

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



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SWIP Circular BK/22

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My dear Confreres,

Fraternal greetings to you from Fr. Benny. On this auspicious occasion of the celebration of Christmas, the Birth of Jesus, I come to you with a heart filled with gratitude to wish each one of you **Merry Christmas**. May the Child Jesus born in the manger be your light and guide into the New Year 2018. Let this Christmas become a time for us once again to define the meaning of our life in spite of the bends and curves that we find in our day-to-day life.

CHRISTMAS: PRESENCE OF GOD IN HUMAN VULNERABILITIES



My dear Confreres, as we enter into the thick of the celebration of Christmas we remind ourselves of the immediate need to have an external preparation. Hopefully all our religious communities are ready for the celebration of Christmas. A good amount of time is spent in distribution of

Christmas Cards and Cakes. Stars and Cribs have taken prominent places in front of our houses. Apparently we are ready to receive Jesus on Christmas Day. I believe that all these preparations communicate some important value for all of us. It certainly increases our community spirit, it evokes in us the importance of holding on to some

important traditions that are handed over to us and above all, it has lasting impact on the lives of the younger generation. **Let us celebrate Christmas meaningfully.**

On the other hand, my dear Confreres, looking at the fanfare and the pomp with which the 'new generation' celebrates Christmas, I really wonder whether we have lost the track in finding Jesus in the manger. Even when our parishes and communities proclaim vociferously through loud speakers the birth of Jesus, even when we preach so subtly and elaborately the meaning of Christmas, **there is an emptiness looming around us on the Christmas day because we are no more experiencing Christmas as a spiritual and personal event.**

Away from the externalities of the pomp and pageantry of Christmas through stars, cribs, crackers and delicious meals, **Christmas for me is the painful struggle of a young couple who tried to fit into their lowly lives the presence of the almighty God and the bothersome and frantic search for giving him a meaningful dwelling.** As we can derive from the Bible Joseph and Mary were not rich people. The kind of dress that they wore and the animal that they used to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem were ample enough to explain their humble status in the society. Possibly declared as a 'prostitute' by the society as she is 'illegally and immorally' pregnant with a child, Mary along with Joseph might have been already ousted from the society without any further societal dignity and tolerance.

The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was a lonely journey of a couple who didn't know how to handle life. Other than a wry smile on the face of Mary and a disparaging expression on the face of Joseph they had nothing more to celebrate. As they were treading almost 140 kilometers there had been questions aplenty for them to answer: **Will we be able to suffer the struggle of such scorching journey? Will the weather play havoc on our health? Will we have sufficient food to complete the journey? Will we get a place in the inn?** The rejection of a place in the inn was a heartbreaking experience for Joseph, the husband. The desire of a husband to provide habitat for his wife to deliver the child is inexplicable; the desire of a Father to provide homely shelter for his children is only natural. But think of the situation of Joseph who stands helplessly at crossroads to fulfil the basic human needs such as shelter, food and clothing.

My dear Confreres, the celebration of the first Christmas by Joseph and Mary was not one of pomp and glory. It is the story of the tears of a young couple who didn't know how to handle life effectively, who didn't have the possibilities to encounter and define life meaningfully. YES: CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT THE VULNERABILITIES OF LIFE AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF GOD.

My dear Confreres, very often we have secularized the unfathomability of Christmas. Often we celebrate it as a custom than as an experience. Christmas is the story of the humanity. Let us not stop it with our personal stories and limited happiness. The struggles of Joseph and Mary are the questions of the modern generation. The questions of Joseph and Mary are the normal questions that the refugees and nomads of modern world facing; these are the questions of the beggars and homeless around us. **Yes these are the questions of our Brothers and Sisters.**

MY CONFRERES, THIS YEAR LET US ENJOY CHRISTMAS TOGETHER WITH JOSEPH AND MARY, CELEBRATING THE MEANINGFULNESS OF HUMAN VULNERABILITIES AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF GOD. WISH YOU MERRY CHIRSTMAS!

THE YEAR 2018 AS YEAR OF OUR LOCAL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

My dear Confreres, Our Beloved Superior General Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvilil has declared the year 2018 as **"Year of Our Local Religious Community"**. It will begin from January 24, 2018 through January 23, 2019. The chosen theme of the Year 2018 is: REVITALISING MY LOCAL COMMUNITY: SPACE FOR COMMUNION AND MISSION. The rationale for choosing this theme is that it highlights one of the four important pillars of our MSFS Congregation. The theme is also in keeping with the Theme of the General Chapter 2019: "MSFS, WAKE-UP TO THE BASICS."

My dear Fathers, I request each of the Local Superiors of our Communities to take note of this special celebration of the "Year of Our Local Religious Communities. A special community meeting has to be convoked in this regard and each community should discern its Vision and Mission and a meaningful celebration of this special year. Let it become an opportunity for us to

- Define the Meaning of our Community Life and the satisfaction we derive from it
- Evaluate the regularity of our participation in the community activities
- Objectivise the Vision and Mission of our Local Community

- Discern the impact of our particular ministries

Let us make this special year declared by the Superior General as an apt time for us to reintegrate ourselves into the spirit of religious life by living our Community Life in the most meaningful way.

PERSONAL AND PROVINCE LEVEL PREPARATION FOR THE 20TH GENERAL CHAPTER

My dear Confreres, as announced and requested by the Superior General, I remind you once again about the personal and province level preparations we are called to undertake as immediate preparation for the 20th General Chapter. **There shall be three extraordinary Apostolic Communities convoked from January 2018 to June 2018** to assimilate and work on the three Study Papers prepared by the General Administration. The study papers are already forwarded to you electronically. In the course of time a printed booklet on these study papers will be given to each confrere. Let us make the General Chapter of our Congregation an event of personal and congregational renewal.

VISITATION OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERIOR GENERAL

My dear Confreres, I would like to remind you once again about the official visitation of the Assistant Superior General to our Province **from the 13th January 2018 to the 24th January 2018**. The schedule of his visitation is communicated to each of you and the documents for the personal and common preparation for the visitation are distributed to each of you. I request the convenors and secretaries of the Apostolic Communities to remind the members regarding the meeting with the Assistant General and all the Confreres to participate in the meeting without fail.

INTER PROVINCE RECTORS' AND NOVICE MASTERS' MEET

The MSFS Inter-Province meet on graded, integral formation for almost 25 Rectors of Formation Houses was held at Montfort Sadan, Pune from 11th to 12th December 2017. The theme for the two days meet was **"M.S.F.S. Wake Up To the Basics."** Reflecting over this theme in line with our forthcoming 20th General Chapter's clarion call and also commemorating the 450th birth anniversary of our heavenly patron St. Francis De sales Fr. Jayaseelan Selvaraj, the provincial of Pune province welcomed the dignitaries and participants. Fr. Noel Rebello, the General Councilor in- charge for Formation explained

the logistics of the two days meet. Fr. Benny Koottanal, Provincial of South-West India Province enumerated the theme by posing three questions namely, **“Where are you?; Where is your brother?; where is your Cross?”** thus placing before us the



expectations of PIF and guided us on the right path. The three main long input sessions were animated by the resource person Fr. Binu Edathumparambil on ***“The Christological Model”***. Based on his topic the emphasis was on Human formation, spiritual formation, missiological formation in the context of tri-dimensional goal of personal sanctity, servant leadership and individual growth respectively.

INAUGURATION OF THE EXTENSION OF LA FEUILLETTE AND DIACONATE ORDINATION OF BRO. BORIS NIXON



December 8, 2017, on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary the Chad Cameroon Mission of South West India Province had the double joy of the Inauguration of the extension of the La Feuillette Seminary at Ngoya in the diocese of Obala, Cameroon and the diaconate ordination of Bro. Boris Nixon MSFS. His Grace Most Rev. Sosthène Leopold Bayemi Mateji, Bishop of Obala presided over the Eucharistic Celebration in the presence of Fr. Manoj Xavier Arackal, Mission Superior, Fr. Thomas Cherukat, the Pioneer of Cameroon Mission, Priests, religious and exuberant crowd of faithful. Bishop appreciated and congratulated the MSFS for this great achievement in a short period of time. The newly constructed building now provides facilities for the seminarians to have a better ambience for learning and community life. It will also serve as a retreat house. Thanks to the Provincial Administration, Benefactors and Confreres in Chad-Cameroon Mission and especially the members of La Feuillette community for making this dream a reality.

PROMOTION TO PRIESTHOOD

My dear Confreres the following Deacons are promoted to the Sacred Order of Priesthood. The ordinations will be held as following:

- **Dn. Sanoj Plamthottathil**, December 27, 2017, at 10 am, St. Xavier's Church, Vattappara, Diocese of Neyyattinkara.
- **Dn. Noby Kottuppallil**, December 28, 2017, at 09:30 am, Christu Raj Church, Valiyathovala, Diocese of Kanjirappally.
- **Dn. Justin Panachickal**, December 30, 2017, at 09:30 am, St. Mary's Forane Church, Karimannoor, Diocese of Kothamangalam.
- **Dn. Simil Karuvelil**, January 02, 2018, at 08:45 am, St. Jude's Church, Karunapuram, Archdiocese of Tellicherry.
- **Dn. Jose Thuruthipallil**, January 03, 2018, at 09:15 am, St. John the Baptist Church, Thuruthippally, Diocese of Palai
- **Dn. Abhishek Joseph**, January 04, 2018, at 10:30 am, St. Joseph's Church, P.G.Palya, Diocese of Mysuru.
- **Dn. Sijo Paul Kovilparambil**, January 06, 2018, at 10:30 am, St. Antony's Church, Ambattupalayam, Diocese of Sultanpet.

My dear Confreres, I request all of you to join the ordinations of our Deacons. We shall show the great sign of our solidarity with each of them as we welcome them as Priests into our Province Family and the Congregation. I request the Superiors of the

Communities to make sure sufficient representation from your communities. Please do pray for our Deacons that they live their chosen life as Holy Priests.

MID-YEAR MEETING OF THE REGENTS

The mid-year evaluation of the regents of South-West India Province was held from 5-6 December 2017 at Vinayalaya, MSFS Provincial House, Bengaluru. All the regents of the



Province took an active participation in the 2 days programme. The programme began at 9:00 am in the presence of Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal, the Provincial and Fr. Santhosh Kumar, the councillor in charge of formation. Provincial enlightened the

regents with a talk on the importance of regency as a time of intensive practical formation and the areas to be focused during the time of this formation. It was followed by a presentation by Fr. Binu Edathumparambil on the topic: "Psycho-sexual integration and formation." Fr. Joe Cherolickal spend his valuable time in speaking the possible struggles and challenges during regency and the ways to face them positively. The second day was dedicated for the recollection animated by Fr. Arockianathan on the theme, "purity of heart to become a priest." The meeting was concluded with the evaluation of the programme in the presence of Fr. Santhosh Kumar.

BLESSING AND INAGURATION OF THE NEW BLOCK AT MUNDARGI



Extension of the building is the sign of growth of the Institution. From last few years we



have seen a noticeable growth in our School at Mundargi and the extension of the building was a felt need. This need was met on the 21st December 2017 as Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal Our Beloved Provincial blessed the new block in the presence of North Karnataka confreres and other well wishers. On the same day

the inauguration of the children's park named "Chinnara Lokha" was blessed by Rev. Fr. A. Jerome Councillor in charge of missions.

CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE SUPERIORS' MEETING

My dear Confreres, the Annual Superiors' Meeting will be held at Vinayalaya on **March 21, 2018** and not on March 22, 2018 as mentioned in the previous Circular. I request all the Superiors of our Local Communities to take note of the change of date and make sure of your participation.

BON VOYAGE

Fr. Anish Palathadathil and **Fr. Innaci Muthu** will be leaving for Chad- Cameroon Mission on January 08, 2018 for the pastoral Ministry. As I congratulate and thank Fr. Anish and Fr. Innaci for the good will to support and render services to our Chad-Cameroon Mission, we wish them Bon Voyage and God's blessings in the new pastoral and missionary endeavours in the Chad-Cameroon Mission.

TRANSFER AND APPOINTMENT

Fr. Onomo Ayissi Innocent Parfait will be undertaking the German Language course in Yaounde from the 10th of January 2018. He will be a member of our community at Ngoya, Yaounde.

OBITUARY

- **Mrs. Aelikutty Joseph** aged 84, Mother of Fr. George Choorapuzha, died on December 10, 2017.

We assure you, dear Confrere, the remembrance of your dear one in our Holy Mass and Prayers.

MY SCHEDULE

My dear Confreres, please do take note of my program schedule. Different from the previous circular, each new circular would bring in additional changes in my programs as per the need. Please do organize the visitation and other common meetings/programs according to the latest communication.

DECEMBER 2017

December 24-25	Visitation to MSFS House, Kattappana and Christmas with Fr. Jacob Thudipara, Mass at Twenty Acre & Kozhimala Parishes
December 26	Meeting and Holy Eucharist with the Associates of Fransalians at Charis Bhavan
December 27	Ordination of Dn. Sanoj Plamthottathil at Neduvely, Neyyattinkara
December 28	Ordination of Dn. Noby Kottuppallil at Valiyathovala, Kanjirappally
December 30	Ordination of Dn. Justin Panachickal at Karimannur, Kothamangalam
December 31	Parish Feast & Festal Mass, Veendasserry, Pattikad

JANUARY 2018

January 1	New Year Mass in the Novitiate
January 2	Ordination of Dn. Simil Devasia at Karunapuram, Thalassery
January 3	Ordination of Dn. Jose Simon, Thuruthippally, Palai
January 4	Ordination of Dn. Abhishek Joseph at P.G. Palya, Mysore
January 6	Ordination of Dn. Sijo Kovilparambil at Ambattupalayam, Chittoor
January 8-21	Visitation to Chad-Cameroon Mission
January 22	Bangalore Apostolic Community meeting with the Assistant General
January 23	Council Meeting
January 24	Feast of St. Francis de Sales at Vinayalaya, MSFS Provincial House
January 25	Keynote Address at the Graduation Day of Cluny School Malleswaram
January 27-28	Silver Jubilee Celebrations of SFS Church, Vattiyoorkavu
January 31	School Annual Day – SFS School, Kannur

FEBRUARY 2018

February 2	Graduation Day SFS PU College, Hebbagodi
February 2-3	Recollection for the Diploma Students of IIS
February 3	School Annual Day – De Sales Academy (CBSE), Hebbagodi
February 5-10	Classes for the Post-Graduate Students of IIS
February 13-15	Visitation to Sannidhi, MSFS Minor Seminary Mysore, Meeting the

	Brothers, Evaluation of the Academic Year with the Staff, visiting other MSFS communities in Mysore
February 16	Balasangama at FidesIndia, Kengeri
February 18	Council Meeting
February 19	Diaconate Ordination at Tejas
February 21-22	Visitation to SFS Seminary Ettumanoor, Meeting the Brothers, Evaluation of the Academic Year with the Staff
February 27	Goal setting for the Future – IIS Diploma Group

MARCH 2018

March 3	Graduation Day at Suvidya College
March 4	Meeting with Confreres ordained in the year 2016-2017
March 6-8	On-going Formation Program for those ordained between 1990-1999
March 9	Council Meeting
March 12	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2015-2016
March 14	Comprehensive Examination for the Post-graduate students of IIS
March 16	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2014-2015
March 18	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2013-2014
March 20	Meeting with Confreres ordained in the year 2012-2013
March 21	Superiors' Meeting
March 25	Palm Sunday
March 29	Maundy Thursday Liturgy at Gauribidanur Mission
March 30	Good Friday Liturgy at Gauribidanur Mission
March 31	Holy Saturday at Gauribidanur Mission

APRIL 2018

April 1	Easter Sunday – Mass at Gauribidanur Mission
April 11	Council Meeting
April 21-26	Animating Retreat for the RNDM Congregation, Bangalore Province
April 27	Talk and Mass for the participants of Salesian Seminar at IIS
April 29	Visitation to Adoor

MAY 2018

May 4-5	Keynote address & Mass on the occasion of 'MSFS Education Seminar' at Hyderabad
May 6-11	Preaching Salesian Retreat at Makkiad
May 20	Council Meeting
May 28	Perpetual Profession at Tejas
May 30	Initiation of the Postulants into the Novitiate at Makkiad
May 31	First Profession of the Novices at Makkiad

JUNE 2018

June 1-10	Visitation to the Philippines *First Profession of the Novices; *Installation of the Delegation Superior; *Meeting the Confreres, Seminarians and the Associates of the Fransalians
June 13	PIF Meeting at Suvidya College
June 14	Inauguration of the new academic year in Suvidya College, Inaugural Mass; *Governing Body Meeting, Meeting with the Staff and Students
June 15-16	Visitation to Tejas Vidya Peetha, NEST
June 17	Council Meeting
June 18-19	Spiritual Orientation for the new batch of students at IIS
June 22-23	Visitation to Sannidhi, MSFS Minor Seminary Mysore
June 23-24	Visitation to MSFS House, Mysore, Sunday Mass at St. Alphonsa's Parish
June 24-25	Soumya Sadan Community, Mysore
June 27-29	Visitation to Hebbagodi: *Mermier Bhavan Community, *Meeting the 10 th Std. Students of all the SFS Schools in the campus *SFS Parish Community, *Prateeksha Boys' Home Community
June 29-30	Recollection - IIS

SALESIAN THOUGHT

"An action of small virtue performed with much love of God is far more excellent than one of a higher virtue done with less love of God." - SFS

Fraternally,



Fr. Benny Koottanal MSFS

Provincial