and others began to believe in her appearance. This place began to be called, "Matha Kulam" (Our Lady's Tank).

In the year 1600, around the end of the 16th century, a poor widow and her lame son lived in Vailankanni. Every day the lame boy used to sit under a banyan tree at a place called 'Nadu Thittu' (central mound) and sell buttermilk to the thirsty wayfarers. One day, a very bright light appeared in front of him and from amidst the light, a Lady of peerless grace with a divine Child in her arms, asked the boy for a cup of buttermilk. Then, She directed him to go and inform a catholic gentleman at Nagapattinam to put up a Chapel in her name on the spot of her apparition. The boy realized that his legs had become normal upon the word from the Lady. With great joy, he ran to Nagapattinam to carry out the errand. Having been already directed in a vision by Our Lady, the Catholic gentleman, with the support of the people, built a Chapel at 'Nadu Thittu' where now stands the present Shrine Basilica. The Lady was called, 'Our Lady of Good Health'.

In the 17th century, a Portuguese merchant vessel was caught in a giant storm in the Bay of Bengal as it was sailing from Macao in China to Colombo in Ceylon. The helpless sailors prayed fervently for Mary the Star of the Sea to save them.

On Sep 8, 1650, they vowed to build a Church in her name, wherever they could land on. The stormy sea became calm. Their ship landed near the shore of Vailankanni on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady.

They transformed the thatched Chapel erected by the catholic gentleman of Nagapattinam into a beautiful stone-built Chapel. On their next visit, they decorated the Altar with porcelain plates, illustrating biblical themes. These plates giving testimony to their thanksgiving to Our Lady, are seen even today around the throne of the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Good Health, over the main altar of the Shrine Basilica. From that time the Feast of Our Lady of Good Health is celebrated every year preceded by hoisting of the flag on August 29th.

On Sept 1771 Vailankanni which had been a substation of Nagapattinam Parish, was raised to the status of a Parish.

In the year 1920, the Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health was renovated for the first time.

In the year 1933, the Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health was renovated for the second time.

His Holiness Pope John the XXIII, raised the Shrine to the status of 'Basilica' on the 3rd of November 1962. The apparitions of Our Lady, the Miraculous statue of Our Lady, the countless miracles, the magnificent architecture and beauty of the Shrine, were the motives for this Shrine to become a Basilica.

In the year 1975, the extension Basilica was blessed and opened.

In the year 1985, the little Chapel at Our Lady's Tank, was rebuilt and blessed

On Dec 31, 2012, Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the Basilica Shrine of Our Lady of Health.

**Dear Blessed Mother Mary intercedes for us to your son.**



In Christ,

Fr. Sengol Bazil

**Fr. Xavier Sengol Bazil**  
*Parochial Vicar*