

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

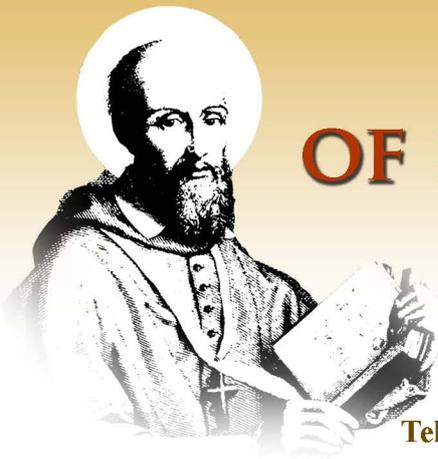
SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

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, secretaryprovincialsouthwest@gmail.com

Website: www.msfsouthwest.com

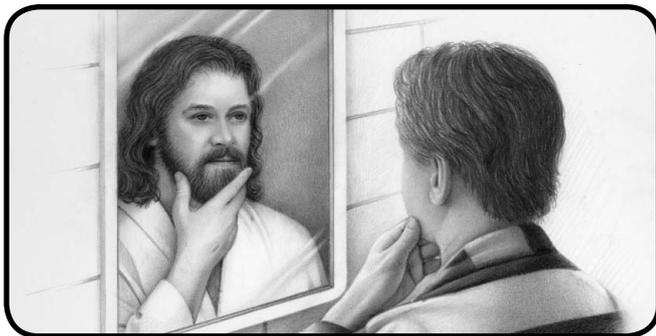


SWIP Circular BK/65

November 08, 2020

My dear Confreres, Fraternal greetings to you from Fr Benny Koottanal. I am happy to come to you once again with the latest update and news from the Province. All that we accomplish and fail to accomplish would exemplify our life as Missionaries. **We are like MIRRORS – we replicate what we really are.** The month of November that is dedicated to the Departed in Purgatory should remind us of our responsibility to **live Jesus** in our daily life.

MIRROR



Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like (Jas 1/22-24).

We read in the letter of St James that the Word of God is a Mirror. This is one of the seven Catholic Epistles. It is meant for all the churches. In the Sixteenth Century, **Martin Luther** rejected the Epistle of St James. The first reason he cited for it is that only twice the name 'Christ' is mentioned therein; secondly, that he gave too much emphasis for work.

Just as the WORD has to become a mirror, the heart of the one in whom it is imprinted also should replicate it like a mirror. Every figure in the Scripture is a Mirror. Whether it is Samson or David, Mary or Judas, when we encounter them in the Word, our faces begin to replicate them like a mirror. When Mary anoints Jesus' feet with the ointment (Jn 12/3)) we begin to see her in ourselves and our eyes become tear-filled. When Judas asks the question: *Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?* (Jn 12/4-5), it exposes vividly my own dissatisfaction. That is why those enlightened people say that **we should read the WORD in the present tense.**

Mirror helps me to see myself. So too, the concern of the WORD is to help me to find myself. Yes, *He leads me beside still waters (Ps 23/2).* People of ancient times always considered still waters akin to a mirror. Remind yourself of the story of Narcis, that handsome Prince – the one who fell in love with his own reflection in the water! The Word of God is always a still water. If you look into it, you can see your-

self again. There is an incident mentioned about Sri Narayana Guru. The final consecration that he did was that of a mirror in the temple. The believer who comes to behold the deity looks into the sanctuary and sees his own face there. **Can you worship 'THE YOU' whom you see in the mirror? That is the peak of spirituality.**

*For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like, says St James. It's true! The responsibilities of the mirror are twofold: **it helps you to see yourself and then to change yourself.** It is when we stand before the mirror that we feel the need to cut our hair or to dye it. **Mirror is a reminder of what we can become.** A man used to sit at the roadside and draw pictures of the passers-by and thus earn his livelihood.*

One day a drunkard came and sat before him. Within a short time, he drew his picture. But the drunkard became very angry. He said: It is not my picture. My eyes are not so bright as these! Where are the wrinkles on my face? How is it that my clothes are so white? I will not pay you for it, shouted the drunkard. The artist said smilingly: Sir, if you want your original picture you should approach a photographer. I am an artist, the one who journeys in ideas! **When I see someone, my concern is not what he is, but what he can become! Why can't your eyes be again brightened?**

My dear Confreres, I believe that the eyes of Jesus are the true mirrors. The presence of those eyes is found throughout the Scripture, making it a mirror. All those who looked into those eyes would find the true replica of their own figures in them! Once you look into his eyes you cannot but weep bitterly like Peter (Lk 22/61-62). **Are you ready to look into the Mirror?**

CONGREGATIONAL MATTERS

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL: NOVEMBER 2020

"That all our departed confreres enjoy eternal peace in heaven and that Fr Peter Mermier be raised to the saintly status"

DAY OF THE DECEASED MEMBERS OF OUR CONGREGATION AND FAMILIES



My dear Confreres, I would like to communicate to you a special instruction of the Superior General for all the members of the Congregation. As all of us know **the month of November is dedicated to the Holy Souls in Purgatory.** The Church has always taught us to pray for her faithful children who have departed from this life but have not yet attained the joys of heaven. We remain united with our deceased confreres and family members by praying for them and seeking their intercessions. As a sign of our communion and love for them, we shall keep **THIRD THURSDAY of NOVEMBER (this year November 19)** as a day dedicated to our deceased confreres and family members at the Congregational level.

Please Note:

- **THIRD THURSDAY OF NOVEMBER (every year)** is dedicated to our beloved confreres and family

members who are no more with us.

- We shall celebrate the day with **Mass for the dead, Office for the Dead, and Rosary of the Seven Dolours**

I request **all the Superiors** to take note of this important date and fulfill the instructions of the Superior General.

CONGREGATIONAL POLICY REGARDING THE CHANGE OF NATIONALITY

At the wake of certain discrepancies that have been brought recently to the notice of the General Administration that one or more confrere(s) changed his (their) nationality on his (their) own in a developed country where they were sent for studies or ministry, the Assistant Superior General, Rev. Fr Yves Carron, has instructed all the Provincials to inform the Confreres about the Congregational Policy in this regard. Our General Directory (numbers 360 to 363) is very clear on the matters of “Nationality/Change of Nationality” and due rules and procedures are to be strictly followed. Therefore, it is pointed by the Assistant Superior General in accordance with the Directory of the Congregation that, if any confrere would like to change his nationality (and for that, seek the necessary permission from Superior General through the Provincial) he has to get in touch with the Provincial much in advance. Any other short-term procedures do not befit the Congregational rules. Let us be aware of these regulations and handle it accordingly.

LIFE IN THE PROVINCE

LIFE AND MINISTRIES IN THE PROVINCE IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

My dear Confreres, the negative impact of the pandemic Covid-19 has exceeded our expectations and halted many of our positive endeavours in the field of our ministries. At the same time, I am extremely happy that the whole province stood together in addressing this blustery time with a sense of focus and deep commitment. **I am really indebted to all the Confreres for their sincere availability to the ministry entrusted to them. It was a time of mutual updating and supporting with innovative planning and involvement to address the magnitudes of the pandemic with fortitude and resolve.**

In spite of the pandemic I am happy that I could visit all of you in our communities in India, meeting you personally and as community and celebrating mass with you and discussing and assessing our ministries and its various challenges. Of course, it was a tedious task at this time, especially to enter and exit Kerala every alternative week as we get only seven days pass without the obligation of quarantine. **The time of the visitation of the Provincial is a time of re-focusing of the life of the community, wherein areas of concerns are pointed out and addressed.** I am grateful to you that all of you had been very co-operative and supportive in participating in the visitation of the Provincial and living the mission of our religious community with utmost respect and concern for each other. I am also in communication with all the Delegation Superiors and Confreres in other parts of the world.

Our Communities

Our Communities are the symbol of the small Kingdoms, where the values of the Gospel are effective-

ly lived. The focal points of our living together are **Love of God** and **Recognition of the goodness of the Other**. To a great extent I could experience this oneness and mutual love among the Confreres in our Communities. **The positive aspect of the pandemic Covid-19 is that all our Confreres got a lot more free time to spent with one another in the community**, especially at the time of the Common Prayers, Meal and Recreation. Therefore, I strongly request each one of you to focus on our call as religious, **called to live in communities**, and to avoid all unnecessary absence from the community even in the future.

Our Ministries

I am really happy to say that in spite of the difficulties of the pandemic and the entire financial crunch that we are experiencing our apostolic activities are going on in a very focused manner. All the Confreres are putting their best effort to make sure that the ministries are continued at its best.

Formation

All our Formation Houses are in function with the normal programs. Together there are around 25 First-Year Minor Seminarians in both SFS Seminary and Sannidhi, in addition to the new candidates in the Philippines and Chad-Cameroon Delegations. Our Formators are giving their best for the growth of the Seminarians. **Vocation Promotion in actuality begins in the Formation Houses**. We need to promote these vocations through the unified accompaniment of the Seminarians in and through our punctual participation in prayer, meals and all other activities of the community.

In our Novitiate, in Makkiyad we have twelve novices in addition to the five from the North-Eastern Provinces. An equal number of novices are there in the Chad-Cameroon Delegation too. This is a promising number for the future of our Congregation. At present, the Novitiate provides very serious formative values to the novices through regular, disciplined and well-arranged schedules.

We do have a good number of Seminarians in our **Philosophates and Theologates**. In this calendar year we are blessed with eleven Priestly Ordinations. I am grateful to our Formators for their total dedication for the growth of our Seminarians.

Education

Perhaps the Ministry of Education is the one, which took an apparent beat due to Covid-19. We have a great number of educational institutions. **I am proud to say that all our Confreres had been at their best in addressing the emerging problems with immediacy and accuracy so that we could handle them well.** Even in the most remote villages, our Fathers made sure that online classes are conducted. I am happy to say that the administration stood with them by providing logistic support as well as directions with regard to the management of finance and other resources.

Social & Innovative Ministries

All our Social work programs have kept up their name by being innovative in this particular time of the pandemic. **I am very proud to say that all our ministries in the Social Work field took innovative initiatives to counter the uphill struggles caused by the pandemic.** The initiatives like the ITI, Garment Mill, DATA, ITSSCAT, Boys' Homes etc. showed its worth by applying themselves very ingeniously

during these trying times. I congratulate our Fathers for their novel involvement in these particular and specialized ministries.

Mission

The Mission Forum too came up with innovative trends to address the spiritual needs of the people of God. **There had been very many initiatives taken up by Confreres through Social Media and other means, thus connecting people with God and with one another.** These positive involvements of the pastors and leaders have borne dividend fruits for the spiritual nourishment of the people, especially the laity and the religious in our parishes.

Stewardship

As I already mentioned there had been a lot of areas that we had to address, especially regarding the sustenance of our various centers and ministries. **I am happy that meticulous planning had been done in this regard to address the needs of the Mission, by prioritizing them and thus keenly addressing matters with efficiency and spontaneity.** At the best of our abilities, we have made sure that no particular center suffers from the fulfillment of its immediate needs. Meanwhile, we have also taken care that all our properties are well cultivated. As a result, a sense of self-sufficiency is emerging in many of the centers.

I remain very grateful to my team of Administration, **the Provincial Curia**, for standing with me and journeying with me in addressing the needs of our Province, especially in this time of the pandemic. We have still not overcome the consequences of the pandemic. But I am sure that with trust in God's love for us and with our total commitment we shall overcome it without fail. **Dear Confreres, let us remain focused; God will take care of the rest.**

VOCATION PROMOTER'S MEETING

A virtual meeting of the Vocation Promoters for both Kerala and Karnataka sectors was held on September 24, 2020. The meeting was animated by the Provincial, Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal, and the Councilor in charge of Formation, Fr Binu Edathumparambil. Frs Sijo Kovilparambil, Noby Kottuppallil, and Johny Kanjiramparambil, the vocation promoters for Kerala, and Frs Sudeep Andrews, Anand Ekka, and L. Selvaraj, the vocation promoters for Karnataka, attended the meeting. The participants discussed about the recruitment of students, the current strength of students in the minor seminaries, retentions and drop-outs, and other matters concerning vocation promotion and formation, especially in the context of the pandemic, Covid-19. In all three batches together, SFS Seminary in Ettumanoor has a total of 22 students and Sannidhi in Mysore has a total of 20 students this year. The vocation promoters shared that due to the travel restrictions they were unable to reach or contact many of the prospective candidates. Given the special situation due to the pandemic, it was decided that the admission of candidates to the seminary could be kept open until December this year. Considering the limited possibilities of visits and direct contacts with candidates and their families, it was suggested that the recruitment brochures for next year could be sent to students, parish priests, and principals of schools through electronic media and social media networks.

ANNUAL RETREATS IN APOSTOLIC COMMUNITIES

My dear Confreres, as all of us are aware, at the wake of the pandemic Covid-19 it was not possible for us to come together for the annual retreat as a province family. Therefore, a decision was made by the Provincial Administration that we shall hold the retreat in Apostolic Communities. It was communicated to the Confreres. All the Apostolic Communities have taken this decision very positively and the Conveners of the different Apostolic Communities with the assistance of the respective Secretaries have organized the dates, venue and the preacher/s for the same. I thank them for the meticulous planning. I request all the Confreres to participate in the retreat without fail and experience God's love for us through our communion with one another in prayer and unity. The following are the details of the retreats arranged in different Apostolic Communities.

Name of the Apostolic Community	Date
Shimoga	October 18-23
Aluva	November 22nd onwards
Koppal	November 22nd onwards
Kolar	November 23rd onwards
Bathery	November 24th onwards
Kannur	November 24th onwards
Ettumanoor	November 27th onwards
Hebbagodi	December 2nd onwards
Bangalore North	December 3rd onwards and December 16th onwards
Trivandrum	December 7th onwards
Mysore	December 15th onwards

ORDINATION TO THE SACRED ORDER OF PRESBYTERS

My dear Confreres, this year we are going to be blessed with **ELEVEN NEW PRIESTS** through our Province for the Congregation and the Church at large. We thank God for our Deacons who are going to be ordained Priests in their Home Parishes by their respective Bishops. Due to the pandemic, Covid-19 participation in these Ordinations will be restricted in accordance with the ordinances promulgated by the public authorities. I request all of you to partake in these ordinations spiritually and intensively pray for our Deacons that they may become **Holy Priests for the ministry of the Church through our Congregation**. On behalf of the South-West India Province, **I congratulate each one of them and wish them joy in their Priesthood**. Here below I present to you the details about their ordinations.

Name	Place	Time and Date	Bishop
Dn Rominic S. Civico	Our Lady of Sacred Heart's Church, Molino, Philippines	At 9.30 am on Saturday, December 5, 2020	Most Rev. Reynaldo G. Evangelista D. D.
Dn John Joseph	Our Lady of Good Health, Annai Nagar	At 10.30 am, on Monday, December 14, 2020	Most Rev. K. A. William
Dn Thanikkal Justin	St Antony's Church, Puthenpedika, Thrissur	At 9.30 am, on Sunday, December 27, 2020	Mar Sebastian Vaniyapurackal
Dn Cheeramban Ajish Antony	SFS Church, Vattiyoorokavu, Trivandrum	At 9.30 am, on Monday, December 28, 2020	Mar Thomas Tharayil

Dn Puthenveetil Albin	St Sebastian's Church, Ayarkunnam, Kottayam	At 9.30 am, on Tuesday, December 29, 2020	Mar Joseph Perumthottam
Dn Paraparambil Jibin	Our Lady of Hope Church, Nilambur	At 9.30 am, on Wednesday, December 30, 2020	Mar Joseph Pandarassery
Dn Kottor Vijin	Mar Sleeva Forane Church, Cherpunkal, Kottayam	At 9.15 am, on Saturday, January 2, 2021	Mar Joseph Kallarangatt
Dn Panackappally Shince	St Mary's Forane Church, Cherupuzha, Kannur	At 9.30 am, on Tuesday, January 5, 2021	Mar Joseph Pamplany
Dns Anil Kiran C. Buddini and David S. Buddini	Holy Rosary Church, Thumarikoppa	At 10 am, on Friday, January 8, 2021	Most Rev. Derek Fernandes
Dn Israil Lakra	St Francis Xavier Church, Kesramal, Sundargarh, Odisha	On Wednesday, January 27, 2021	Most Rev. Kishor Kumar Kujur

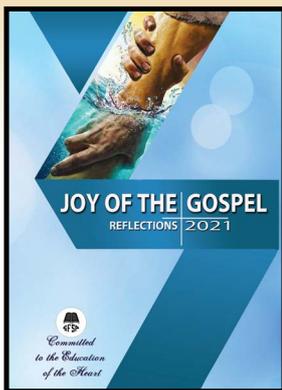
VIKAS JYOTHI - MDO of SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE

My dear Confreres, I am very happy to inform you that **VIKAS JYOTHI, the MDO** (Mission Development Office) **of the South-West India Province** is completing three years of its existence. I am very happy to apprise you that during these three years of its existence VikasJyothi, through the animation of Fr Thomas Cherukatt, has rendered yeomen services to the poor and deserving people, especially children and youth and has been instrumental for the social uplift of people in various strata of the society, especially in our province. Following are the beneficiaries of the services of VikasJyothi during the past three years.

- All the Seven Boys' Homes in our Province
- A few of our Social Work Centers
- Scholarship to Boys and Girls in various MSFS Parishes (723 of them in addition to the children in the Boys' Homes)
- Scholarship for Higher Education (105 of them)
- Support to our Missions in Chad-Cameroon and the Philippines
- Help for the Homeless
- Flood Relief Works
- Covid-19 Relief Works

In all, a total amount of Rs. 1 Crore was spent by VikasJyothi, MDO of the Province for the uplift of the poor and deserving people in and around the province during the past three years. This is a massive involvement of the province in the life of the people who need our care and support. I take this opportunity to thank Rev. Fr Thomas Cherukatt for his total commitment to the mission of the Province through our MDO, VikasJyothi.

BIBLE DIARY 2021



My dear Confreres, SFS Publications has published the latest Bible Diary “Joy of the Gospel 2021”. It is the 7th consecutive year of the publication of the Bible Diary. The Bible Diary 2021 contains, i) Prayers for Various Occasions, ii) The complete ritual of the Eucharistic Celebration, iii) Readings of each day with full texts, iv) Scriptural, Theological and Practical Reflections on the readings of the day by eminent Scholars, v) Short description of the Saint/Saints of the day with their pictures, vi) Index to the Readings, and vii) Calendar of the forthcoming year. This Bible Diary can be a fitting gift to ourselves and to those whom we wish spiritual nourishment and wellbeing. I request all of you to promote our Bible Diary. I take this opportunity to thank the management of SFS Publications for their hard work and dedication to bring out this issue of the Bible Diary 2021.

SALESIAN RETREAT 2020

My dear Confreres, Salesian Retreat is a means to delve into the life-culture of the MSFS Congregation through the spirit and spirituality of St Francis de Sales. This beautifully arrayed spiritual journey of three weeks with our Patron St Francis de Sales began with the insightful initiative of Frs Antony Mookenthottam, Armind Nazareth and Agnelo Fernandes. Although initially it was envisioned for people of every walk of life, including the laity, in the course of time, it was more pointed to the members of the MSFS Congregation. In the recent times it became a regular feature in the formation of our Seminarians. All our Seminarians before their final profession partake in this spiritual journey with St. Francis de Sales, popularly known as Salesian Retreat.

Salesian Retreat 2020

Due to the pandemic Covid-19 the scheduled Salesian Retreat in the month of May, 2020 had to be postponed. Therefore, the Staff of Tejas Vidya Peetha organized the **Salesian Retreat 2020** from 2nd to 16th of October 2020 in the Indian Institute of Spirituality, Bangalore. Twenty-three of our Brothers from Tejas Vidya Peetha attended the Salesian Retreat. The retreat was a serious experience of vibrant, insightful and enlightening time spent in listening, reflection and meditation. Due to the existing scenario of the pandemic Covid-19 the input sessions consisted of actual and virtual communications. Eminent Salesian Scholars of our Congregation, such as, Rev. Fr Abraham Vettuvellil (Superior General), Rev. Fr Yves Carron (Assistant Superior General), Rev. Fr Suresh Babu (General Councilor in charge of Formation), Rev. Fr Agnelo Fernandes (Former Superior General), Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal (Provincial), Rev. Frs. Joe Cherolickal, Sibichen Kochuveedu, Riju Vazheparambil, Roji Kuttivayalil, Shajan Manickathan and Tito Puthuparambil shared their insights on different topics.

I wish our Brothers who participated in the Salesian Retreat 2020 rich experience of the wealth of our spirituality and a consequent renewal in their religious life. I thank all the Organizers of this edition of the Salesian Retreat for their commitment and dedication to the formation of the younger generation of our Congregation.

MASKS AND PPE KITS THROUGH MSFS GARMENT MILL



My dear Confreres, as all of us know the Corona-hit world is still wriggling under the aftermath this pandemic has left behind. The poor are the ones who were affected maximum by this pandemic. Struggling under the impact of this plague many look up for help from somewhere. I am proud to say that through the instrumentality of **MSFS Garment Mill** initiated through PSI (Pastoral Sociological Institute) South West India Province was able to reach out to thousands of people **through the distribution of MASKS and PPE Kits.**

We have freely distributed more than 30,000 Masks to very deserving people especially the vulnerable, women and children in Karnataka and Kerala and very particularly in the remote villages of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Our garment mill is stitching thousands of PPE Kits for the use of St John's Medical College Bangalore. In addition, these services also give regular employment and income to more than 60 women in Karahalli and in the surrounding villages. Hearty Congratulations to our Confreres under the leadership of Fr Benny Jacob Marangoly for this noble involvement in the life of the needy people.



DISPLAYING DEATH NEWS ON THE NOTICE BOARD

My dear Confreres, once again I would like to make a cordial reminder of the **importance to do suffrages for the dead Confreres.** It is an obligation from the part of every Confrere to celebrate **ONE MASS EACH FOR EVERY DECEASED CONFRERE WHO IS PERPETUALLY PROFESSED** irrespective of the province to which he belonged. Once the death news is communicated from the Provincial's Office, every Local Superior is expected to display the news on the Notice Board for the awareness of the Members of the Community and to fulfill the due suffrages without fail. Gratefully let us remember our Confreres for their dedicated life here on earth and pray for their eternal rest in the Lord's company.

BEST WISHES TO FR ANIL THONDAMPALLIL

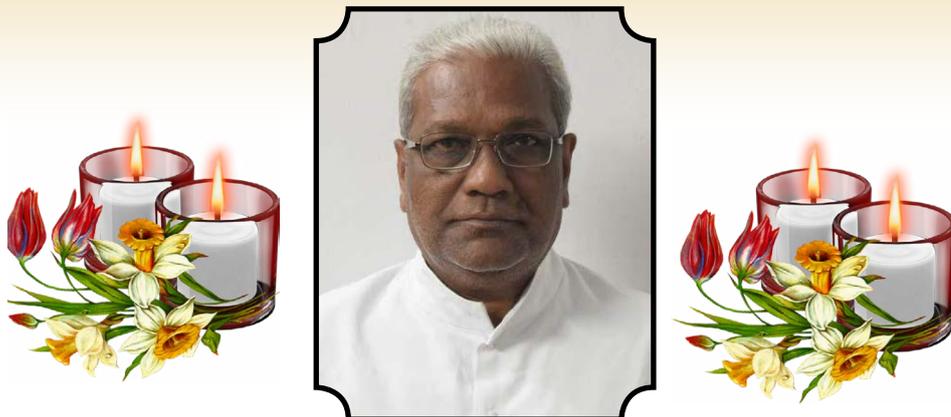
My dear Confreres, I am happy to inform you that **Fr Anil Thondampallil** has reached Austria for the proposed Hospital Ministry. He will be engaging in Hospital Ministry in collaboration with the Congregation of the *Barmherzige Brueder* (Compassionate Brothers) in the city of Graz in Austria. He will shortly begin the ministry after the required quarantine. On behalf of the Province I wish Fr Anil God's abundant blessings and success in this new ministry.

APPOINTMENTS

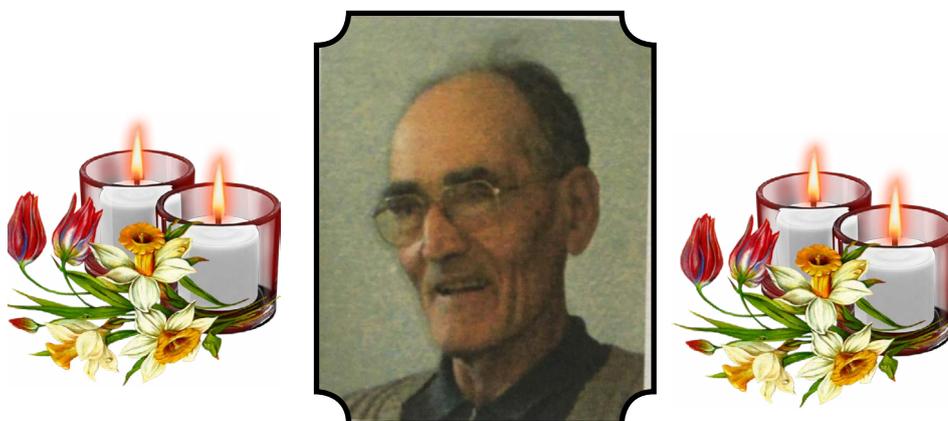
Fr Chirackal Justin is appointed as the convener of the newly constituted Bathery Apostolic Community with effect from October 25, 2020.

Fr Kalariparambil Thomas is appointed as the convener of the newly constituted Aluva Apostolic Community with effect from October 25, 2020.

OBITUARY



Rev. Fr Pakki Devadas (62), of Visakhapatnam Province, expired on October 17, 2020. We thank God for all the good things that He has showered upon our Congregation through the instrumentality of Fr Pakki Devadas. May God bless him and give him eternal rest.



Rev. Fr Paul-Ernest Vulliod (95), of Franco-Swiss Province, expired on November 4, 2020. We thank God for this great missionary. May God bless him with the eternal reward.

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 Confreres.

- **Mr Devaraj (62)**, Brother-in-law of Fr L. Selvaraj, died on October 15, 2020.
- **Mr John Tottiyil (72)**, Elder Brother of Fr Mathew Thottiyil, died on October 20, 2020.
- **Ms Aimee Carron**, Mother of Fr Yves Carron, died on October 30, 2020.

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

VOICE OF SFS

"All the Virtues are Virtues by the harmony or conformity they have with reason."

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Benny Kootanal'.

Fr Benny Kootanal MSFS