

MISSIONARIES OF ST.FRANCIS DE SALES – MSFS SOUTH WEST PROVINCE - INDIA



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Circular AB/1

10 July, 2011

My dear Confreres:

Fraternal Greetings to each one of you from Vinayalya, Bangalore! On May 16th, 2011 at the MSFS Provincial House in Morogoro, Tanzania, our beloved Superior General, Very Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes appointed me as the Provincial of the South West India Province. I accepted this responsibility fully aware of my limitations and inadequacies, totally trusting in the unwavering love of God who called me into the MSFS family, in a spirit of obedience to God's sometimes surprising ways, and trusting in the good will and confidence you have placed on me. The installation ceremony on June 12, on Pentecost Sunday, was an overwhelming and humbling experience for me and it was great to have so many of my confreres both at the Eucharistic table and at the family meal. Many of you from far and wide contacted me assuring me of your prayers and support. I thank each one of you sincerely for your loving presence, assurance of prayers, and brotherly support in our journey together as missionaries and as members of one religious family.

Thank You ...

I am deeply thankful to our Superior General with whom I had the opportunity to work during the last four years in the General Administration. He has been a Big Brother to me and a source of great support, encouragement, and inspiration. I am grateful to Rev. Father Thomas Cherukat, the Assistant General, Rev. Fathers Noel Rebello, George Parampukattil, Thumma Mariadas (General Councillors), and Rev. Fr. Augustine Mangatt (General Bursar) as they have been a huge part of my life during the past four years. It was such a joy to work with the General Curia.

I thank Rev. Fr. Mathew Kozhuppakalam, out-going Provincial for his committed service to the mission of our Congregation in the S.W. India Province. I experienced Fr. Mathew as a person who so loved the Congregation and the Province selflessly that he gave himself totally to the growth and development of our mission during the past five years of his leadership. Every community and every mission in the Province has a flavor of Fr. Mathew's determination to bring the Province to its highest potential. Together with my confreres in the Province, I pray that Fr. Mathew will have enough time to take care of himself and get back his lost energy and health.

On behalf of the Province, I thank Rev. Fr. Jose Kumbloickal who served as the Administrator of our Province for almost three months, meticulously attending to every concern in the administration and animation of the Province. I thank Rev. Fr. Kurian Karicakal and Rev. Fr. Santhosh Kumar who in spite of their manifold responsibilities, rose up to the occasion and worked extra time during the transition period. I remember Rev. Fr. Kurian Aranjaneyil (Sr.) of happy memories who has left us for his eternal reward while in office. I thank Fr. Benny Marangolil, our Provincial Bursar, for his efficient and effective financial management to make sure that each confrere is well taken care of, no matter there is economic depression or regression.

The S.W. India Province places on record the great initiatives and contributions provided by all the three previous Provincials, Rev. Fr. Thomas Cherukat, Rev. Fr. Jose Parappillil, and Rev. Fr. Mathew Kozhupakkalam, who with their dreams and vision prepared the ground and then launched into different Innovative Ministries and also opened and expanded avenues for Mission, Education, and Formation. They have given a strong foundation and direction to our Province. We are immensely grateful to them for all the blessings they brought into the Province. We will continue to associate closely with them and get their vision and expertise in taking our Province to the next level of growth in fulfilling the mission of the Church. We need to allow our past to bless our present and future. Provincials may come and go, administration will change from time to time, but our mission and vision enshrined in our Constitutions will never be compromised because it is not our mission but it is the mission of the Lord.

Our Blessings ...

Today S.W. India Province is blessed with many young confreres in formation, confreres who are perpetually professed and ordained ministers. We are perhaps the largest Province in the Congregation. We are blessed with gifted, talented, and daring confreres with missionary commitment all over the world. We have perhaps stretched ourselves too far in order to respond to the missionary needs of the Universal Church. Recently I had the opportunity to visit two of our confreres in Cameroon, Africa where they were working with a group of construction workers from 7 am to 7 pm in building a beautiful parish church. I met two other confreres in Chad who are educating a group of around twenty five boys with limited resources and a small house that serves as study hall, dining hall, recreation hall, chapel, and dormitory. If not for our confreres who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the mission of the Lord, those boys would perhaps never see a school. We are blessed with veteran missionaries in our Province who have sweated their blood in the mission territories of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. We have great preachers in our Province who are tirelessly preaching the Word of God through retreats, renewal programs, and healing ministries. We have experienced Formators and Professors in our seminaries and Institutes who are known for their academic and professional excellence. We have pioneering missionaries in the Philippines, Chad and Cameroon in West Africa, and in the villages of India who show to the people the missionary faces of our Patron and Founder. We have a quite a number of confreres engaged in different Innovative ministries (social and humanitarian), and parish ministries who witness to the people of God the spirituality of St. Francis De Sales and the missionary zeal of our Founder. We have many confreres working in Germany, Austria, France, and the U.S.A. with a tremendous sense of sacrifice to be at the

service of the people of God. We have many confreres specializing in different areas of ministry with a definite vision to be at the service of the Congregation. We thank the good Lord for bringing us together as a Province family that is vast, dynamic, energetic, and always ready to plunge into creative ministries. We will count our blessings every day and thank the Lord for what the Lord is accomplishing through his unworthy servants.

I chose the day of the Solemnity of Pentecost for installation as Provincial for a reason. Pentecost comes after the feast of Ascension every year. We have an image of Mary Magdalene in the gospel where she wanted to put her arms around Jesus and cling to him. Jesus said: 'Woman, do not cling to me. I have not ascended to my Father'. Jesus knew that clinging to the past wounds, hurts and memories would not allow him to ascend. In order to let the Spirit of God be released in our lives, we need to ascend to a new future, letting go of the old and refusing to cling to the past hurtful memories and disappointments. Pentecost happens when we allow the Spirit to enter the present moment and when we refuse to get stuck in the past.

As a Province we will not allow the past wounds and hurts to contaminate and torment our present. We shall not be prisoners of the past but a Pentecost people by ascending to new possibilities in mission, ministries and in community living. We are aware that the past will not go away but we will not let the past determine our present. We will continue with wherever we have planted the seeds of the Kingdom and we will work together with great determination for the mission of the Church. We are not only missionaries but also missionaries of St. Francis De Sales. We will always remain as missionaries with the spirituality of St. Francis De Sales and missionary zeal of Servant of God, Fr. Peter Mermier. To be missionaries in the post-modern world of today, we need to fight together any force that steals away the missionary dynamism of the members of the Province. We will stand together as a Province family and oppose any trend that weakens the missionary heritage of our Congregation. We will work united in heart and mind to check any attitude that sabotages our firm resolution to claim our missionary identity as Fransalians.

Please know that I need your co-operation, prayers, understanding, and blessing to pursue this ministry of leadership. Your valuable suggestions and timely feedback for the growth and development of our Province are always welcome. May the intercession of Mother of Compassion, our Patroness and St. Francis De Sales, our Patron help us in our missionary journey in the missionary spirit of Father Mermier.

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 2011

As per the requirements of our Constitutions the Provincial is to convoke the Provincial Chapter within three months after his appointment. With the permission of the Superior General, according to Article 228 of our Constitutions (to hold Provincial Chapter beyond three months after assuming office as Provincial), **I hereby convoke Provincial Chapter 2011 to be held in Vinayalaya, Bangalore from October 17th -21st. The provincial Chapter is truly an occasion for thorough evaluation, discovery of greater inner strength, and a joint attempt to find ways and means to make the spiritual life and the mission of the province more vibrant and effective (Art. 235)**

This is the first time we are going to have a Chapter and not a Congress in our Province. We had our last Congress around a year and nine months ago in October 2009. As a Province we have grown numerically, geographically, and in terms of various ministries. Our concerns and challenges are numerous. We need to look back and evaluate ourselves as a Province Family before we move into the next level of growth and expansion. There are different areas that need immediate attention and meticulous planning. We need to look beyond three years of one term of the Provincial Administration. We need a clear and definite short term and long term planning in areas of Formation, Education, Mission, and Innovative Ministries in Kerala, Karnataka, Chad-Cameroon, the Philippines, and our missionary presence in the affluent countries. We need to address the challenges that we face in our witnessing of the Religious, Community and Missionary spirit as Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales. We need to set priorities for our mission and ministry. All these demand a thorough and intense study, sharing, and planning first in the Apostolic Community level with greater involvement of all the confreres, and then taking the matter to the Chapter for deeper discernment and clarity.

Considering various processes involved in this matter and other organizational constraints, the Provincial Council that met in Vinayalaya on July 8 – 9, decided to have Provincial Chapter. **“It is obligatory on the part of all the members to participate whole-heartedly in the preparation for it” (Art. 235).**

The Theme: **RE-DISCOVERING MSFS IDENTITY: A PROPHETIC RESPONSE TO**

EMERGING THREATS TO OUR MISSIONARY LIFE AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

The Steering Committee:

The Provincial Council has constituted a Steering Committee to plan and organize the Provincial Chapter. The steering committee consists of Fr. Thomas Chennakattukunnel, Fr. Joshy Thazhathukunnel, Fr. Benny Koottanal, and Fr. D. Jeevan Prasad. The Convener of the Steering Committee (SC) is the Provincial and the Chairperson of the SC is Fr. Benny Koottanal.

Election of Delegates to the Provincial Chapter

The Election Process for the election of the Delegates to the Provincial Chapter will begin soon. The Provincial Council has decided to choose the Second Method as given in the General Directory (Article 273) to elect all delegates. **The Provincial and his Council establish different electoral colleges on the basis of geographical areas or types of ministry. ... Each electoral college elects the number of delegates allotted to it.** The different electoral colleges based on geographical areas will therefore elect the number of delegates allotted to it. The list of confreres eligible to vote and be voted for, different electoral colleges based on geographical area, ballot papers, and directives for election process will reach you shortly. All the Apostolic Conveners kindly keep in mind that once the ballots reach the confreres, the first round of the election of the delegates has to be completed before 10th August, 2011 and the second round of elections has to be completed by 31st of August 2011 and the ballots should be sent to the provincial's office latest by these cut off dates.

GENERAL CHAPTER 2013

The General Chapter 2013 was convoked by the Superior General with the theme “I want Mission – MSFS Mystics of God’s love for prophetic ministries today”.

Preparation for the 19th General Chapter 2013: A light green booklet from Rev. Fr. Superior General in preparation for the 19th General Chapter is made available to all the confreres. This booklet explains the ways in which each confrere can participate in the General Chapter. The Apostolic Communities should arrange their meetings to study three working papers in the booklet and the report has to be sent to the Provincial as per the time-frame given in the booklet. Please read the directives and study the Working Papers of the Chapter as a preparation for the General Chapter. I invite us all to start praying ‘the Prayer to the Holy Spirit’ for the General Chapter. Election of Delegates to the General Chapter 2013 will also begin soon.

Congratulations and Prayerful wishes to the newly appointed Provincials

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil- Provincial of East Africa Province, Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhiyil- Provincial of Nagpur Province and Fr. Vincent Lourduswamy- Provincial of Pune Province. We wish them all the best and abundance of God’s graces in their ministry.

The Constitution Growth Retreat: Constitution growth retreat for the third group of participants will be held in Vinayalaya from October 10-14, 2011. It is obligatory for those who have not yet participated in this retreat to do so as it is mandatory for all the confreres in the Congregation, according to the directives of the Superior General. I invite all of us (who have not yet made this retreat) to go through this community and spiritual exercise without fail as a sign of our unity and family spirit for renewal.

Gulbarga/Shimoga Mission: After sufficient period of study, prayer, and discernment, the Provincial Council decided to implement the Action Plan (on Gulbarga-Shimoga Mission) that was clarified in the last Provincial Congress and re-confirmed during the meeting of Provincial administration with General Administration in November 2010. Four of our confreres will pioneer into these missions soon in view of exploring and discerning the possibility of implanting the missionary presence of our Congregation in the two new dioceses of Karnataka, at the request of respective bishops. We are grateful to our young confreres Fr. Dorai Swamy, Fr. Anand Ekka, Fr. Tony Ernyakulathil, and Fr. Timson Parakottil who accepted this missionary adventure in the spirit of our dear Founder Fr. Peter Mermier.

Appointments:

Name	Place	Appointment	With effect from
Fr. Edasseril Jose	MSFS House Kannur SFS School, Kannur	Superior Correspondent	15 th July 2011
Fr. Choorapuzha George	Divya Jyothi Ashram, Bathery	procurator	15 th July 2011
Fr. Kulangarathottiyil Sebastian	MSFS Community Ulickal Prateeksha Boy’s Home	Superior Warden	5 th July 2011
Fr. Ummikuzhiyil Cyriac	Our Lady of Vailankanny Church, Yelehanka New Town	Asst Parish Priest	3 rd July 2011
Fr. Vechuvettickal Jose	MSFS House, Kannur SFS School, Kannur	Procurator Principal	15 th July 2011
Fr. Kizhakkethazhe Francis	St. Francis de Sales Church, Vattiyoor kavu	Parish Priest	15 th July 2011

Fr. Ponnambel Josey	K.C.B.C, Cochin	Secretary- Commission for Social harmony & Justice. KCBC	15 th July 2011
Fr. Chirackal Justin	St. George Forane Church, Kattappana	Asst Parish Priest	18 th July 2011
Fr. Pulpara Joseph	Jyothi Nilaya, Calicut	Superior, Director&Treasurer	15 th July 2011
Fr. Kollarayath Jaison	Prateeksha Boy's Home	Director	1 st July 2011
Fr. D. Doraiswamy	Gulbarga Mission	Superior	15 th July 2011
Fr. Ekka Anand	Gulbarga Mission		15 th July 2011
Fr. Parakotttil Timson	Shimoga Mission	Superior	15 th July 2011
Fr. Ernyakulathil Tony	Shimoga Mission		15 th July 2011
Fr. George Mariaraj	Prateeksha Boy's Home	Asst. Director	26 th June 2011
Fr. Elanjimattathil Boban	St. Josephine Bakhita Parish at Ekoumdoum	Asst. Parish Priest	15th July 2011
Fr. Manoj Arackal	Chad Cameroon Mission	Mission Procurator	October, 2011
Fr. Panamattathil Gijo	LCI Arusha	Designated to be on the staff	November 2011
Bro. Neyampakulam Joshy	Sannidhi, Mysore	At the service of the community & completion of B.A	

Bro. Prabhu Prakash from Tejas Vidya Peetha was ordained deacon on 29th June 2011. Congratulations!

Perpetual Profession



On June 1, 2011 during a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided by Rev. Fr. Jose Kumbolickal, the Provincial Administrator, five of our dear Brothers; A. Antony Sathiya Seelan, Chirackalpurayidathil Anish, Jeevan Prashant, Manjackal Jijo and Olickal Sijo, made their Final Commitment to the Lord. The Provincial Administrator, receiving their vows, officially accepted them into the Congregation as permanent members. It was attended by confreres and family members of the Brothers. On the same day eight of our brothers renewed their vows. Congratulations to

our newly perpetually professed confreres and those who renewed their vows.

First Profession



On 9th June 2011 ten novices belonging to the South West Province and five novices from Pune Province after completing one year of their Canonical Novitiate made their First Profession at Snehajyoti Ashram, Makkiyad. Rev. Fr. Mario D'Sousa presided over the Eucharistic celebration and received their vows. It was a joyful day for the Novitiate Community at Makkiyad as the first batch of fifteen novices made their first commitment to the Lord in the presence of a gathering of priests, religious, neighbors, parents and relatives of the novices. The newly

professed attended an Orientation program from June 10 - 12 in Vinayalaya in preparation to their Philosophical formation in Suvidya College. We have a new group of fifteen brothers who began their novitiate after the initiation ceremony on May 30th. We appreciate the services of Fr. Sebastian and Fr. Joby in the formation ministry.

Admission to Postulancy at SFS Ettumanoor: On the 18th of June 2011 we the members of the SFS Seminary community had great rejoicing and gladness because it was on that day for the first time, after assuming his office as Provincial, Very Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil made his official visitation to our community. He arrived at 4 pm and was officially welcomed by the students and the staff. Rev. Fr. Provincial presided over the solemn Eucharistic celebration and in the homily he unfolded the mystery behind the Holy Trinity in clear and simple terms. He exhorted the members of the community to lead the religious life after the example of the Holy Trinity. After the homily the Provincial presided over the Rite of admission to the Postulancy and admitted 33 of our candidates to the year of Postulancy. He made them understand the significance and the importance of postulancy as a period of preparation for the Novitiate. The solemn Eucharistic celebration came to an end at around 7.30 pm after which there was the agape.

Fr. George Valliamthadathil.

Congratulations to **Fr. Christopher Crasta** and **Fr. Wilson Kottam** who have completed their Ph D.

A viva voce examination for **Fr. Wilson Kottam** for his Ph.D degree in Journalism and Mass Communication was held in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Calicut University on 22 June 2011. His doctoral thesis was: “**A study on the impact of computer animation on children in three cities of Kerala (Calicut, Cochin and Trivandrum)**”. After the successful completion of the viva voce examination, the Board of Examiners awarded Ph.D to Fr. Wilson Kottam. Congratulations on your achievement!

Fr. Herold Christopher Crasta, successfully defended his thesis on 8th June 2011 at Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala. He did his research in History on the theme, “**Social**

Formation of Siddhis in Dharwad and Karwar Districts of Karnataka.” Siddhis, the only African Diaspora found in Indian sub-continent are migrants from East Africa. The doctoral thesis discussed their history, present day problems and suggestions for their emancipation. Congratulations on your achievement!

Congratulations to Fr. A. Prashanth Kumar who has completed his B.Ed studies with first class.

SFS School, Ettumanoor Secured 100% results in the CBSE exams to the 10th and 12th Classes for the academic year 2010-2011.

Class	Number of students	Distinction	First Class
X	44	41	03
XII	68	40	28

Recollections 8 with St. Francis de Sales July 2011-March 2012

The eighth set of annual Salesian Recollections has already given to you. The purpose of the Salesian Monthly Recollections, as indicated in Fr. Superior General's letter of 27th November 2001, is to motivate us to live in a more vibrant and witnessing way our SALESIAN Vocation and Spirituality. We thank the Commission that has prepared this set of Recollections.

Ordination: Dn. P. Maria Lawrence will be ordained a priest on July 23, 2011 at 05.30 P.M., at Our Lady Health of Christians Church, Mathakottai, Tanjavor Diocese, by Rt. Rev. Dr. Antony Devotta, Bishop of Tiruchirapally.

Promotion to priesthood

Deacons **Emile Paulin Amougou Amougou, Robin Thonikuzhiyil and Kujur Kuldeep** in our Chad-Cameroon Mission are promoted to the Sacred Order of Priesthood.

Promotion to renewal of Vows in Chad-Cameroon

Bros. Ayissi Parfait and Christophe Abesouguie are promoted to renewal of Vows.

Orientation Program in Sannidhi. There are 18 students in Sannidhi for the year 2011-2012.

SFS Seminary, Ettumanoor has 26 first years, 24 second years and 29 third years in the new academic year

In Divyajyothi, Latapara we have two students this year.

Pray for:

Mr. T.T. Philip, father of Fr. Joshy Thazhathukunnel who passed away on 16th June 2011. He was 81 years old.

Change of Address

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Change of Phone numbers and E-mail ID

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ITSSCAT – India

The Institute of Talent Search for Social Change and Transformation of India (ITSSCAT – India) with the primary aim to train the intelligent and economically underprivileged children to civil services has already started functioning from the 23rd of May 2011. This program is currently conducted in a rented house close to Karamana approximately 3 kms away from Thiruvananthapuram railway and bus station.

We have admitted six 8th standard students (boys) who are very good in studies (all with A grade) and are from economically underprivileged families from Kerala. They go through civil services training along with their regular school education at St. Mary's H.S.S, belonging to the Archdiocese of Thiruvananthapuram (Malankara). The students are by now introduced to the civil services' basic training like, character formation, role modelling, reading skills, study skills, language skills, memorizing, disciplining oneself through yoga and meditation, basic motivation, etc. There has been good support and cooperation from people near and far. The address of the Institute:-

De Sales Bhavan, ITSSCAT – India, H.No. E.49, Sasthri Nagar East, Kunchalummoodu,
Karamana P.O, Thiruvananthapuram – 2, Kerala. Ph. 0471 2341498. *Fr. Jose Karekatt*

Blessing and inauguration of the nursery section of SFS School, Hebbagodi

The foundation stone of SFS Nursery School, Hebbagodi was laid by Rev. Dr. Mathew Kozhuppakalam, the former Provincial on 27th July 2011. Through systematic planning and guidance, we were able to complete its construction on record time. The nursery block was inaugurated by Rev. Dr. Abraham Vettuvelil, the Provincial of the South-West Province and blessed by Rev. Dr. Jose Kumbolickal, Councillor in charge of Formation on 25th June 2011. Rev. Dr. Abraham our new Provincial, Fr. Joseph Thayil, our new Manager and all other dignitaries present on the occasion were given a very warm welcome to SFS School in a solemn function which preceded the blessing and inauguration. *Fr. Soby Maroor*

Installation of the New Provincial

June 12, 2011 was a special day of joy and thanksgiving for the South West India Province as Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvelil was installed as the Fourth Provincial. The installation of the new Provincial on the Solemnity of Pentecost added meaning and color to the celebrations.



The celebration began at 5.30 p.m. with the Solemn Eucharist concelebrated by eighty priests and participated by the family and friends of Fr. Abraham, MSFS scholastics, and invitees from the neighboring seminaries and religious communities. At the beginning of the Mass, Fr. Jose Kumbloickal, the Provincial Administrator welcomed the entire gathering of confreres and distinguished guests. After the lighting of the lamp the new Provincial invited the community to a meaningful

celebration of the Eucharist. Fr. Jose Parappillil was the homilist who preached an uplifting homily highlighting the implications and challenges of ministry of leadership in the religious community.

After the homily, Fr. Jose Kumbloickal, the Provincial Administrator read out the “Appointment Letter” from Very Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes, the Superior General. The profession of faith was followed by the signing of the register by the New Provincial with Fr. Jose Kumbloickal and Fr. Kurian Karickal as witnesses. The new Provincial then washed the feet of four confreres who represented the missionary presence of the Province in Africa, India, the Philippines, and Europe/U.S.A. as a symbol of servant leadership.

During the gathering that followed immediately after the Eucharistic celebration, Rev. Fr. Dharmaraj (Provincial, South East Province), Rev. Fr. ThummaMariadas (General Councilor in charge of Mission) and Rev. Fr. Mario D’Souza (Provincial, Pune Province and the Chairman of PIF) expressed words of felicitation and best wishes.

The new Provincial in his address thanked the Superior General, General Administration, the outgoing Provincial and Administration, the Provincial Administrator, and all the confreres and the guests. He said: “We will count our blessings every day and thank the Lord for what the Lord is accomplishing through his unworthy servants in the S.W. India Province. Provincials may come and go, administration will change from time to time, but our mission and vision enshrined in our Constitutions will never be compromised because it is not our mission but it is the mission of the Lord”. The installation ceremony ended with a sumptuous dinner prepared by our own students from Tejas Vidya Peetha.



Dear Confreres:

Once again I appreciate all what you are and what you are doing for the mission of the Lord through our Province. I thank you sincerely for your understanding, support, and concern as I am just learning my ministry of leadership in the Province. When I accepted the responsibility, I had to re-organize all the programs that I set for the coming two years. With the permission of the people involved in different programs, I cancelled almost all the scheduled programs. However, I had to attend to the animation of the Constitution Retreat on Community Living for the two Provinces, North East India Province and Visakhapatnam Province. Again, I will be away for two weeks in September in the United States to honor two commitments with two groups that will be beneficial and supportive to our ministries in the Province. I am looking forward to meeting you all personally and in Apostolic Communities in the coming days. Let me conclude with a quote from St. Francis De Sales:

“Where human spirit fails, Holy Spirit fills.” *St. Francis De Sales*

Wishing you all the best in your ministry,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abraham', written in a cursive style.

**Fr. Abraham Vettovelil MSFS
Provincial**