

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

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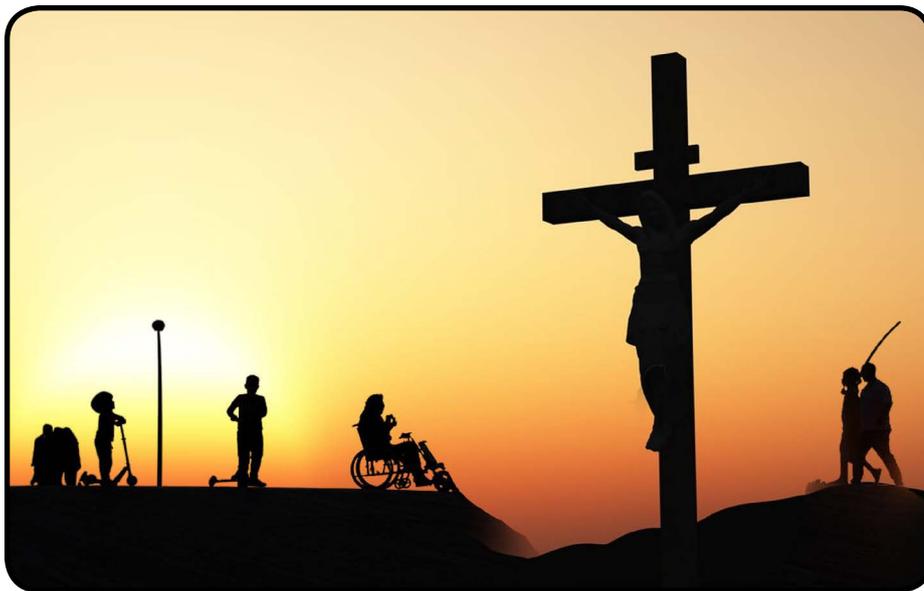
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SWIP Circular BK/60

May 16, 2020

**My dear Confreres,** Fraternal greetings to you from Fr Benny Koottanal. At the eve of the 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter I come to wish you the blessings of the Risen Lord. Jesus says: *If you love me, obey my commandments* (Jn 14/15). The time of quarantine and lockdown is a great opportunity for us to listen to Him attentively and test the grade of our love for Him. Let us have a short reflection on the credibility of our lives as religious and priests today.

## IT IS FINISHED (Jn 19/30): Am I Ready for Eternity?



It's already time for many of us to call Jesus our younger brother. Unfortunately even in our "late forty's" most of us behave and live like grown-up boys. The ones whom we call 'Juniors' are already above thirty years of age. Would you ever call your brother or sister who is married and is above thirty years of age, a junior? What a contradiction? Jesus who was just thirty-three years of age dies on the cross and says: **IT IS**

**FINISHED!** We have not even started living our lives even at the age of fifty. Even now we are so much concerned as to how to live our lives, and not how gracious and noble we need to live our lives. The life and words of Jesus should help one to attain a meaningful youthhood, grace-filled old age and calm death. Until one dies one cannot be called blessed. Always remember: The right to call you 'blessed' is assigned with those few people who would witness your death and not with the thousands whom you encounter when you are alive.

The nurse who was attending at the death bed of **Voltaire**, the renowned French Writer, said: Even if you promise me the whole power in the world, I will not be ready anymore to attend at the death bed of someone who does not believe in anything or anyone. It is so terrifying! **I look now at Jesus on the Cross:** His death was caused by one of the cruelest murders the world has ever seen. Even then He did

not cry aloud. **When Jesus died, the one who cried was the one who killed him:** *Certainly this man was innocent* (Lk 23/47).

**The death of Jesus was a graceful death.** He proves that the one who has lived meaningfully will also encounter a meaningful death. This is the reason for Jesus' saying: *I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord* (Jn 10:17-18). Along with this statement of Jesus, we must also add another statement of His: *I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and overall the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you* (Lk 10/19). Just as in life, when you are able to hold certain authority over death too, even death becomes an art.

**The one, who lives like Jesus, will also be able to die like Jesus – with a sense of satisfaction.** When He brightened our lives with thousands of words, He enlightened our lives with two statements: IT IS FINISHED (Jn 19/30) and FATHER INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT (Lk 23/46). These are the graceful expression of a person who found final satisfaction in His life.

**Take note of the life of an old man.** Even when his memories are fading, he repeatedly narrates before others his life-experiences just like the shutter of a dam is opened. The only question is: **Can he put the signature of personal satisfaction over those shared memories?** Your statements are the **imprimatur** that you are signing over the quality of life that you lived: IT IS FINISHED. Jesus did not need any gazetted attestation to His life other than that of His own.

Some take this statement of Jesus – **it is finished** – as the victory utterances over the enemy. I do not want to think so. His life apparently was an unfinished journey. He was seemingly a loner (Mt 26/56). I would consider this statement of Jesus as the reflection of His faithfulness. You can read it along with the statement of Mother Teresa: **My vocation is not to be successful, but to be faithful.** Honestly speaking, how many of us can daringly stand at the victory podium? Ninety-nine percent of us have to return half the way. **Some of the recent demises in our province were so – we say, they died too young!** But are we right? How long they lived is unimportant. How long they lived under the brightness of the SUN is important. Which is better? – To live long like feeble kerosene lamp, or like a lightning just for a moment? **It is not the number of breaths you take that gives you life, but how many moments take your breath away** (Anonymous).

My dear Confreres, **whatever be the length of our life, our responsibility is to hold firm the baton until the run comes to an end.** When you fall down someone else will take it up. Jesus was faithful till the end. He believed in the plan of God. In order to brighten up those beliefs, He spent His time in lonely places and on mountain-tops (Mk 6/31). It is at that time Moses and Elijah spoke to him about the sacrifice he has to accomplish in Jerusalem (Mk 9/4). **It is not easy to be faithful. You have to pay the price for it as big as the Cross.**

IT IS FINISHED means that everything was in love. What does it mean when He says *I have come to fulfill the law* (Mt 5/17)? To fulfill means to complete in love. It is like the old song of Beatles: All you need is love.

My dear Confreres, although not so dramatic like that of the life of Jesus, for each one of us a podium is prepared to play the story of our life. **In spite of all the opportunities provided, how sad it is to see people living life unprepared for eternity?** Like the book of Revelation, the content of eternity is

sealed and kept before us. But who will break the seal?

You might have heard of the story of a *Guru* who made the whole township silent with one question. On the first day he asked those whom he encountered – **where are you going?** The student told, to the school; the housewife told, to the market; the coolie worker told, to the field. On the second day too he repeated the same question to the same people and they were confused. On the third day when he asked the same question to the same people, there was a total silence – the silence of meaning! In short, **when meaning, faithfulness and love merge together, even your death becomes a 'Passover'.**

The shrieking sound of the world around you will stop when meaning, faithfulness and love merge in your life. It is time to look ahead! *I do not know what hour the thief would come* (Lk 12/39). Am I prepared to say? **IT IS FINISHED.**

### **Prayer Intentions of the Superior General for the Month of June 2020**

That we will re-commit ourselves to the basics of our religious life as MSFS by faithfully living community life, missionary calling, MSFS-ness, and the spirituality of St Francis de Sales.

*Congrats!*

### **Golden Jubilee of Rev. Fr Antony Kolencherry**

**My dear Confreres,** we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of **Rev. Fr Antony Kolencherry.** Along with you, I take this opportunity to congratulate him for his total surrender to the Lord through the MSFS Congregation and in particular through our Province. Dear Father, you are unique and through your own unique dynamism, you have brought in the flavour of love and commitment through the various ministries you have undertaken in the province until now. May this Jubilee year be a time of joy, fulfillment and motivation for further commitment.

Date of Birth : 18-04-1946

Place of Birth : Manjapra, Kerala

Name of Father : Ouseph Kolencherry

Name of Mother : Thresia Mangalathu

Parish : Manickamangalam

Diocese : Ernakulam

First Profession : 19<sup>th</sup> May 1966, Salesianum, Visakkapattanam

Perpetual Profession : 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, Fribourg, Switzerland

Ordination : 29<sup>th</sup> June, 1971, Cathedral of Salzburg, Austria



## Appointments and Achievements

- He holds Doctorates in both Philosophy (from the university of Bangalore, India) and Theology (from the university of Vienna, Austria).
- He is the Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of Sacred Sciences (SSS) in 1997 at Mysore, India.
- He is the Founder-Director of Indian Institute of Spirituality (IIS) in 1989 at Bangalore, India - where many Priests, Sisters and Lay persons do Diploma and Post Graduate Studies.
- He is the Founder of the SFS Publications
- He is a well-known lecturer for Spirituality of World Religion in the University of Vienna; also worked as assistant Professor. Besides, he was visiting professor in several institutions of learning in India and abroad.
- He worked for 10 years and helped the Malayali community and taught Religion in the International school, Vienna, Austria
- He worked as Parish Priest for fourteen years, 2004-2018 in Solothurn, Switzerland.
- He continues as a lecturer in St Peter's Pontifical Institute Bangalore (more than 30 years) and in Lumen Christi, Arusha, Tanzania; also engaged in various intellectual and spiritual activities in India, Africa and Switzerland.
- He is also a renowned preacher and writer in English and German. He is the author of 'Living the Word', 'Philosophy of Values: East and West', 'Philosophy of Karma Yoga', 'Prayer in Culture', 'Herz zu Herz', 'Das bist Du' and others; also author of scientific papers and editor of a vast number of Fransalian Books and Spiritual literature.

**Dear Fr Antony**, on this golden occasion of your Sacerdotal Jubilee we are proud to acclaim that you are a true son of St Francis de Sales. Your affable, gentle and sincere ways of handling life and its eventualities speak volumes about the versatile person that you are. Your Holy life and profound religious commitment have touched the lives of thousands of people all over the world. We join you with a heart full of gratitude to God to celebrate your golden years as a priest of God in the MSFS Congregation and very specially in the South West India Province. *Ad multos Annos* dear Fr Antony!

## Perpetual Profession

Perpetual Profession of our Scholastics in Tejas Vidya Peetha will take place as usual on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2020. Of course, the whole function will be conducted in accordance with the directives given by the Government due to the pandemic Covid-19. Given the present condition, the family members of the Scholastics will not be invited for the same. We wish our Brothers God's abundant blessings as they prepare themselves to serve God **For Ever** by becoming permanent members in our Congregation. During the Holy Mass, Rev. Fr Binu Edathumparambil will take charge as the new Rector of Tejas Vidya Peetha.

## Initiation to the Novitiate

This year we have Fifteen Candidates to enter the Novitiate. All of them (except two) are at present in Sannidhi, in our Minor Seminary in Mysore. They have completed the Pre-novitiate program as well as the retreat. We are looking at the various possibilities of getting them transported to our Novitiate in Makkiyad. Please keep these candidates in your valuable prayers.

## First Profession

The First Profession of Thirteen of our Novices will take place on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2020 in MSFS Novitiate Makkiyad. As it would be difficult for me to go to Makkiyad due to the restrictions at the inter-state borders, I delegate **Rev. Fr Thomas Chennakattukunnel** to receive the vows of our Brothers. The whole ceremony will be conducted in accordance with the lockdown restrictions enforced by the Government. We wish our Brothers God's abundant blessings as they enter religious life by becoming temporary members in our Congregation.

## Supporting Our Parishes – Kit worth Rs. 1000/-

My dear Confreres, in the given situation of the pandemic Covid-19 South West India Province has rendered yeomen services to the suffering people through its Social Work Wings PSI and FidesIndia. In this context the Provincial Administration is going a step further to support those who are immediately connected with us. Therefore, **it is decided that we shall help 10 each most deserving families in each of the parishes managed by us, more especially with a future vision, looking beyond the immediate needs.** Each of these families shall be provided with a kit worth Rs. 1000/- I request the Parish Priests to find out ten most deserving families in their parishes and inform about it to Fr Joe Cherolickal, the Councilor in charge of the Mission, latest by the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2020.

## 'Introduction to Devout Life': Gift to Every Family in our Parishes

During this time of the quarantine and lockdown members in the family are brought together in love and unity much more intensively than otherwise. They have the opportunity and time for various normal activities of the family, such as meals, prayers, healthy recreations and so on. The provincial Administration has come to a decision to inculcate into the life-system of the families entrusted to our care through our parishes in a distinctive manner. **We shall provide to every family in two of the parishes in Kerala, St Joseph's Parish, Ulikal and St John of the Cross Parish, Adoor, the copies of INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVOUT LIFE. This is to promote Salesian Spirituality in the families and also to promote vocations to our Congregation from these families.** I request the parish priests to take up this initiative positively and to promote more vocations from your respective parishes. After having evaluated the effectiveness of it we shall promote this plan to other parishes as well. To begin this venture in Karnataka, unfortunately, we do not have the Kannada translation of the 'Introduction to the Devout Life'.

## Regarding Our Education Institutions

In the given situation of the infectious pandemic Covid-19 all our education institutions remain closed indefinitely. Although different views are aired by different sources, the government has not given any clarity as to when the education institutions can be reopened. I am happy that the management of our

different institutions, in consultation with the Provincial Administration and the Core-Committee, have taken fitting decisions about the mode of classes, fee structures and the salary scale.

Due to the uncertainty regarding the reopening of our education institutions due to the extension of the lockdown, we need to be cautious in dispatching the salary of our employees too. In accordance with the directives given by the government and as the fees from the students have not been fully collected, the Provincial Administration has decided that we should dispatch only 50% of the Salary to the teaching staff (non-teaching staff is exempted). We can pay the retained amount when the institution becomes functional. The directives given by the state government will be followed in this regard.

### **Postponement of Retreat**

My dear Confreres, it looks a bleak possibility to conduct the annual retreat in Charis Bhavan in the month of July 2020. As we are still in the uncertainties caused by the pandemic Covid-19 it would be unwise to plan to conduct a retreat in July, as public gatherings will still be restricted, especially in Kerala. Therefore, **the Provincial Administration has decided to conduct the annual retreats in October 2020 (as planned early to be conducted in IIS) and in the month of November in Charis Bhavan.** The dates for the Charis Bhavan retreat shall be informed to you later. Please take note of this tentative arrangement.

### **DATA is recognized as a center for German Language Examinations by telc GmbH, Germany & A Center for IELTS by British Council.**



DATA – De Sales Academy for Talent Assistance, in tune with the larger vision of providing training in foreign languages and professional excellence is scaling great strides by collaborating with international accreditation and examination agencies. Taking into consideration, the quality of training offered in German language learning, telc GmbH, a subsidiary of the German Adult Education Association (DVV) has recognized DATA as an examination center to conduct B1 and B2 level German Language proficiency examinations. Students and Professionals who qualify for such examinations will be awarded telc certificates which are recognized by all the universities and various professional bodies as a mark of language proficiency. German language exams are conducted

with the assistance of Fokus Sprachen und Seminare, Stuttgart. This is recognition for the quality of training offered at the institute as well as the infrastructural facilities and other amenities offered for learning. The British Council has also recognized DATA as a center of excellence in providing IELTS (International English Language Testing Systems) training. This recognition enables the institute to have access to a wide range of teaching materials provided by the British Council and to collaborate to have faculty development programmes.

## 'Face Mask Project' by PSI Garment Centre, Karahalli



Pastoral Sociology Institute [PSI], the long standing Social Work Agency of the South West India Province of the MSFS, is trying their best in joining hands and contributing their might with the rest, in fighting Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, PSI Garments Centre at Karahalli is engaged in manufacturing FACE MASKS that are *user friendly by using soft and medicated fabric which is hygienic and healthy*. It is washable and available in different colours.

In this endeavor, PSI does not expect any financial gain but to serve the Society. Accordingly, one mask costs about Rs.15.00 [Fifteen only] which is only its production cost.

Those in -charge of our Educational and other Institutions, please contact Fr Benny Marangoly [9591003591] and prepare the Institution to brave the challenges of the time.

## Scholastics who are doing Regency

Our Brothers who are doing Regency in various communities in Kerala and Karnataka are requested to continue with their regency until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2020. The first year Theology Program in Tejas tentatively will begin on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2020. Those brothers who are regents and are expected to go to Suvidya College for Philosophy studies also would continue with their regency up to the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 as Suvidya College begins its academic year in the last part of June 2020. You are expected to renew your vows in your own communities in the presence of the Local Superior and send the renewal format with due signature and date to the Provincial's office.

## Promoted to Second Year Theology and Renewal of Vows, La Feuillette, in the Chad-Cameroon Delegation

1. Bro. Karumathy Robin Joy
2. Bro. Kezhakenthottam Antony George
3. Bro. Ndeialdongar Toussaint
4. Bro. Nyamsi Panteun Yves Cyrille
5. Bro. Ponnor Vinu Varghese

## Promoted to First Year Theology and Renewal of Vows – Philippines Delegation

Bro. Robert Sotomil

## Transfers and Appointments

1. **Fr Jose Puthiaparambil** is appointed as Superior of the MSFS Community at Chintamani and Parish Priest of St Joseph the Worker Parish, Chintamani with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
2. **Fr J. Periyanyagom** is appointed as Director of Prateeksha Boys' Home at Chintamani with

effect from 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

3. **Fr A. Mathias** is appointed as the Superior of the MSFS Community at Tamaka, Kolar with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
4. **Fr Cyriac Ummikuzhiyil** is appointed as Associate Priest in the Minor Basilica at Harihar in the diocese of Shimoga with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
5. **Fr Kurian Karickal** is appointed as Superior of the Charis Bhavan Community with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
6. **Fr Bijil Chakiath** is appointed as the Director of Charis Bhavan Retreat Center with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
7. **Fr Jose Parappillil** is appointed to the MSFS Community in Kattappana with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020. He is also appointed as Spiritual Director in SFS Seminary Ettumanoor with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
8. **Fr Noby Kottuppallil** is appointed as Procurator of SFS Seminary Ettumanoor with effect from 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.
9. **Fr Charles Periyannayagom** is appointed to the MSFS Community in Tamaka, Kolar as Procurator of the Community and SFS PU College with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
10. **Fr Gijo Panamattam** is temporarily appointed to NEST Community Kengeri
11. **Fr Jose Simon** is appointed to the Community of Bero in Chad as the Parish priest of St Josephine Bakhita Parish and Priest in charge of SFS School Bero with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.
12. **Fr Innaci Muthu** is appointed to the Staff of SFS Seminary Ngaoundere with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

## Obituary

**Ms. Sagaya Mary (70)**, Maternal Aunt of Fr Erudayaraja, died on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2020.

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

## VOICE OF SFS

**“To die in the state and habit of Love and Charity is sufficient to obtain Eternal Life.”**

**Fraternally,**



**Fr Benny Koottanal MSFS**  
**Provincial**