

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

VINAYALAYA, MSFS Provincial House P.B.No.5557,  
Malleswaram West P.O, Bengaluru 560 055, INDIA

Tel. 080 23340379 Mob: 91 9739010026, Fax: 080 23341329



E-mail: [provincialsouthwestmsfs@gmail.com](mailto:provincialsouthwestmsfs@gmail.com), [secretaryprovincialsouthwest@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryprovincialsouthwest@gmail.com)

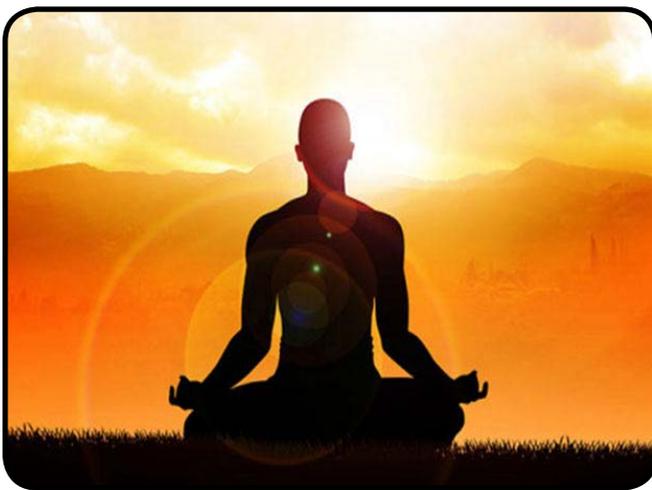
Website: [www.msfsouthwest.com](http://www.msfsouthwest.com)

SWIP Circular BK/63

August 26, 2020

**My dear Confreres,** Fraternal greetings to you from Fr Benny Koottanal. Besieged by the lingering impacts of the pandemic Covid-19 we still tussle with the 'new normal'. As we pursue to integrate our life-situations with positive insights, let us try to evaluate the image of God that we have before us. **What is the parameter we hold to assess the notion of God instilled in us?**

## METAMORPHOSIS: FROM ARROGANCE TO ENLIGHTENMENT



*Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father and we shall be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? (Jn 14/8-9).*

Philip requests Jesus to show the Father. Most probably he might have made this request with a certain sense of fear. Leave aside the desire to see God; theirs was a culture that feared even to utter the 'term' *God*. Therefore, they replaced the title 'God' with some other symbolic words. The title YAHWEH (*He Who Makes That Which Has Been Made*) is one among those many such invented attributes. They believed that the one who sees God would die. Of course, there is some truth in that. Observe a person who had a vision of God; suddenly he turns out to be as someone who is dead to many things. This is **METAMORPHOSIS**, a transformation from ordinary experience to enlightened awareness.

Moses is the only one who saw God, yet did not die. Even that was not a complete 'seeing' – "...and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen" (Ex 33/20-23). That very moment Moses was enlightened and the skin of his face was shone (Ex 34/29) and the people of Israel were not able to face him (Ex 34/30). **One needs to have an extra ounce of integrity to encounter someone who is enlightened.**

But still, how profound is the response of Jesus: *Philip, one who has seen me, has seen the Father!* This is the maximum enlightenment one can receive on his way to the total encounter with God. Not only as the

'Incarnate Word' but also as a human being there is no blasphemy involved therein; because this is the reverse reading of the book of Genesis. **If God created human beings in His own image (Gen 1/26), the one who possesses flawless body and mind reflects the person of God.**

But interestingly, there is a strange unintelligibility in the expressions of *image* and *likeness*. **Are they one's possibility to think and meditate and thus to be elevated to His image and likeness?** Or have these concepts emerged out of the yearning of the human beings to remain close to God? I believe that the notions of love and friendship receive the clad of enlightenment from this craving for the nearness of God! **It is a gift of God that Humans possess the broad-mindedness to love.** Yes, the more illuminated Humans become, the better becomes their understanding of God!

Look at the book of Genesis: In its initial stages itself it is mentioned that they were able to 'see' the Lord God...*and they hid themselves from the presence of God* (Gen 3/8). Moving from Adam to Abraham, there takes place an alteration from 'seeing' to 'hearing' (Gen 12/1-3); when it reaches Jacob, it becomes a 'vision' (without the intervention of human senses) and through the person of Joseph it is evinced as a 'dream' that needs to be interpreted (Gen 37/5-11). **The last word for such metamorphosis is CHRIST. Whatever Christ is, so is God: Compassion, care, welcome, waiting** and so on...! **In Christ God is no more to be feared. We can project nothing on God, what Christ is not! This is the healthy approach that we need to develop towards notions like 'inherited sin'** (Jn 9/1-3).

The God-concept that a person develops concerns not only his spirituality but also his temporal life. **It is observed that the maximum number of skeptics is in India.** This is the result of contradicting notions of God. Precisely because of that Indians have not made great impacts in scientific and technological realms when compared to their unrivaled acumen. **But a different story can be narrated about the Arabian world.** Their notion of God is perilously precise. Perhaps that is also the reason for their assiduousness in Mathematics and Logic. As a consequence its influence on the societal realm is precarious. **If you believe in a gruelling God, in turn, you become a taskmaster and begin to derive satisfaction from it.** All the sectarian violence and murders we witness are proofs for that.

**Two facets of the life of Elijah are worth noting.** He began serving God by killing all the priests of other cultures, whose beliefs were not acceptable to him (1 Kgs 18/40). **But in the second phase, we see that there is a total turn around in his perception of God.** He awaits God in the most difficult and dire signs, such as storm, earthquake and fire; but God was not there! But the call of God for the prophet came from the most gentle breeze (1 Kgs 19/11-12); now he knows the face of God. He never committed murder again.

**We notice here that the spat is not between faith and faithlessness.** Even if faithlessness loiters for a while it will, in the course of time, encounter the dawn of faith. **In fact, the opposite of faith should be 'bad faith'** and that is to be named 'blind faith', that is, belief without understanding and perception.

**My dear Confreres,** as we grow in age and maturity, our faith in God should also be clarified with the metamorphosis of enlightenment and illumination. All our thoughts, words and deeds are invariably dependent on the notion of God we hold. **The degree of our holiness is not merely measured by the**

**doctrinal correctness of our eschatological perceptions** but by the entrenching veracity of our human facet that inculcates and permeates the divine inside of us.

## CONGREGATIONAL MATTERS

### Prayer Intentions of the Superior General: September 2020

That reading the signs of the time, we may be inspired to reach out through our social ministries to our brothers and sisters who are deprived of their human rights and dignity.

### DeSIFMA

DeSIFMA – **De Sales International Film and Media Academy** is a new initiative of the MSFS Congregation as per the Directives of the General Chapter 2019. There are threefold intentions for this endeavour: They are,

- To provide a media hub for the MSFS to disseminate Fransalian Core Values and Spirituality of St Francis de Sales
- To equip students, having a passion for film making, with theoretical and practical knowledge
- To provide them with a professional opportunity to realize their full potential

The Superior General informs us that the infrastructure with a studio for DeSIFMA is getting ready despite the challenges and restrictions due to Covid-19. The intention is to build a culture of innovation through film media and digital communication. The project will be started in a rented building this year. The Congregation is also looking for a plot of land to have the structure for the project in the near future. Each province of the Congregation is expected to contribute a stipulated amount of rupees to the realisation of this project. This project will remain as a souvenir for the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first SIX MSFS landing in the Indian soil.

## LIFE IN THE PROVINCE

### Diaconate Ordination in the Philippines



In the midst of exponential increase of the COVID-19 pandemic victims in the Philippines, nothing could inhibit God's manifold blessings to come upon MSFS, Philippine Delegation, in the person of Dn. Romnick S. Civico who has been consecrated to the ordained ministry as a Deacon on 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 in MSFS Forma-

tion House Lalaan 1, Silang, Cavite. Hailing from the family of eight children and was born and raised in Trento, Agusan Del Sur, Southern Philippines, Dn Romnic has joined and become the fourth Deacon of the MSFS, Philippine Delegation.

In the absence of Delegation Superior, Rev. Fr Jose Kumbloickal, Fr Binoy Kuzhuppil, the Superior Delegate, Rev. Fr Philip Valakodiyil, Rector of the MSFS Scholasticate, MSFS priests and bothers and Diocesan priests joined the Bishop of Imus, Most Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista, who solemnised the celebration of the ordination to the ministry of Diaconate with the firm observance of the precautionary measures against the COVID-19 in accordance to the government protocol. Service and evangelical counsel was the cumulative and coherent objective of the Bishop's motivational words of encouragement for both, the congregation and Dn Romnic, who is a sign of God's blessing for the congregation and for the Catholic Church. **Hearty Congratulations dear Dn RomnicCivico.**

### **First Profession in the Philippines**



The Philippine Delegation is in immense joy as three of the novices namely; **Christian Ybanez Exclamado, Marlon Bahalla Quijano and Rustom Atamosa Maglahus**, professed their First commitment to Religious Life and officially became temporary members of the Congregation on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020. The Holy Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr Ginu Pathiyakam MSFS, to-

gether with the Fransalian priests, Parish Priest and the Spiritual Director of the novices. During the Holy Eucharist, ten of our temporally professed brothers also renewed their Religious Vows. The relatives, friends and benefactors were not invited in coherence with the Government's protocol on minimizing the attendants of Religious gatherings due to COVID-19. The live streaming of the ceremony was made available for those who were not able to be present themselves physically. **We extend our heartfelt congratulations and felicitations to the newly professed brothers.**

### **Postulants to Join the Novitiate from Chad-Cameroon Delegation**



It is a great joy for the South-West India Province and especially for the Chad-Cameroon Delegation as 13 postulants from Chad Cameroon delegation travelled to Tanzania for their novitiate formation. On behalf of the province I wish them all

the best and request all of you to pray for them that they remain faithful to the call of God.

## Conferring Minor Orders of Lector and Acolyte



24<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 was a day of blessings and joy for Tejas Vidya Peetha as our first- and second-year theologians were conferred the Minor Orders of Lector and Acolyte respectively. Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal, the Provincial of South-West India Province, presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. Conferring the Order of Lector on our ten first-year brothers, Bros. Kuriakose Cherakkal, Cyril Elackodickal, Jeffin

Elivalankil, Somi Illickal, Jain Kaniyodickal, Andrews Mascrene, Jilu Payattukandathil (South West), Mathew Jutto, Renold Regan (South East), and Nevin Tete (Nagpur), Fr Benny exhorted them to be equipped with sufficient knowledge and love of the Scripture as they are specially chosen to proclaim the Good News to the world. Conferring the Order of Acolyte on our five second-year brothers, Bros. Jibin Anithottathil, Rony Madathiparambil, Nitesh Minj, Robin Pereira (South West), and David Amalanathan (South East), Fr Benny encouraged them to develop a deep love for ministries concerning their service in the Church, especially at the altar.



Fr Benny exhorted all the brothers to form strong convictions and prepare themselves well for their future life and ministry as priests. He thanked the Rector and all the formators at Tejas for their commitment and dedication in forming our scholastics and instilling in them a spirit of missionary dynamism and commitment.

## Congratulations: MSFS Participation in the Faith Formation Program of the Archdiocese of Bangalore

The Archdiocese of Bangalore strives constantly to reach out to the People of God through its various extraordinary ministries during this time of the pandemic Covid-19. One of those initiatives was the organization of **Faith Formation of the Laity** through Thirty talks through the involvement of the **Conference of Religious in India (CRI), Bangalore Unit**. Six of the Confreres of the South-West India Province of the MSFS shared their resourcefulness through well-prepared talks. They are, **Frs. Jijo Manjackal, Binu Edathumparambil, Tony Erniakulathil, Vinod Kanat, Benny Koottanal** and **Dn Albin Puthenveetil**. The Archbishop of Bangalore expressed his heartfelt appreciations for the effective and meaningful talks shared by the CRI.

A special word of appreciation is extended to **the Brothers of Tejas Vidya Peetha**, who edited the videography of these talks and inserted meaningful interventions through quotes, anecdotes and Biblical references. This was achieved through the coordinated efforts of **Dn Justin Thanikkal and Bro. Arun Cyriac**. It is indeed a credible performance by our Brothers, who received a lot of applause from all over. **On behalf of the South-West India Province, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to our Brothers for their stupendous performance.** I thank the staff of Tejas for accompanying them with their support and encouragement. **HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS DEAR BROTHERS.**

## Hearty Welcome to Fr Biju Palamkunnel

Fr Biju Palamkunnel has returned to India after Five years of pastoral ministries in the United States. The unexpected return of Fr Biju is due to the trouble encountered in extending the visa permission to continue with the ministries in the US. He has already landed in India and at the moment he is in quarantine in our ITI Community in Kolar. He will be given an appointment in the province and meanwhile, he will also pursue processing the visa to US. We extend a very hearty welcome to Fr Biju Palamkunnel.

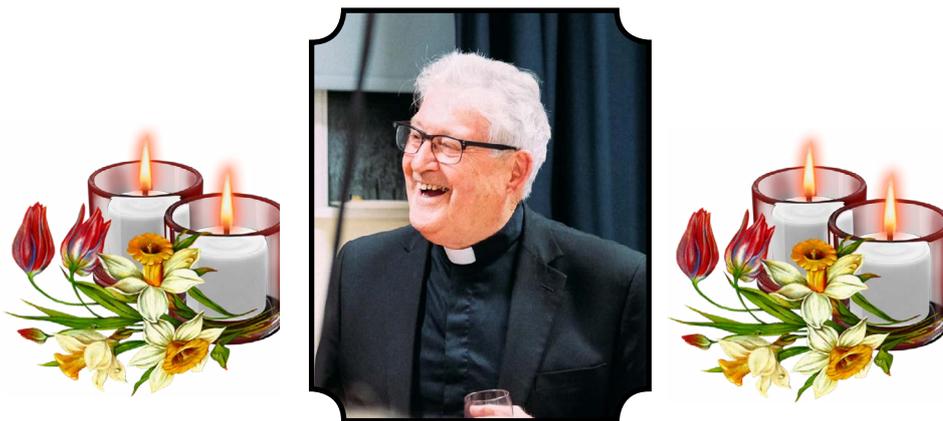
## Results of our Schools in India

My dear Confreres, with lots of joy and pride I am happy to announce to you the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard results of all our schools in India. Our institutions, keeping the good reputation we always held, have come out colourfully in the academic performance of the academic year 2019-2020. This goes in line with the overall performance of our schools in its multi-dimensional efforts to build the future of our country with quality citizens. **I take this opportunity to congratulate the Management of all our schools, all the teachers and non-teaching staff** for their total commitment to the holistic growth of our children. **Hearty Congratulations.**

Serial No.	Name of School	10th /12th	Appeared	Passed	Above 60%	Above 80%	Highest Percentage	Pass Percentage
1	SFS ICSE HEBBAGODI	X	75	75	9	66	98%	100%
	SFS ISC HEBBAGODI	XII	12	12	3	9	95%	100%
2	SFS ACADEMY HEBBAGODI	X	26	26	26	26	96.40%	100%
3	SFS HIGH SCHOOL E M HEBBAGODI	X	143	140	53	88	98.08%	98%
4	SFS HIGH SCHOOL, K M HEBBAGODI	X	30	24	17	7	89%	80%
5	SFS PU COLLEGE HEBBAGODI	12th (PU)	496	432	208	129	97%	87.09%
6	SFS CBSE KENGERI	X	10	10	3	7	93.92%	100%
7	SFS HIGH SCHOOL MALUR	X	100	100	78	22	96.96%	100%

8	SFS SCHOOL E M CHINTAMANI	X	89	88	38	47	96.96%	99%
9	SFS SCHOOL K M CHINTAMANI	X	31	30	10	11	90.56%	97%
10	SFS PU COLLEGE TAMAKA KOLAR	XII (PUC)	92	78	38	19	95.33%	84.78%
11	SFS SCHOOL SRINIVASPUR	X	132	130	52	73	98.72%	98%
12	SFS SCHOOL SAVANUR	X	88	81	31	48	96.96%	92%
13	SFS SCHOOL MUNDARGI	X	37	37	11	26	96.64%	100%
14	SFS SCHOOL KOPPAL	X	96	94	19	75	98.72%	98%
15	SFS ICSE KOPPAL	X	35	35	35	33	98%	100%
16	SFS SCHOOL KUKKANOOR	X	74	67	24	39	99.52%	85.6%
17	SFS CBSE KANNUR KERALA	X	16	16	10	6	91.6%	100%
18	SFS CBSE ETTUMANOOR KERALA	X	115	115	27	87	98.2%	100%
19	SFS COLLEGE ETTUMANOOR KERALA	XII	178	175	51	127	98.8%	98.3%

## Obituary



**Rev. Fr Martin Griffin**, of English Province, died on 18th August, 2020. We thank God for this great missionary. May God bless him and give him eternal rest.

**NB: For a deceased Confrere, who is perpetually professed, each one of us is obliged to celebrate a Holy Mass irrespective of the Province. I request all of you to do the necessary suffrages for the departed Confrere.**

- **Mrs. Pushpa Rani (45)**, Mother of Bro. A. Samuel, died on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.
- **Mr Poulouse M.C. (88)**, Father of Fr Shajan Manickathan, died on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.
- **Mr Devasia Puthusserry (93)**, Brother of Fr Thomas Puthusserry, died on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.

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

**VOICE OF SFS**

**“When God sends inspirations to a heart, the first one he sends is that of obedience.”**

**Fraternally,**



**Fr Benny Koottanal MSFS**