



FEAST OF ST ALPHONSA

ST. ALPHONSA SHRINE CHURCH AND PILGRIM CENTRE



**Panchayat/
Municipality/
Corporation**

Kuravilangad Panchayat

District

Kottayam

**Nearest Town/
Landmark/ Junction**

Pala Town– 5 Km

Nearest Bus station

Mary Giri Bus Stop – 600 m

**Nearest Railway
station**

Ettumanoor Railway Station – 11.9 Km

Nearest Airport

Cochin International Airport – 65.3 Km



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TIME

DATES

July

FREQUENCY

Annual

DURATION

10 Days

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL (Legend/History/Myth)

Saint Alphonsa lived a saintly life and was recognized as a saintly person during her lifetime. Even at a young age she showed a great zeal for suffering and she used to pray fervently and longed for sacrifice and fasting as and when possible. She believed that she must endure all things that tests her will and offer them to the Lord. It is said that in spite of her painful diseases, she was cheerful to the last. It was her students who established the cult of Saint Alphonsa. After her death, they began visiting her tomb and offering prayers. As they continued, they started receiving favours. Ever since, her tomb has been a centre of pilgrimage and innumerable miracles. The first officially confirmed miracle was that of, a disabled child miraculously cured of his ailment and his limbs restored, due to prayers at the altar of Sister Alphonsa's shrine. The miracle was approved in 1985 and the beatification of Sister Alphonsa was proclaimed by Pope John Paul II, during his visit to India in 1986. There is a two floored structure in front of the shrine which was originally the Papal podium for the beatification ceremony on 8 Feb.1986. Sister Alphonsa became Saint Alphonsa after she was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI at a ceremony at St. Peter's Square, Vatican on 12 October 2008. The Clarist convent where Sr. Alphonsa lived is located near St. Mary's Syro-Malabar Catholic Forane Church in Bharananganam. There is a museum adjacent to the convent chapel where the personal belongings of the Saint are well preserved. The feast is celebrated on the death anniversary of the saint which falls on 28th July. It was on this day in 1946 that Alphonsa flew off on the wings of grace to be in the beatific presence of her Maker.



RELEVANCE-
(Local / National / International)

Local



NO. OF PEOPLE PARTICIPATED

Approximately 10,000

EVENTS/PROGRAMS

Novena
Candle-Lit Processions
Special Services
Special Prayers

DESCRIPTION *(How festival is celebrated)*

On the 9 days preceding the feast, Novena, Candle-Lit Processions and Special Services are held. The con-celebration of the Eucharist, the proclamation of the divine word and the Novena on all the 9 days are led by Bishops. On the feast days, *Bharananganam* and its environs are deluged by tens of thousands of devotees, cutting across denominational and religious divides. They come, they pray, and they go home filled with divine grace and an ineffable peace. St.Alphonsa's life blew out like a candle after radiating sweetness and light all around for a short span of time. The candle-lit rosary procession held on all the 9 days preceding the Feast of the saint on 28th July starts from the shrine church at around 6.15 P.M. after the Ladeenju, the Mass and the Novena, circumambulates the St.Mary's Forane church and ends at the beginning. The devotees participate in the procession with spiritual fervour and interiorize the kenotic life of St. Alphonsa, a perfect paradigm of ideal cenobitic life. The procession ends with solemn blessing at 7.00 p.m. Thereafter, devotees also can pay homage to the relics of the Saint.

