

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

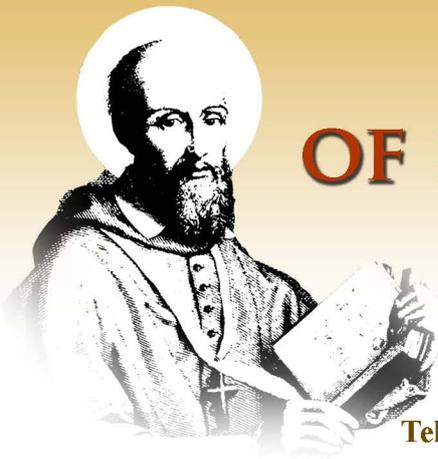
SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

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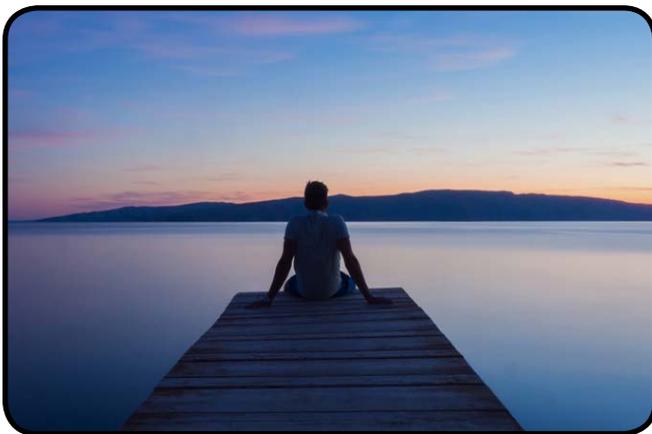


SWIP Circular BK/64

October 10, 2020

**My dear Confreres**, fraternal greetings to you from Fr Benny Koottanal. The ravaging consequences of the pandemic Covid-19 are still lingering around us. Somehow or the other we begin to desire that there should be an end to it, although we are not in sight of it. But we need to go ahead without desperation and discontentment. I request all of you to focus on your commitment, to take care of your health and remain in union with God and the whole humanity. **Let us make a difference in the world as MSFS through our life of total Contentment and dedication.**

## **CONTENTMENT: The Benchmark of Religious Life**



*The whole Congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and said to them: Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger (Ex 16: 2-3).*

Yes, the most serious sin in the Old Testament is murmuring. God encountered it with an iron hand. Jesus proposes the new philosophy of life in the Gospel of John: *In that day you will ask nothing of me...* (Jn 16:23) – **CONTENTMENT.**

Look at those birds that are pecking at the fruits! With what a sense of contentment and fulfillment they eat their daily food. That is true – no bird has ever complained to the tree about the food that it has received from it. It is simply grateful. **How is it that we human beings became so discontented?**

Although human interactions normally begin with a smile, very often our body language becomes a symbol of discontentment. In some cases, in the context of the families, even the time of utmost intimacy in Relationship, which is the highest celebration of the lofty spirit, insinuates the language of discontentment. Are all these mere physical exercises? Are they not moments of exclusive spiritual quietness?

**The one message that we need to derive from the person of Christ is his sense of Contentment.** Even his birth was in the midst of a myriad of complaints. His was a life that was abhorrent even to the

inns. Even then, how fast a manger transforms itself into an honourable space: Cattles, Shepherds, Wise Men, Angels and Stars! All these together make the manger a refined and poised place. **Everywhere and with everyone he was contented.** His obedience to his parents (Lk 2:51) was a sign of His contentment in life. Although his disciples had innumerable hitches he thanked his Father for them (Mt 11:25). Even in the most derisory circumstances of life, he experienced deep tranquility. Who else can sleep at the rear of a boat that was tossed up and down by the storm and waves (Mk 4:38)? Those deft and adroit words that he uttered as he passed by at the age of thirty-three, without completing anything that he started, were the most satisfying words, which were ever uttered in the history of the whole world: **IT IS ACCOMPLISHED.** How lovely it is to live in contentment and to encounter those who live in such a state of life!

*On that day you will ask nothing of me* (Jn 16:23) – **this statement of Jesus extents inexhaustible insights.** This is a declaration that depicts the heights a person can attain in prayer. Most of the time our prayers are a litany of our wants and complaints. **When is it that we last approached the sanctuary of the Lord just like we would go to meet a bosom friend without any formal reason?** In the book of Job Satan asks God, *does Job fear God for naught* (Job 1:9)? God proves through the life of Job that Job feared God for naught. **I think the time for such intimacy in the relationship will emerge only when one begins to present oneself to the other in total contentment sans grievance or hassles.**

The legendary figures like “Mad man of Naranathu” belongs to this genus - People who don’t need anything! When the goddess appeared to him to grant him a boon, the mad man told, “I don’t need anything!” But as the goddess insisted that he should ask for something, he told her to change the filariasis on his left leg to his right leg – that’s it! It is like the change of governments in some of our states. **Those who are gratified with their state of life do not need any special boon or blessing! Such an art of living is called CONTENTMENT.**

The statement of Jesus to the Samaritan woman that *“you have had five husbands”* (Jn 4:18) bared her discontentment in her present state of life. Jesus clarifies her philosophy of life by telling her that **you will never be quenched of the thirst so long as you drink from this well. Yes, one needs to return to the source** (Jn 4:13-15). LIFE BEGINS WHEN YOU ARE CONTENTED!

**My dear Confreres,** it is time for us to challenge ourselves and see the grade of our contentment in the chosen way of life as religious and priests. **Am I contented in the chosen way of life?** It is only when I am contented that I will be able to hold close the other confrere, whom I hated until now; it is only then I will begin to share my possibilities with the rest of the members of the community; it is only then I will stop murmuring and criticizing others!

Yes, it is then that I will be able to proclaim like Jesus: **Blessed are the eyes, which see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it** (Lk 10: 23-24).

## CONGREGATIONAL MATTERS

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

In this month of the Foundation Day of the Congregation, let us pray that the two newly established

Provinces of Dibrugarh and Guwahati will take the Congregation to greater heights in pursuing its apostolic and missionary goals as desired by our founder Fr Peter Mermier.

## **Fratelli Tutti – The New Encyclical of Pope Francis**

**FRATELLI TUTTI (All Brothers)** with the Subtitle, 'On Fraternity and Social Friendship', is the new Encyclical of Pope Francis. In the Encyclical the Pope states that the Covid-19 Pandemic has proven the failure of the world to work together during the crisis. I request all of you to have a serious reading of this Encyclical, individually, as Community and as Apostolic Communities. A preliminary explanatory video as well as the full text of the Encyclical is sent to your Email. **I request that this encyclical should be read and studied especially in all our Formation Houses.**

## **Foundation Day Celebrations**

As we are approaching the Foundation Day of our Congregation, the Superior General has suggested two important things for our implementation on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. They are:

- **Prayer of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.** I request you to go through the mail I have sent carefully and also to find the attachments to the mail that I have sent to you with explanations as well as the prayer to the immaculate heart of Mary.
- **Planting Six Trees on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2020** to mark the occasion of the arrival of the first group of 6 Missionaries from Annecy. **I request the Superiors of all our Communities to take note of these important instructions of the Superior General and implement them without fail.**

## **New Provincial Curia of East Africa Province**

The East Africa Province has elected a new Provincial Administration. In addition to the Provincial **Rev. Fr Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS** the following members are elected to form the team of Administration:

Rev. Fr Sheejan Kallarackal (Councillor and Admonitor)

Rev. Fr Zachariah Burefero (Councillor)

Rev. Fr Soosai Raj Robert (Councillor)

Rev. Fr Japhet Kirimi (Councillor)

Rev. Fr Reji Pendanath (Provincial Bursar)

In the name of the South-West India Province, we Congratulate Rev. Fr Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS and his new team God's abundant blessings in their apostolic ministries.

## **LIFE IN THE PROVINCE**

### **Perpetual Profession: Chad-Cameroon Delegation**

It was indeed a wonderful celebration; everything began with the annual retreat that took place from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 at La Feuillette. It was also the retreat in preparation for the perpetual profession of three of our brothers namely: Bro. NGUIMATIO EUTEDEM Peygres Senghor, Bro. SENGUENA Leandre Francky and Bro. MADJITA TANIBE Anniversaire. This retreat was animated by Fr



Jean Parfait ATEBA, priest of the diocese of Yokadouma and Vice-Rector of the Catholic University of St Teresa of Mvolyé, Yaoundé. The theme of the retreat was: “The Word of God, my daily guide”.

This beautiful experience of the Lord in the retreat was crowned with the celebration of the perpetual profession that took place on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> of September during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist

which began at 11.30 am. The celebration was presided by Rev. Fr Xavier MANOJ ARACKAL MSFS, the delegation superior of Chad-Cameroon delegation and concelebrated by the MSFS Confreres and Priests of some other congregations. The celebration was graced with the presence of so many guests, some representatives from the neighboring communities, classmates, family members and our Holy Cross sisters.

I take this opportunity to congratulate our Confreres who are perpetually professed and extend to them a hearty welcome to our Province Family. I thank Fr Manoj Arackal, the Delegation Superior and his team together with the Staff of the Seminary, for their loving commitment to the formation of our Brothers.

### **First Profession: Chad-Cameroon Delegation**



29<sup>th</sup> of August 2020 was a remarkable day for the MSFS congregation and the church at large as fourteen Postulants belonging to East Africa Province, Chad Cameroon Delegation, South Africa Region and Mozambique Delegation after having completed the canonical novitiate made the first profession at Fransalianum Novitiate, in Kibaha, Tanzania. The solemn Eucharistic celebration was presided over by

Rev. Fr Mathew Thazhathukunnel, Provincial Superior of the East Africa Province and the Postulants were presented to the provincial by the Novice Master Fr Stephen Ubadesi. On the occasion of the first profession of the 18<sup>th</sup> batch of the novices, the provincial gave a moving homily on the topic “Consecration of oneself after the example of Jesus Christ”. This celebration was graced and blessed by the loving presence of many of our MSFS Confreres, Priests, Religious, Parents, Lay Faithful and Well Wishers.

I take this opportunity to thank the East Africa Province, under the able leadership of **Rev. Fr Mathew Thazhathukunnel**, for the effective Formation given to our Novices and instilling in them a deep sense of Fransalian Spirituality. My heartfelt thanks also to **Fr Stephen Ubadesi**, the Novice Master, and **Fr PrakashPrashant**, the Socius.

### **Founder’s Day Celebrations and Conferring of Minor Orders: Philippines Delegation**

The Philippines Delegation of the Southwest India Province gathered in MSFS Formation House, Silang on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 to celebrate the Founder’s day. The solemn Eucharist in which all the

members of the delegation (barring Fr Jundie and Fr Anishmon who are in Cebu) participated. During the Eucharistic celebration Fr Binoy Kuzhuppil, who delegated Rev. Fr Jose Kumbloickal, the Delegation Superior, officiated the rites of minor orders of Lector and acolyte.

Following are the First Year Theologians who received the minor order of Lector:



1. Bro. Jibin Pathil MSFS
2. Bro. Antony Varghese MSFS
3. Bro. Marlon Bahalla Quijano MSFS
4. Bro. Rustom Atamosa Maglahus MSFS
5. Bro. Christian Ybañez Exclamado MSFS

Following are the Second Year Theologians who received the minor order of Acolyte:



1. Bro. Stihl R. Magandam
2. Bro. Aldren C. Mondigo
3. Bro. Alex J. Estancia Jr.
4. Bro. Michael Ray L. Diaz

The Eucharistic Celebration was followed by the agape cultural Program. The day was also celebrated as the day of the New Comers. They exhibited their talents along with their senior brothers.

## **Apostolic Community/Community Based Annual Retreat 2020**

My dear Confreres, in the given situation of the pandemic Covid-19 it is nearly an impossible task to come together as a province family for the annual retreat. Therefore, the proposed annual retreat at the province level stands cancelled for this calendar year. In discussion with my council I would like to request you to conduct the annual retreat in the following manner:

- Wherever it is possible please come together as an Apostolic Community and conduct the Annual Retreat. **I request the Animators of the Apostolic Communities to get in touch with your respective members and to organize the retreat.**
- If the gathering at the level of the Apostolic communities is not possible, the annual retreat could be organized as a cluster of two or three nearby communities or at the level of the individual communities. **I request the Superiors of the Communities to get in touch with each other and organize the retreat.**
- The preachers for the retreat could be our own Confreres (unless you have someone else in

mind), dividing different topics among themselves.

- **The retreat should be conducted latest by the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2020.** Please let me know about the dates of the retreat in your Apostolic Communities/Communities.

My dear Confreres, I wish and pray that this time of our coming together be a sign of our union with the Lord and the bonding that we cherish with one another.

### **Distribution of the Circulars**

My dear Confreres, the monthly circular of the Provincial is sent to the Confreres mostly through the electronic media. But there are a few Confreres who do not have access to email or WhatsApp. To these Confreres, the hard copy of the circulars are sent through postal service. The postal facilities seem to be often not functioning well and as a consequence, some do not get the circulars at all. Therefore, **I request the Superiors of the Communities to make sure that a copy of the circular is printed and given to those Confreres of your communities who do not access electronic media.** From this issue of the circular (BK 64) no hard copy of the circular shall be sent to the Confreres from the Provincial's office. Those Confreres who are living alone in parishes and do not have electronic accessibility will still continue to receive the hardcopy of the circular through postal service from the Provincial's office.

### **Celebration of the Holy Mass for the Intentions of the Province**

My dear Confreres, I would like to remind you that all of us, especially all those Confreres who are living in our communities, are obliged to celebrate the mass every day for the intentions of the Province. Even those of us who are working in independent parishes, unless your pastoral care for the people demands it, are requested to celebrate the mass for the province. This is a personal support the Confreres are expected to give to the province as the province takes care of all the needs of every Confrere. Any exception in this regard should be with the permission of the Provincial.

I also request each of you to present your Mass Diaries without fail to the Provincial when he comes for the canonical visitation to your communities and get it signed from him. This noble culture is not to control you but to authenticate your commitment in celebrating the masses for the intentions of the Donor. Every Mass entrusted to us should be exonerated on time without fail. It is a matter of conscience and we shall not give any excuse to it. Thank you so much for your understanding in this regard.

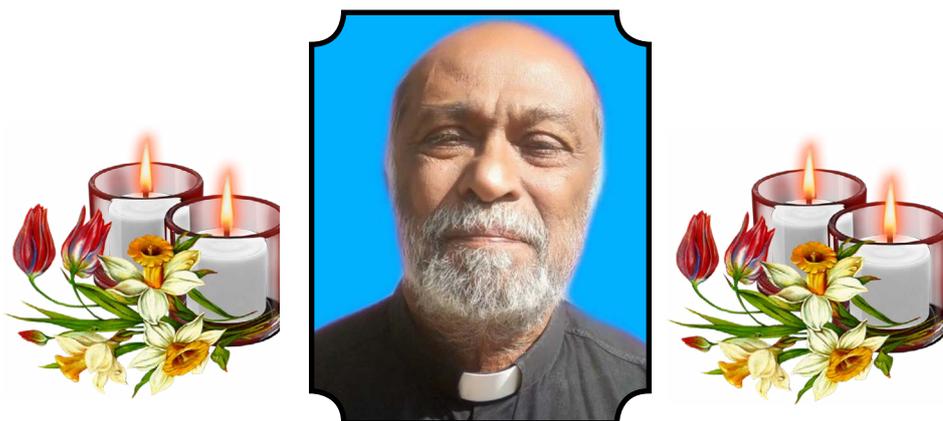
### **Appointments**

- **Fr Biju Palamkunnel** is appointed to the community at De Sales Institute, Kolar as Assistant at FSST Note Book Industry with effect from October 1, 2020.
- **Fr O.T. Joseph** is temporarily appointed to the community of Vinayalaya as he is designated for studies in Printing Technology in Chennai.
- **Fr Sebastian Conrad** is appointed as the convener of the Mysore Apostolic Community with effect from October 1, 2020.

- **Fr Y. Mathias** is appointed as the convener of the Kolar Apostolic Community with effect from October 1, 2020.
- **Bro, Nzesseu Chimi Valentin** is appointed to the SFS Minor seminary Ngaoundere for a year of Regency with effect from September 20, 2020.
- **Yibongha David Shiynyuy** is appointed to the SFS Boys' home and Scholl Dobafor a year of Regency with effect from September 20, 2020.
- **Mbinkar Melchisedek** is appointed to the SFS Boys' home and school Berofor a year of Regency with effect from September 20, 2020.

## Obituary

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



**Rev. Fr Mathew Chavely (71)**, of East Africa Province, expired on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 2020. We thank God for the inspiration that we received through this veteran missionary. May God bless him and give him eternal rest.



**Rev. Fr Thomas Vadakumpadam (74)**, of Nagpur Province, expired on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. We thank God for this great missionary. May God bless him with the eternal reward.



**Rev. Fr Kodigandala Julian (57)**, of Visakhapatnam Province, expired on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. We thank God for all the good things that He has showered upon our Congregation through the instrumentality of Fr Julian. May God bless him and give him eternal rest.



- **Mrs. Thresiamma Chacko**, Aunt of Fr Thomas Anchanickal, died on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2020.
- **Mr Belavendran (61)**, Father of Dn John Joseph, died on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2020.
- **Mrs. Eliamma Varkey (94)**, Maternal Aunt of Fr Tom Kanat, died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2020.
- **Mr Mathew Pandanam (91)**, Brother of Fr Abraham Pandanam, died on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2020.
- **Mr Raphael Palely (76)**, Maternal Uncle of Fr Sujith Pallassery, died on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2020.

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

#### **VOICE OF SFS**

**“Prayer is called mystical because the conversation in it is entirely secret.”**

**Fraternally,**

**Fr Benny Kootanal MSFS**