

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



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**Circular MK/26**

**11 April 2010**

Dear Confrere,



## **He is risen Alleluia...**

We are in the Easter Season which invites us to radiate the peace and joy of the risen Lord. The message of Easter is that of hope. In the midst of difficult and complex situations of present day society, when the Church is going through one of her difficult times, and when truth is suppressed, the resurrection of Christ should be the source of hope and joy for all of us. When the future appears to be

bleak, when we find that there is no way out, the risen Lord says “do not be afraid.”

Resurrection is a challenge to those who believed that truth can be buried in a grave. It gives us the assurance that in the end truth, justice and love will prevail. It is this hope that we have to live especially during this Easter season.

The presence of Christ which was limited to Palestine during his earthly ministry has now with the resurrection become universal. From now on where two or three are gathered in His name, He will be there in their midst. The all pervading presence of Jesus can be experienced by all. Even today He is near to those who call on him in faith because He is only a prayer away.

Let us catch the revelation of Jesus in his resurrection. Let us say not merely, “Christ is risen,” but “I SHALL RISE” because we are an Easter people.

## **Special Retreat for the Year of Priests 2010**

The retreat for those who have not attended it in Charis Bhavan is from 26-30 April 2010 at Vinayalaya, Bangalore. The retreat will begin on Monday at 11am with the Eucharist and will conclude on Friday noon with the lunch. Those who are yet to register their names please do so immediately. As it is the follow up of the Action Plan of the Provincial Congress 2010, I request all those who have not attended the retreat at Charis Bhavan to attend the retreat at Vinayalaya.

## **My Visitation to Europe**

From February 18 – April 4 2010 I have been away in Europe to visit our confreres, benefactors and to have discussions with some funding agencies. Although it was bit tiring for me it was a good experience to be with the confreres.

## **The meeting of all the MSFS Confreres in GAH**

The meeting of all the confreres in Germany, Austria and Holland (GAH) took place in Rodenbach near Frankfurt. Fr. I. James is the Parish Priest of Rodenbach in the diocese of Fulda and forms a community there with Frs. Stephen J. and Edward Xavier. Fr. I James is also the coordinator of the Apostolic Communities in GAH. Fr. James along with the confreres made everything possible to have a good and meaningful meeting. The meeting took place in an atmosphere of cordiality and understanding. The meeting had the following purposes:

- a. to find ways and means of making our MSFS presence in a unified way in GAH
- b. To establish Inter-Province Neighborhood Local Communities
- c. To explore ways and means of establishing a juridical presence of MSFS in GAH
- d. To bring about a common minimum program and a plan of action for our effective life and mission in GAH.

## **Our Confreres in Germany**

As I had the joy of visiting Frs. James Mukalel and Joseph Pazhayattil on my way back from Cameroon in October 2009 I did not go to visit them this time. Besides Fr. James Mukalel had to come off to India to take part in the burial of his diseased elder brother and Fr. Pazhayattil had to come home to see his ailing mother. Fr. James Manjackal was busy with many of his retreats and so I could not meet him personally there. I had the joy of being with Frs. George Chirayil in Shernfeld , Tomy Mullassery in Wemding, Sibi Manickathan in Ochsenfeld, Thomas Mekattu in Berching , Binod Puthenpurackal in Gunzenhausen (all in the diocese of Eichstaett), Y. Mathias in Niedernberg (diocese of Wuerzburg), James Panickerveetil in Grafing in the Archdiocese of Munich and seeing Fr. Rajkumar and Fr. Joy Vazhapillil during the common meeting. As I fell sick during my visitation in Germany I could not also make the strenuous journey to Muenster to see Fr. Joy Vazhapillil who has presently rather independent charge of a Parish there. Fr. Rajkumar undergoes the German language course in Klausenhof near Muenster.

All our fathers are engaged in the pastoral ministry and were fully occupied especially in the Lenten Season. It is a matter of joy that their services are appreciated very much by the people, the respective Parish Priests and the diocesan authorities. They live a simple life and we are happy that a good portion of their salary is coming to the aid of the province to maintain the priests, the missions and structures. This is an occasion for me to say a word of thanks to all of them. Many of them also make attempts to find resources for the mission work of the Province.

## **Our Confreres in Austria**

I spent also some time with our confreres, viz. Frs. Bobby Puthenparambil, Sibichan Kochuveedu, Sen Vellakada and Joemon Cherolickal in Austria. Sibichan Kochuveedu is rendering his services in the Archdiocese of Vienna in the Parish of Neusitft am Walde, and Fr. Bobby Puthenparambil in the parish at Heinprechtspoella in the diocese of St. Poelten, both parishes entrusted to the care of the Augustinians. They are doing a good job and the concerned authorities are happy with them. I would like also to say a word of thanks to them as they also make part of their salary available for the works of the Province. Frs. Sen and Joemon are also assisting in Parishes not as full timers but as part timers. They are given lodging and boarding and a stipend for their studies. Both have already registered themselves in the University of Vienna and are hopeful of finishing their studies in the time allotted to them.

### **Our Confreres in France**

Frs. Viju Kunnathottel, Jose Puthiyaparampil (jr.) Binoy Kidangathukarot, Martin Richard and Johnny Cheruvil are lent to the Franco-Swiss Province. As they had already worked in our Chad-Cameroon Mission, they are fluent in the French language which facilitates their ministry there. Fr. Viju works in the Parish of ST. Mathieu in Genevois and has 7 communities (Churches) in the parish. Fr. Binoy was assisting him but will soon get a transfer to our school in Florimont/Geneva as chaplain (part time) and as assistant in a parish (part time). Fr. Jose has a parish of his own and still a member of the diocesan commission for the propagation of faith. Fr. Martin is the assistant to Jose. Fr. Johnny has been the assistant in the Parish of Les Allinges (the place where Francis de Sales stayed during the time of his mission in Chablais) and the Bishop has the intention of making him the Parish Priest in September. All are well-integrated into our communities in the Franco-Swiss Province. I had also meeting with Fr. Fournier, the Provincial and paid my respects also to Fr. Emile Mayoraz our former Superior General. They support some of our ventures in the Chad-Cameroon Mission.

### **Our Confreres in England**

Frs. Sunny Paul is since long a member of the English Province and is presently on a sabbatical but is chaplain in a school for the elite of London. He will be back again in the Province to take up his new assignment in one of the Parishes. Fr. Saji Neendoor is at Yeovil as assistant to Fr. Martin Griffin, the Provincial. I had also a discussion with Fr. Martin, the Provincial and he is happy with both of them. They have been well-integrated in the Province community. Fr. Benny Valiaveetil is still the assistant in the Cathedral Parish of Northampton and Fr. Rogi Kuttivayalil the assistant in St. Michael's Parish, Bletchley. I had an opportunity to meet the Bishop and the Vicar General of the diocese of Northampton and they are extremely happy with the presence of our confreres. Their Parish Priests also would not like to miss them from their Parish. Fr. Benny has completed his Masters in Counseling in the Heythrop Theological College and is registering for the doctorate. Fr. Rogi has already registered for doctoral studies in the University of Westminster, one of the best Universities of England for Media studies. Both of them have been granted a scholarship by the Bishop.

## **Our Confreres in Rome**

I made also a flying visit to Rome to see our Superior General. Fr. General is not only an expert in the Governance of the Congregation but also a welcoming host and a culinary artist. The open sharing I had with him was very encouraging and supporting. I thank him very much for his love and great heartedness. I also met Fr. Thomas Cherukat and Fr. Augustine Mangatt. Fr. Jerome who is doing his Doctorate in Canon Law in the Urbanian University in Rome hopes to complete the studies by June 2011. Fr. Sibichan Panthanmackel is already registered in the Gregorian University for his doctoral studies in Biblical theology and is busy learning Italian and Greek.

## **Our benefactors**

In Germany I visited our friends and benefactors especially Mrs. Annemarie Biechl and the Family of Sammer. We have wonderful people like Fr. Francis Xavier Eder, my former parish priest, who recently celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday and gave a big dinner to all his friends. (He requested them not to bring any personal gifts for him but the money they intended to buy him gifts should be paid to his account and he will make that money available for our mission work. He could collect about Euro 5400,-- and the money was put at our disposal. A bouquet of thanks to him). We have the whole family of Lehmaier (Mrs Lehmaier and her daughter sings for the passion play in Neumarkt, Germany and they made sure that part of the amount collected [Euro 3000] be sent for our mission work) and Mrs. Helga Maier who celebrated her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in October and as she refrained from getting any gifts for herself and she collected a sum of Euro 1600,-- and the departed Mrs. Wenefrieda Ablassmeier who died on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2009 who in her will and conversation with her daughter Katharina wished for herself no wreath or flowers on her corpse or grave but desired that the amount they intend to spend for this purpose be send for the poor children whom we support (people donated a sum of Euro 1600,--). I have loyal friends like the whole family of Maurer, the whole family of Manzeneder (their sons Johannes and Daniel visited us before two years), my friend Johannes Haas, our OSFS friends, Mrs. Greiner Waltraud, the family of Strobel, Weber, Glocker and others.

A visit to the abbot and other administrative authorities of the Augustinian monastery (Stift) in Austria is a must in all the travels as they are our benefactors who helped us a lot to build our children's village, Tejas and Prateeksha, the Boys Home in Hebbagodi. Our good friend Dr. Leopold Streit, a benefactor himself is unforgettable as he has connected us with so many people especially with the Stift who in their turn helped us to do many projects. Deacon Tony Schmid and his wife Emma who had recently an operation on her knee, with a group of friends are our constant supporters. Toni had 25 years of his service in the Parish as Deacon and he refrained from receiving any gifts on this occasion and put the money he received for it at the disposal of our mission and the street children of Rumania. I am also thankful to many people who help us. The handicrafts circle under the leadership of Franziska Tieber in Austria did a good work to find more or less enough money to build a home for the children.

I visited also Fr. Leo Tanner in Switzerland who is helping us to build a chapel in Tejas. On this occasion I also paid a visit to some funding agencies that have less and less money to fund but more and more projects. We are lucky if we can get one or the other projects sanctioned.

## **Change of Nationality by confreres in the Congregation**

All the provincials have received very important information from the **Superior General** and I wish to share with you excerpts from the letter.

“Let me share with you a very serious concern of confreres initiating on their own change of nationality without following proper procedures as outlined in General Directory 360 to 363. If such a practice is allowed unchecked by us, major superiors, it can have serious adverse consequences for the life and mission of the Congregation in days far ahead, when new generation of confreres will have to deal with the situations that may arise.

It may be the short term gains or conveniences that might encourage confreres to have recourse to change of nationality. Perhaps we are not aware of the long term disastrous consequences that can take place if such permissions are sought or granted without proper discernment. Therefore in this letter I want to explain my concerns to you before I give you specific directive in this regard.

The principle to be followed in the change of nationality was that in a country where the Congregation has no Major Superior, change of nationality would not be granted.”

### **Rationale for such a principle:**

1. Confreres changing nationality on their own make it difficult for the successive provincials at a given time to call such confreres to the country where they belong, and yet be responsible for them before civil and ecclesiastical authorities in that country.
2. If the confrere does not obey the Provincial, then both the confrere and the Provincial will be in difficult predicament. The Provincial will be obliged to begin the process of dismissal which will be unfortunate. Or the confrere, if the Provincial, is insistent, will get a Bishop to accept him in his diocese. In either case we could be held culpable for not foreseeing such situation and arresting it by having proper directives in place.
3. Without a major superior/Provincial/ Vice Provincial in the country, there is no person of the Congregation in that country with ordinary sufficient jurisdiction to address to the concerns of the confrere before civil and ecclesiastical authorities.
4. Refusal of confreres to return to the Province at times are referred to the Superior General by the Provincials or confreres for arbitration, intervention causing unwanted difficulties and involvement of the Superior General in matters that could have been avoided.
5. Only a major superior in a country can ensure financial stability and religious life properly supervised and directed.

In the light of the above observations and explanations, I hereby give this directive to all the Provincials of Indian Provinces and of the Province of East Africa with the consent of the General Council:

“No Major Superior/Provincial/Vice-Provincial will entertain applications for change of citizenship in a country where there is no Major Superior. All are to read carefully the relevant article of the General Directory, Number 360 to 363, and follow them.

The Provincials/Vice-Provincials/ will make this directive known to all those under their charge through personal letters, at the earliest.” This directive will be in force unless reviewed and revoked by the Superior General with the consent of his General Council.

### **Appointment by the Superior General**

1) Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS, Provincial of East Africa Province, is appointed as Superior Delegate of the Superior General of Lumen Christi Institute.

(2) Fr. Augustine Mangatt is entrusted the responsibility to mobilize finances for LCI.

We congratulate them and offer our support for this common venture of the congregation

### **Appointment to Suvidya College**

**Fr. Mendem Bhaskar** is appointed as the Procurator of Suvidya College by the Chairman of Suvidya Governing Body, Fr. Mario D’Souza. We are very thankful to **Fr. Joseph Thekkel** who did great works during the last six years in caring for the largest MSFS Community in the World. We wish him all the best for his future ministries in the North East.

### **Appointment in the Province**

**Fr. Kurian Aranjaniiyl** is appointed as Director of PSI Sevagram with immediate effect. He has been instrumental in building the first floor of PSI Sevagram which was inaugurated in a simple function on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2010. On this occasion I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Fr. Kurian Aranjaniiyl for his commitment to complete the work in time. We can be sure that PSI will continue to grow under the efficient leadership of Fr. Kurian as its Director and Fr. Jeevan Prasad as its Executive Director. Special thanks to Fr. Mathew Kalathungal and Fr. Abraham Puthussery for their constant help and support in the completion of the building.

### **New Secretary**

Fr. Prince Kurian Cheriyaakavil has taken full charge as the new Secretary with immediate effect. I make use of this opportunity to thank Fr. Jais for all the services he has done. With great care, love and a smiling face he received all the fathers and guests who came to the Provincial House. Personally I thank him for his spiritual and human support which

made some very hard times bearable and good for me. Thank you very much Jais for what you are and what you have done.

## **Studies**

**Fr. Raison Kaduvakuzhickal** is designated for MBA Studies in St. Joseph's College, Bangalore and will reside in Vinayalaya.

**Fr. Jais Mecheril** has started his studies in B.Ed. in Ramaiah College, Bangalore

**Fr. Balavendra Jacob** is designated to do his Masters in Pastoral Management in Jnanadeepa Vidyapeeth in Pune from June 2010

**Fr. Thomas Anchany** has started his B.Ed. Studies in Prasanna College of Education, Ujire, Belthangadi

**Fr. Prasanth Kumar** has started his B.Ed. Studies in Basveswara B. Ed. College, Haveri.

## **Let us pray for the Departed**

1. **Fr. Peter Chakkulickal** of South East Province died on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010. He was 66 years old

3. **Mr. Scaria Thomas Puthiapampil**, aged 79, the father of Fr. Johny Puthiapampil and the eldest brother of Fr. Jose Puthiapampil (Sr.) has passed away on 20th February, 2010.

2. **Mr. Thomas Mukalel**, the elder brother of Fr. James Mukalel died on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010. He was 65 years.

## **Seminar on Trends of Modern Education**

Fransalian education forum-Regional (FEF-Regional) is organizing a seminar for all confreres engaged in the apostolate of education on "Emerging trends of modern Education" at Goa from May 3 to 7. You are already informed about it through the Circular dated 18 December, 2009. You may have already received the letter and registration form from Fr. Joshy Thazhathukunnel. If not please contact him on his mobile. Mobile No: 0944 873 4970. Those engaged in the educational ministry have to take part in the seminar.

## **Other events and News**

- **Tejas Vidya Peetha**, our Institute of Mission-oriented and contextual theology, is organizing a "**Theology update program**" in the year of Priesthood from 12 – 14 May 2010 in Vinayalaya. Experts in Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology, Moral Theology and Canon Law deal with current trends in the area of their specialization. Separate invitation is enclosed herewith.

- **The Formators Forum Meeting** will be conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at Vinayalaya.

- **The Salesian Seminar 2010** will begin on 2 May at 6 p.m. and will end on the 7 May 2010 at noon. The Theme for the seminar is “Spiritual Empowerment at Various Stages of Life”. All are invited to participate in the seminar.

### **Congratulations:**

- Fr. **John Melukunnel** completed his B.Ed. studies in Koppal with distinction.

- **Fr. Vinoy Valachathinakath** completed his M.Th. in Biblical theology from St. Peter’s Pontifical Institute, Bangalore with distinction.

- **Fr. Benny Valiaveetil** completed his M.A. in Psychology and Counseling from Heythrop College, London

- **The 20<sup>th</sup> Convocation at Indian Institute of Spirituality took place on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010.** 51 students received diploma and 17 students received certificate in Spirituality. Very Rev. Msgr. S. Jayanathan, the Vicar General of the Arch-Diocese of Bangalore, presided over the Holy Eucharist and distributed the diplomas and certificates to the students. Rev. Dr. A. Rayappa, the President of St. Peter’s Institute, who was the chief guest of the convocation ceremony, delivered the keynote address.

- **SFS Public School-ICSE, Hebbagodi**, celebrated “Blooms 2010-lighting up dreams” the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Day, on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2010 in a colorful manner. Prof. Dr. B.S. Sonde Ph.D (Former Vice Chancellor, Goa University and Professor of ECE, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore) was the Chief Guest of the function, with Mr.R. Sharanappa (Former DDPI, Gulbarga) as the Guest of Honour. Rev. Fr. Benny Jacob MSFS presided over the function.

- **The 1st floor of PSI Sevagram, Kengeri** was blessed and inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Mathew Kozhupakkalam, in the presence of a small gathering of confreres on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2010. With the construction of a spacious additional floor there is enough facility for conducting any program.

- **A two day retreat** was conducted for the nurses on 13 – 14 March at **De Sales Bhavan, Mysore**. **Fr. Shalbin MSFS and Fr. Shino MSFS**, our confreres in charge of ministry to migrants in the diocese of Mysore, gave guidance for the retreat. More than 150 nurses from Apolo, Mother Teresa, JSS and Kamashi hospitals have participated in it. The retreat focused on the issues related to the youth and unsolved problems of nurses today. The retreat was consisted of counseling, confession, actions songs, thought provoking talks and adoration by Br Sunny, Jobins from Charis Bhavan and Fr Joseph CMI. After the retreat the participants felt the need of organizing regular prayer meetings in their hostel.

- **NEST : Home Day Celebrations on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2010**, was attended by number of confreres, well wishers and friends. Fr. Kurian Aranjanayil, the counselor in charge of innovative ministries presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. Mr. Abe T Ramapuram,



Vice Chairman, Orange county Resorts Pvt. Ltd. was the Guest of Honour. Children at NEST came up with beautiful and creative program which was greatly appreciated by all present. The Home Day celebration was an occasion to see and experience the growth and development of NEST and the children there. The program ended with dinner. Special appreciation to the staff of NEST for their dedication and commitment.

- **Fr. Shajan Manickathan** got his left leg amputated on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Hosmat hospital, Bangalore. Now he is recuperating at Vinayalaya. We pray for his speedy recovery.

- **Fr. M. Periyannayagam** is on holidays in India from our Chad-Cameroon Mission. Fr. **Thomas Payattukandathil** is expected on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

Your Brother in Christ

*Mathew Kozhuppakalam*

**Fr. Mathew Kozhuppakalam MSFS**  
**Provincial**

**One minute with St. Francis de Sales**

*"Let us belong to God forever, without end, without any reservation"*