

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE (SWIP)

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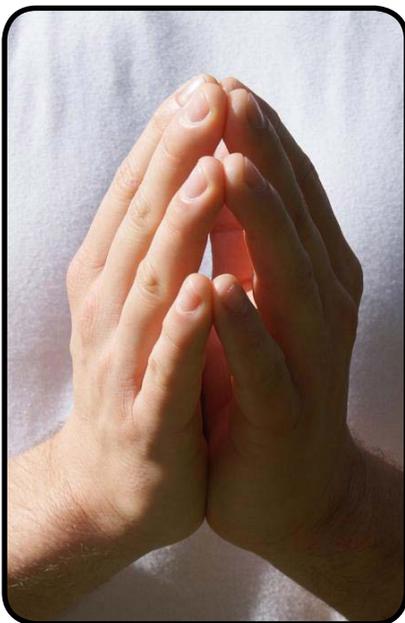
Website: www.msfsouthwest.com

SWIP Circular BK/80

January 22, 2022

GRATEFULLY YOURS...

My dear Confreres,



Precious are those moments, which I cherish praising and thanking God with you. Like a pilgrim who is on a long journey to reach the destination of his choice, when I look back at the path that I tread as the animator of South-West India Province, I have only words to thank God and the people who played sincere role in my life. I admire the way God worked in my life and how he used me to a great extent making the crooked path straight, the rough road smooth and orienting me to choose the road less travelled. As I began my journey with you six years back, I remember the fears and anxieties that weighed within me. Of course, there burned within me a sense of purpose and discipline and a sincere intention of doing good to those entrusted to my care. At the same time, it was getting revealed to me that no province can reach its full growth unless spirituality is integrated with the rest of the activities of one's life. I was and I am still undergoing a sense of disturbance, a sense of fire, which burns within me, which makes me in one way or the other unsettled. Today I realize that it is this fire, this sense of unsettledness that helped me to organize and animate our province the way I did, good or bad, satisfactory or yet to be improved – let history judge it.

My dear Confreres, during the past six years, as even before, we had been involved in a series of missionary activities, which include, Community Life, Mission, Formation, Education, Social Activities and Administrative endeavours. Attempts were made and commitment was shown to live these dimensions of our Missionary way of life at its best. Of course, the challenges set before us were graver, than earlier and are far from over. There is a need to dream higher and to work out the possibilities of actualizing our set priorities. In order to orient myself to understand properly the task at hand, the question that I used to ask myself was: **Why am I here?** This has helped me to understand the purpose of my life.

I was entrusted with this noble opportunity to lead our province for the past six years. More than evaluating the achievement list, my desire is to see that our Province grows more in a personal relationship

with God. **Material well-being and spectrums of initiatives and developments in the mission field can only be an outward sign of the interior mark of depth that we have clothed ourselves with.** The Gospels prove that every aspect of Jesus' life was based on his relationship with his Father. In the same way, it is our relationship with Jesus and his Father, more concretely, our prayer life, which should be the pattern of our Missionary Spirituality. **As St Francis de Sales teaches us:** A Priest, for that matter, a MSFS Missionary, who does not spend daily minimum half an hour in prayer in order to interiorize and to realize the purpose of all that he does, and minimum half an hour in reading in order to enlighten his mind and heart, can also prepare himself to contribute to himself and to the humanity the minimum possible.

The question is, should I be merely an ordinary person? Or do I want to raise something out of this ordinary sphere of my life? If so, we need to dare to think different. **We need to understand what our priorities are and set them aright. We need to understand that fatigue is often a mental creation that stems from doing things you do not like to do. Am I doing what I do not like to do? Seneca observes: "It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that things are difficult."**

My dear Confreres, with a sense of humility I stand here before you to express my respect and a sense of gratitude for the magnanimous ways you went with me during the past six years. You were willing to walk with me more than the measured distances and your extra steps made a strong difference in the life of our beloved province. As a province, we tried to touch every fabric of our missionary life from the personal level to the collective, from the spiritual realm to the structural, from privacy to common witness. I have learned through these six years that human capabilities have a vital limit. This animation journey with you has taught me that only through my regular relationship with my God I can communicate to you the meaning of my work. I am realizing all the more that I need to be more and more a man of prayer and sensitive to the other and know for myself that God has placed a treasure in an earthen vessel that is me.

One of the realisations that I have made in my life during these years of the animation of our province is that there isn't any sterling virtue in me, which anyone can point out as that which makes me special. But still, God has poured on me his love abundantly through each one of you, my confreres, and through various others who showed me how much more I need to grow in life. **I AM EVER GRATEFUL TO YOU.** I place on record that more than what I gave to you I have received from you. I am edified by the way you conduct your life, individually and as a community. Dear Confreres, I have learned a lot of things from you. I learned from you how humility and simplicity could win hearts; I learned how I need to become a mother to others; and I learned how one needs to manage one's time to carry out all the responsibilities with sufficient care.

Carmelites always say that they have two wings: the wing of prayer and the wing of community. Today when I think of my life as the animator of our Province I understand that my two wings were "**trust in the Providence of God**" and "**my own Confreres.**" When I look back and evaluate the marvelous things we could accomplish during the past six years, I mark in bold letters **your passion and unceasing commitment. You trusted me and we have made a difference in the life of our province with our own punch mark.** In attempting to achieve targets you filled in all those qualities, which I personal-

ly lacked. **I dared to act when I noticed passion at its best, commitment at its loftiest and sincerity at its noblest aura.** Success or failure is part of life, but lack of effort in attempting is sin.

The Gospel spirituality is a spirituality of withdrawal. At every peak moment, one must withdraw to reflect, evaluate and launch out. I wish to do that. Now I feel all the more that there is a fire in me, which disturbs me, challenges me and never keeps me resting. Certain times together with the members of my team of administration I have taken drastic risks, but I have equally seen God's hand carrying us through. **I trust in God.** It is merely this simple thing that I communicate to you, my dear Confreres: The best moment of my life as the animator of our Province was those personal moments when one or the other shared with me that I have touched their life. **I say now, you have touched me and I am grown.**

My dear Confreres, this is my last circular as your Provincial. During the past six years we had been sharing a life of togetherness through various spectrums of our lives, such as intellectual, administrative, spiritual and communitarian. Standing at the culmination of my office as Provincial, I am convinced of the fact that the past years were not merely bed of roses. It was a time of hard work, dedication, incessant journeys, personal and collective encounters in communities, face-to-face challenges to mend and to renew and insistence on intellectual and spiritual pursuit. Often you were challenged to give your topmost quality for your own holistic growth. As I affirm that there was a pure intention of seeing you grow in every stratum of your life, I am proud that you were willing to learn. Now I request you to launch out and change the world. Let the world know that we have something to offer to it. **Let us understand that clinging to safe shores in life is nothing more than making a choice to remain imprisoned by our own fears. Let us accept complete responsibility for the way things are and let us resolve to work on changing ourselves before seeking to blame and change others.** This is one of the truest measures of a person of strong character. **The quality of our life is ultimately shaped by the quality of our own choices and decisions.**

I place on record my heartfelt gratitude to:

- **Rev Dr Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS**, the Superior General, for his advice and leadership
- **The members of the General Curia** for all the brotherly accompaniment and suggestions
- **All the Provincials and the Vice Provincial.** Very specially, I am grateful to **PIF** (Provincials India Forum) for their respectful love and Team-work
- **The Delegation Superiors** of Chad-Cameroon, Philippines and Germany-Austria for the collaborative ministry in leadership and animation
- **Provincial Councilors** for the constant journey with me, for their love, support, suggestions and walking together
- **Provincial Bursar** for the relentless accompaniment, meticulous sharing of financial plans and for the brotherly encouragement and unreserved loyalty
- **Provincial Secretaries** who shared with me life-giving commitment

- **MSFS Confreres beyond Province boundaries** who appreciated and encouraged me a lot
- **All the Archbishops and Bishops of the Archdioceses and Dioceses** where our Missionaries are engaged in ministries.
- **Vinayalaya Community**, those persons from whom and the place from where I gained human and religious integrity
- **All those who hold me close to their hearts...** my family members, my beloved friends who understand and share my life and all those who gave me listening ears and hearts in moments of loneliness
- **All the Staff of our Institutions** all over the province and **the People of God in our Parishes.**

My dear Confreres, the road was lengthy, un-understandable were its twists and kinks, painful were the injuries and mysterious was the destination. But, **warm was the togetherness, sweet were the moments of reconciliation, soothing were those loving words of sharing and now the destination is flawlessly clear – GOD, who alone suffices.**

Fraternally

Fr Benny G. Koottanal, MSFS

INSTALLATION OF THE NEW PROVINCIAL



My dear Confreres, on January 24, 2022, on the Feast day of our beloved Patron St Francis de Sales, **Rev Fr Thomas Kalariparambil MSFS**, will be installed as our new Provincial. The festal mass and the installation ceremony will commence at 11 am in Vinayalaya, MSFS Provincial House. All the Confreres of our Province are invited to participate in the ceremonies. Of course, the Covid-restrictions shall be strictly implemented. I request all those of us who are not able to join us physically, to pray for Fr Thomas and for the whole Province-family that under his leadership our beloved province will reach further heights.

ORDINATION TO PRIESTHOOD

The MSFS Congregation and the South-West India Province, in particular, are blessed to have five more new priests who are ordained during this December and January. We as a province family congratulate the new priests for their courageous decision to respond to the call of Jesus to consecrate themselves as holy priests in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales and wish them God's abundant blessings upon their priestly and missionary ministries.

Fr John B. Gannot

Date of birth : June 22, 1992

Place of birth : Kota
Name of parents : Mr Martin Gannot and Mrs. Sunita Gannot
Parish : St Michael Church, Suket
Diocese : Ajmer
First Profession : May 28, 2012
Perpetual Profession: May 28, 2020
Diaconate : November 9, 2020
Ordination : December 27, 2021, St Michael Church, Suket



Fr Uthuppassery Bibin

Date of birth : March 3, 1993
Place of birth : Changanassery
Name of parents : Kuriakose and Valsamma
Parish : St Mary's Church, Kadayanickadu
Diocese : Changanassery Archdiocese
First Profession : May 31, 2014
Perpetual Profession: May 28, 2020
Diaconate : November 9, 2020
Ordination : January 3, 2022, St Mary's Church, Kadayanickadu



Fr Valliara Arun

Date of birth : May 14, 1992
Place of birth : Karuvanchal
Name of parents : V.C. Cyriac and Lissamma
Parish : St Joseph's Forane Church, Vayattuparamba
Diocese : Thalasseri Archdiocese
First Profession : May 28, 2012
Perpetual Profession: May 28, 2020



Diaconate : November 9, 2020

Ordination : January 5, 2022, St Joseph's Forane Church, Vayattuparamba

Fr Palamattathil Subin

Date of birth : August 6, 1991

Place of birth : Edoor

Name of parents : Benny and Santhamma

Parish : St Mary's Forane Church, Edoor

Diocese : Thalasseri Archdiocese

First Profession : June 11, 2011

Perpetual Profession: May 28, 2017

Diaconate : February 19, 2018

Ordination : January 18, 2022, SFS Church, Hebbagodi

Fr Arun Kumar

Date of birth : September 5, 1993

Place of birth : Venkai camp. Tungabadra Dam

Name of parents : Lourdu Swamy and Arogya Mary

Parish : Infant Jesus Church, Bangalore

Diocese : Bangalore Archdiocese

First Profession : May 31, 2014

Perpetual Profession: May 28, 2020

Diaconate : November 9, 2020

Ordination : January 19, 2022, SFS Church, Hebbagodi

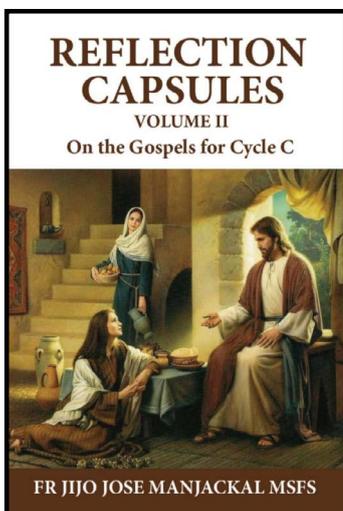


CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES TO FR TONY ERNIAKULATHIL MSFS

My dear Confreres, it is a great moment of pride for the MSFS Congregation that **Fr Tony Erniakulathil MSFS** is appointed by the CBCI as the **Associate Director – Finance of St John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore** with effect from June 1, 2022. It is a wonderful opportunity for Fr Tony as well as for the MSFS Congregation to serve the Church at the National level. On behalf of the South-

West India Province, I take this opportunity to wish Fr Tony Erniakulathil God's abundant blessings in this new stint of ministry. **Fr Tony**, hold high the great name of our beloved Congregation through your genuine missionary services. **Congratulations!**

A NEW BOOK BY FR JIJO MANJACKAL MSFS: REFLECTION CAPSULES: Vol II - On the Gospels for Cycle C



REFLECTION CAPSULES: Vol II - On the Gospels for Cycle C, by **Fr Jijo Jose Manjackal MSFS** is a 256 pages book consisting of around 60 Reflections (Homilies) based on the Word of God. The book is published under SFS Publications, Rajajinagar. The Reflections are arranged based on the Gospels of Sundays Cycle C. A Gospel Reference Index and a Thematic (topical) Index give easy and ready access to the content. There are nearly 100 themes; each reflection is decorated with relevant anecdotes/stories/illustrations. The book is resourceful in understanding the Word of God (Gospels) and in preparing sermons, recollections, talks, community and family prayers and motivational sessions. It is also a great aid for Lectio Divina – the ancient method of praying with the Scriptures.

REFLECTION CAPSULES: VOL II is dedicated to Rev Fr Anish Mundiyanickal MSFS and Rev Fr Alwyn Zothansanga MSFS. The book is made available at an Introductory Price (of 40% discount) at Rs 200/- For orders, kindly contact SFS Publications (or contact reflectioncapsules@gmail.com / 8050573289).

We congratulate Fr Jijo Manjackal for his commitment to spread the wisdom of the Word through his writings.

ITSSCAT - 2: CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS



The academic year 2021- 22 has made a remarkable leap in the South-West India province as we have opened the second unit of ITSSCAT- India at Palachode, close to the city of Perithalmanna, in a rented house. The construction of the building at the land given by the Rtd. DIG. Mr Joseph Thomas, for which Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal, our Provincial, laid the foundation stone on August 25, 2021, is already in full swing. A two-floor building designed to accommodate a maximum of 50 students and 5 staff was started on November 15, although delayed due to unfavourable weather, has already completed the first phase of concreting. If everything goes well it can be completed by January, 2023.

ITSSCAT-India, purely a service-oriented nonprofit concern, in adherence to its original vision completely at the service of the nation and society, through Indian Administrative and civil services, is indeed a proud move particularly of the South-West India Province of the MSFS. This venture, growing fast, has

brought remarkable results and has made a commendable impression of MSFS in the society. ITSSCAT-India has also entered into a tie-up with Brilliant Pala, the prominent coaching institute in India for the training of our students who aspire to study in IITS, IIMS and Medicine.

Through ITSSCAT- India, we commit ourselves to be at the poor, especially the most deserving highly talented High School children aiming at lifting them to a better life being at the service to others and nation; motivating, training, and forming them to enter Indian Administrative and Civil Services. I have witnessed to its beginning, growth, results and development during my tenure of six years as provincial. I wish and pray that this may continue to grow further and reach further high realms as possible and cater to many more children in need.

BLESSING AND INAUGURATION OF THE COUNSELLING CENTER AT BATHERI



DIVYA JYOTHI RENEWAL (Reflecting, Evaluating, Nurturing and Empowering for a Worthy Alternative Life) CENTRE was blessed by Rev. Fr Benny Gregorioso Koottanal MSFS, the Provincial Superior of South-West India Province on January 20, 2022. In his message, Fr Benny expressed the need to make this Centre a blessing for everyone through various ministries. The Emblem of the Centre was released by Rev Fr James, (Forane Vicar of Assumption Church, Sulthan Batheri) and was handed over to Fr Shinto Jacob MSFS, the Director. The presence of Fr Thomas Moongamakkal, (The project support-

er), Fathers from Batheri and Kannur Apostolic communities, neighbours and friends made the event more graceful. Sincere thanks to everyone for your valuable support and encouragement in various ways.

BLESSING OF THE NEW WING OF SFS COLLEGE



The blessing of the Seminar and Conference Block of St Francis de Sales College along with its newly added facilities such as Boardroom, Classrooms, Prayer rooms, Staffrooms, Labs, NCC room, and Lift were blessed on Tuesday, January 18, 2022, by Rev. Dr Benny Koottanal MSFS, the Provincial, during a simple ceremony. Fathers from Mermier Bhavan, Fr Joshy Thumpechirayil MSFS, the Provincial

secretary, a few Staff of the College, Parents, and Students were present for the function. Rev. Dr Benny Koottanal MSFS, the Provincial, thanked and felicitated everyone who worked for the new building and for their great effort.

APPOINTMENTS

Fr Panachickal Justin is appointed as the Youth Co-ordinator of the Kerala Region with effect from January 1, 2022.

Fr Karuvelil Simil is appointed to the community of Adoor for Pastoral Assistance with effect from January 3, 2022

Fr Vettukattil Joseph is appointed to the Community of PSI Sevagram, Kengeri with effect from January 10, 2022.

Fr John B. Gannot is designated to be appointed in the Diocese of Gulbarga with effect from February 10, 2022.

Fr Uthuppassery Bibin is designated to be appointed in the Archdiocese of Thalassery with effect from February 1, 2022.

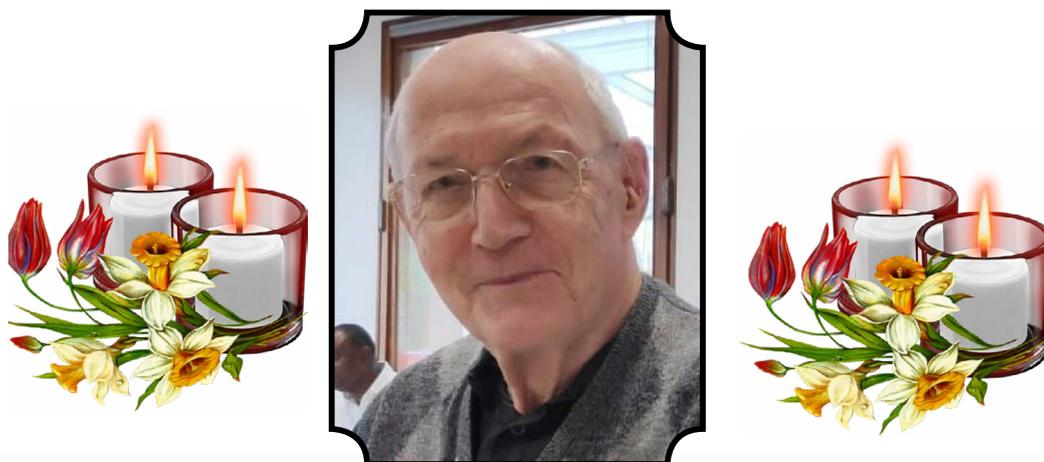
Fr Valliara Arun is designated to be appointed in the Diocese of Pala with effect from February 19, 2022.

Fr Palamattathil Subin is designated to be appointed in the Diocese of Kanjirappally with effect from February 15, 2022.

Fr Arun Kumar is designated to be appointed in the Diocese of Shimoga with effect from February 15, 2022.

OBITUARY

Rev. Fr Claude Morel MSFS (88), belonging to Franco-Swiss Province passed away on January 15, 2022. We thank God for all the good things that He has showered upon our Congregation through the instrumentality of Rev. Fr Claude Morel. May God bless him and give him eternal rest.



Rev. Fr Sushant Mantri MSFS (52), belonging to Pune Province passed away on January 16, 2022.
We thank God for this great missionary. May God bless him with the eternal reward.



NB: For a deceased Confrere, who is a professed member, 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.

VOICE OF SFS

The essence of discipline is all about knowing when to 'take hold,' and when to 'let go'.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fr Benny Koottanal MSFS".

Fr Benny Koottanal MSFS
Provincial