



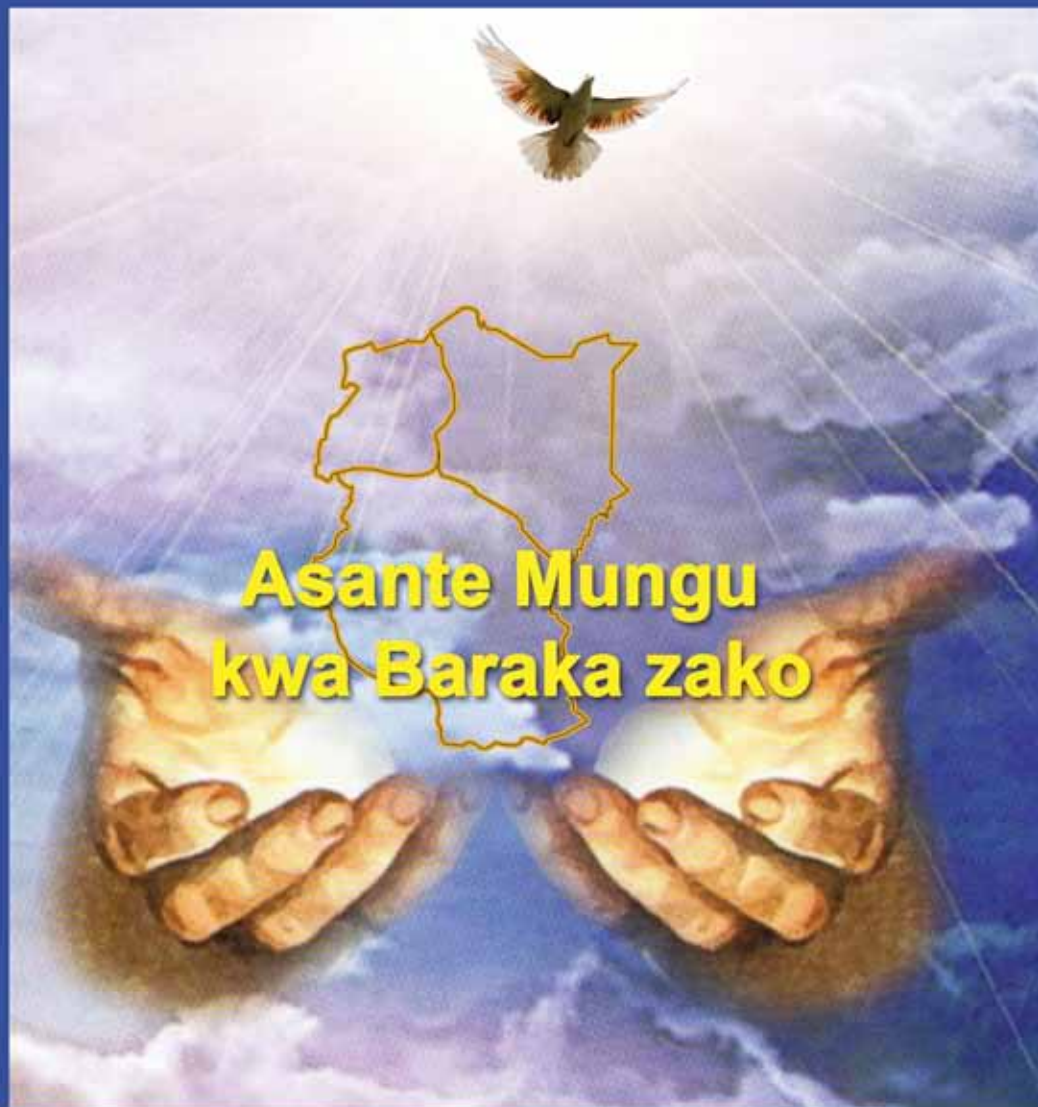
Vol. I

Jan - June 2012

BARAKA

ZA FRANSALIANS

Half Yearly News Bulletin of MSFS East Africa Province



**Asante Mungu
kwa Baraka zako**

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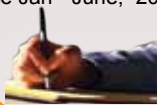
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As our patron St. Francis de Sales says “Bloom where you are planted” we the Missionaries of St. Francis de sales were planted by divine plan on Dec 31, 1987 in the continent of Africa. Now we are heading to 25 years of our presence in African Continent especially in East Africa.

We the MSFS Missionaries, if asked how these 24 years are passed, we have nothing to say other than to confess “Asante sana Mungu kwa Baraka zako”, which means “Thank you Lord for your blessings”. Yes, it is the fact that we the MSFS Missionaries could do something what was possible within our abilities and strength only by the grace of God and His providence. So as we are about to enter in to the Silver Jubilee year, we have all the reasons to sit and reflect and wonder about God’s guiding presence in our day today activities and in our missions. The few writings put in this news letter are some of our reflections on God’s blessings showered upon us. We were really showered with innumerable blessings for which we can go on writing volumes and volumes.

BARAKA is the reflection of the blessings (Baraka) that we received from the Almighty. In the realization of BARAKA so many hands worked behind all of whom we cannot mention but only to express with a beautiful word ‘THANK YOU’. But however we are indebted to mention some of them like those who contributed the articles, those who assisted us in editing, typesetting, layout and proof reading. It is by the cooperation of these hands this BARAKA has come to its realization. It is our hope and wish that by reading this you may get an overall view of MSFS presence in East Africa and continue to support us with your valuable prayers and God’s blessings upon us.

-The Editors



Baraka...

On December 31, 1987 four of the MSFS Confreres Rev. Frs. Kuzhuppil Devasia, Kuzhuppil Sebastian, Mangatt Augustine

and Kochuparampil Thomas - landed in Dar es Salam, Tanzania. A historical moment in the life of the MSFS Congregation and particularly for the MSFS Mission in Africa. This was first major missionary venture from MSFS in India to another country. It was followed by many missionary openings in other African countries, as well as in other continents. Looking back to the quarter of century of the missionary presence of the MSFS in this part of the world, I can say with all my conviction that it was a time of grace. If someone asks me if I could find a single word that would tell of everything that was during the last 25 years, I would say yes: and that single word would be BARAKA - in Swahili - meaning BLESSING. It is a story of blessing: Blessings we have received from God and the blessings we have given in the name of God.

Baraka is not a jubilee memorial souvenir but the news letter of the Fransalians in East Africa launched in this jubilee year. We need to share the good news of the multitude of blessings that we have received from God. We have many stories to share... stories of blessings; stories that inspire, motivate and challenge; stories unique and unknown to many; stories untold...Perhaps we were too busy to tell them, or thought it is insignificant to share. But we realize how even a small thing is a blessing. Things apparently seem to be no blessing, would turn out to be real blessings – that is our experience. As you hold the Baraka in your hands, it is my ardent wish and prayer that you experience blessings in your life and you will be the source of blessings for many.

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS
Provincial of East Africa province

NEWLY CONSECRATED CHURCH AT OSIA PARISH -TOROR-ARCHDIOCESE UGANDA

Osia Parish in the Archdiocese of Tororo in Uganda was established in the year 1975 by Rev. Father Weidemar, having curved out of Achilet Parish. It has ten sub-parishes. The population of Catholics in the Parish has tripled since its inception in 1975. Over ten years now, the Christians of Osia Parish have recognized the need to have a bigger Church to accommodate the increasing number of Christians. So the function was led by the Most Rev. Denis Kiwanuka Lote, the Archbishop of Tororo in the presence of the former Provincial Superior of Missionaries of St. Frances De Sales (East Africa Province) and a huge crowd of faithful.

Through the local fundraising (Harambee) and assistance from other well-wishers, they were able to construct a magnificent new Church. May 26, 2012 was a special and auspicious day for the faithful of Osia Parish to witness their newly built Church being consecrated by the Most Rev. Denis Kiwanuka Lote, the Archbishop of Tororo, in the presence of a good number of Priests, Nuns, Well-wishers and thousands of faithful from and outside of the Diocese and country. The occasion was graced by the presence of Hon. Minister of State for Lands, Hon. Sarah Opendi Achieng who delivered a message from His Excellency the President of the Republic of Uganda. His Highness the Adhola, the cultural leader of the Jopadhola, and His Highness Moses Owor were also among the dignitaries' guests who were present. All in all it was a grace filled and unforgettable event for the faithful of Osia Parish. All thanks and praise to God.



Fr. Sebastian Nirappel MSFS

SFS TECHNICAL INSTITUTE - MWAKATA, TANZANIA



SFS Technical Institute is owned by Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales, within the jurisdiction of the Catholic Diocese of Kahama. It came to existence in the year 2003 at Mwakata, Region of Shinyanga, Tanzania.

It is established in order to uplift the standards of Tanzanian youths who are underprivileged to go for their secondary education and those who cannot go for higher studies and to equip them in various trades.

At present this institute offers the following courses: Motor Vehicle Mechanics, Welding and Fabrication, Carpentry & Joinery, Computer & Secretarial, Tailoring & Dress Making,

Electrical Installation and Motor Vehicle Driving. The Institute accommodates 150 to 170 students per year for long term and short term courses. Our static shows 78% of our past students are already employed in their respective trades and well-settled in their family life. Since our institution is well-equipped with modern machinery and qualified staff, it can provide not only training but also assist the local community with various products, equipments and furniture.



Fr. Joseph Poikunnel MSFS

MY EXPERIENCE IN ST. JOSEPH'S VTC- MOLOLONGO, NAIROBI

When I first came to Mlolongo in October 2011 I had never before heard of something like a Vocational Training Centre (VTC). So I was excited about what would be ahead of me for the next six months. As you also might not be familiar with the term of a VTC let me just explain to you the main ideas behind it. The Aim of a Vocational Training Centre, like the one of St. Joseph's Parish in Mlolongo, is what we call empowerment in the Social Sciences.

Empowerment means to provide certain skills and abilities to people, which they can then use for themselves in order to improve their life situation and make a living of their own. Instead of providing people lifelong with goods and services, empowerment wants to provide a short term help which enables the persons to help themselves. So let us take a look at St. Josephs Vocational Training Centre in Mlolongo and find out how this institution does in terms of empowerment.

The VTC offers courses in Tailoring, Motor Vehicle Mechanics (MVM), Early Childhood Development (ECDE), Computerized Secretarial Training, Accounts and a huge bandwidth of Computer Courses. For all Courses different Levels of certificates or diplomas are offered, all of them according to the local Education Authority. Qualifications for intake differ depending on the course but start as low as "Ability to read and write". Such a wide range of courses are offered so that a wide range of the population can make real use of the institution. Only a student, who finds a subject which he is really interested in, will be willing to study and work hard anyway! To ensure that students can come to profit from the institution's services not only from Mlolongo but also from the surrounding villages, the VTC also offers a Hostel for girls at a subsidized rate which is much below the normal local rates of accommodation. All Payments for the VTC can be made in monthly



instalments and special cases can often be supplied with an external or internal sponsorship, at least if the student can ensure he or she is willing to work hard and, once employed, pay back the sponsorship to provide another new student. This effort is undertaken in order to reach the young people of poor families who would otherwise not be able to join the VTC for any kind of education. One thing which I found may be most impressive in my time here is the steady development which the Institution is undergoing. Within half a year two new computer courses have been added to the repertoire. A new course of two-wheel motor mechanics is about to be launched in collaboration with a local motor bike dealer, the institution's library has been significantly expanded, and projects, which will supply students of tailoring and MVM classes with basic tools for self employment (mechanical sewing machine/ toolbox), are also to be set in action this year. Especially the last mentioned project is another step in the direction of empowerment which should be highly accredited.

All those efforts cannot be fully sustained by the income generated from the nominal amount of fees paid by the students but if it also gets support from outside. By getting in contact with local people and Companies and Organizations which are able to supply some money for a good purpose, the VTC received support as well as donations from Salesan foundation, Mr. Bimal Kantia Elgon Kenya Ltd, Rev. Fr. Thomas Chozhithara & Fr. Sony Kochumalayil MSFS, Fr. John T. Judie, Rotary Club of Nairobi, MRH Foundation, from Rotarians of Karstadt and Dr. Manu Chandaria. This kind of support can also be taken as credit for the good work which is done here.

The Motto of St. Joseph's Vocational Training Centre in Mlolongo is **"STRIVING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE"**. When I arrived here it was only a Motto like all the others out there. In the last six months, which I spent here, I found it to be filled with life and meaning. Education is a great gift in this part of the world, and it is provided here in high quality, surrounded by the safe environment of the church and the moral standards which are brought to the students by weekly prayers and of course the loving guidance of Fr. Jomat Kollappallil as Principal of the

VTC and assistant Parish Priest as well as Fr. Jacob Thekkekara as Director of the VTC and Parish Priest of St. Josephs Parish Mlolongo. I appreciate the great work done here. God bless you all!

Mr. Matthias Artmann

*(Matthias was a Volunteer from Germany in the VTC for six months
From Oct, 2011 - Mar, 2012.)*

ITAGA PARISH: TABORA, TANZANIA ACTIVITIES, PLANS AND CHALLENGES



Itaga parish is one of the oldest parishes in the Archdiocese of Tabora which is situated about 15 kilometres away from Tabora town. The parish was established by the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) on July 27, 1913 under the patronage of St. Anthony of Padua. After 77 years of their hard work, the Missionaries of Africa handed over the parish back to the diocese. Due to the shortage of diocesan clergy, the diocese had requested the Congregation of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales to take over the pastoral care of the Itaga parish from January 13, 1991. Since the year 1991 there were many priests from the congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de sales who have worked here

as parish priests and assistants. After taking up the parish, Fr. Sebastian kuzhupil MSFS was appointed as the first parish priest of Itaga parish in the year 1991 followed by Fr. Pius Kochuparampil MSFS, Fr. Sunny Mattathil MSFS, Fr. Sebastian Palakudy MSFS and the present parish Priest, Fr. Tomychan Perumanoor MSFS. The parish has got 48 sub-stations and 130 Basic Christian communities (BCC), which are scattered about 130 kilometres around the parish. For the better running of the parish, it is divided into eight big centres (Kanda) and in each sub-station there are two lay catechists who immediately take care of the spiritual needs of the people in the absence of priests.

There are also nine secondary and a quite good number of elementary schools within the parish boundary which are run by the Tanzanian government. With the cooperation of a sister belonging to the society of Daughters of Mary, the parish also is running a kinder garden, where around 30 children are studying. Although Itaga was considered as one of the poorest and largest parish of the diocese, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales have taken it as a challenge to give regular spiritual nourishment to the people such as going to sub stations for mass, establishing two pilgrimage canters, conducting yearly retreats prior to pilgrimages, attending the people in the parish office who are affected by various problems at least once a week, having novena at the parish centre every Tuesday and Saturday, and timely conducted seminars for catechists and different pious groups of the parish. Recently, the parish has built a mini shopping complex, a stage for public meetings and a laboratory in order to take care of the social and medical needs of the people, which are also a source of income for the parish. All in all the faithful of Itaga Parish are being nurtured well by the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

Fr. Tomychan Perumanoor MSFS.

OUR FIRST MISSION: LUBUBU PARISH

Our Lady of Grace Parish, Lububu is one of the oldest and remote Parishes in the Archdiocese of Tabora, Tanzania. It has been served by different Congregations beginning with the Society of Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), Diocesan Priests and presently MSFS Priests together with the collaboration of the Sisters of Daughters of Mary. Lububu Parish has 23 Sub-Stations and 3 prayer centers where the spiritual service has been rendered. In all the sub-stations, there are Catechists to lead the prayers and assist the priests. Our Lady of Grace is the Patroness of Lububu Parish. Lububu is the first Parish, in the African Soil, for the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales to work and proclaim the Word of God to the people. It is also the first journey into the African Continent by the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

His Grace Archbishop Mario A. Mgulunde, the then Archbishop of Tabora had entrusted the Lububu Parish to the care of the Missionaries of St.



Francis de Sales Fr. Augustine Mangatt MSFS (Parish Priest), Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS and Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS on January 24, 1989. The Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales are serving tirelessly in animating and initiating activities among the local Christian Population from 1989 till today. The year 2013 would be the year of Silver Jubilee for the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales for their presence in African Soil.

Birth and History of Lububu

The day of birth of anybody is a happy day. The Parish of Lububu took its birth from the Society of Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) who opened the Mission of Lububu in the year 1925. Most Rev. Henri Leonard the Bishop of Tabora 'Vicariate' that time, had permitted the White Fathers to spread the Gospel in the land of Wanyamwezi (people of a particular tribe). After a long journey of exploration, they found the place Lububu to start the Mission and build the Church. Lububu means 'VUMBI LA FISI' or 'DUST'. The Church of Lububu Parish was built and blessed as Our Lady of Grace Parish on 6th June 1934. Rev. Fr. Henry Van Erden was the first Parish Priest together with Rev. Fr. Boscho and Bro. Mathew. The Missionaries from the congregation of Missionaries of Africa served the people of God for 33 years from 1925 to 1958.

Besides the construction of the Church the White Fathers built and opened the Diocesan Junior Seminary in the year 1953. In the year 1958 the Lububu Parish was entrusted to the Diocesan Priests from the Tabora Archdiocese and they were serving the people of God for 27 years from 1958 to 1984. Rev. Fr. John Kaholwe was the first Diocesan Priest to lead the Lububu Parish. Lububu Parish had been closed due to the lack of priests for 5 years from 1984 to 1989 and people were left without spiritual nourishments. In the year 1987, His Grace Mario A. Mgulunde, the Archbishop of Tabora had submitted a request to the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales to lead the Christians in Lububu Parish. On January 24, 1989 on the feast of St. Francis de Sales, the Lububu Parish was entrusted officially with the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales by His Grace Mario A. Mgulunde. The Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales have been rendering their spiritual services for the Catholics of Lububu for 25 years and beginning to celebrate their Jubilee.

Daughters of Mary Immaculate

Sisters of Daughters of Mary started to collaborate with the Fathers in serving the people of God in Lububu Parish from the year 1930.

The Convent for the Sisters was built and blessed officially by His Grace W.Trudel on December 28, 1946. They had been serving the people very much especially when the Parish was without Priests from 1984 to 1989. They are still continuing their services with the grace of Our Lady of Grace.

Salvation Hill (Mlima wa Wokovu)

“Mlima wa Wokovu” is a place of Pilgrimage. This is a small Hill in the Lububu Parish, situated on the main road leading to Kagongwa and Kahama. It is also closer to Mwamala sub-station and the faithful from Mwamala are taking care of the Hill.

This Salvation Hill has a history of 22 years. In 1989 Rev. Fr. Mathew Chavely MSFS had proposed the idea of making a pilgrimage (Hija) to this Hill and to pray. Rev. Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS, the then Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS and the Chairperson of Mwamala village, Mzee Luka had joyfully accepted this idea. It was on the day of Good Friday in 1990 together with all the faithful Rev. Fr. Mathew



Chavely MSFS erected a CROSS on this Hill. The local Christians expressed that they were very happy to pray on this Hill, where they used to collect firewood and graze animals.

Later in 1991 the Fathers and all the leaders from different sub-stations had the meeting and decided to make a pilgrimage to this Hill. The Hill was baptized as the Mlima wa Wokovu which means Salvation Hill and the first Hija or Pilgrimage took place on September 14, 1991. Rev. Fr. Jose Parampukatil MSFS officiated the Mass and Rev. Fr. Arul Joseph broke the Word of God.

later with the arrival of Fr. Pius Kochuparampil MSFS The construction of a small chapel on the hill was initiated. Church was complete in 1992 and was blessed by His Grace Mario Mgulunde, the Archbishop of Tabora and officially opened by Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz MSFS, the then Superior General of our Congregation. Today many Christians from different diocese make their pilgrimage to this 'Mlima wa Wokovu' to experience a spiritual atmosphere. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless all the pilgrims, so that whoever goes there with good intention, feel his being saved.

Fr. Susai David, MSFS

FOSTER PROJECTS IN IPULI TABORA, TANZANIA

According to UNICEF reports, 2200 children die each day due to poverty. And they “die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death”. Seeing the condition of children who are vulnerable the East African province, began the project under the name FOSTER (FRANSALIAN ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, EDUCATION AND RENEWAL) in order to help and enable the depressed and less fortunate ones. FOSTER aims at fostering the children in their physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual dimensions. Our Lord Jesus Christ



says, “Whenever you did this to one of these little ones, you did it to me” (Mt 25:40). Adhering to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, through different activities the FOSTER, namely the Children’s Home, the Girls’ Home,

the Project for the visually impaired people, SFS Mission School and the Day Care centre, works on the poverty eradication and social development.

Responding to the growing demands of the society in Tabora which had more orphan and street children due to the increase of epidemic like AIDS and broken families, the children's home was begun in Ipuli in the year 2002. Since its inception, the SFS Children's Home is helping the poor and vulnerable children who are orphans or semi-orphans by providing for their basic needs and education so that they may become model citizens of tomorrow. In the Children's home, the children are provided with the most basic needs of a safe living environment, healthy food, decent clothes, quality education and proper medical care. In addition to all these, they are also counselled to give them emotional support. In all its aspects the Children's Home in Ipuli has become a boon to the people of Tabora and at large to the whole of Tanzania as it caters to the needs of the vulnerable children who have none to support.

MERMIER GIRLS' HOME

Based on enrolment data, about 72 million children of primary school age in the developing world were not in school in 2005 and 57 per cent of them were girls. The girl children, dominated by the patriarchal society, were not provided with their rights and were treated as commodities which can be bought and sold at any time as they did not have enough awareness about education. So in order to facilitate the girl children who were deprived of the education, FOSTER took up this uphill task of educating the girl flock too. The girls who were homeless and lived on streets are catered by the Girls' Home and they are given a wholesome formation pertaining to the social, ethical and spiritual dimensions in order to teach them to be responsible and to uphold high standards of moral behaviour.

THE PROJECT FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE

The linkage between poverty and disability is strong and goes in both directions. Poverty causes disability through malnutrition, poor health care and dangerous living conditions. Disability can cause poverty by preventing the full participation of disabled people in the economic and social life of their communities, especially if there are no proper supports and accommodations available. So in order to make available the facilities for the visually impaired



people, FOSTER began the Furaha-clay project in the year 2007 to enhance them to become self reliant. This project aims at helping the visually impaired and those affected by improper pigmentation (albinos). The students get free accommodation, education

and technical training in arts. They are taught how to make items like bricks, pots, flower vases and water filters out of clay. Furaha-clay is a self reliant project which earns its income from the sale of the products produced especially the water filters which are very popular for they are very effective in preventing Typhoid and other water-born diseases. This project also which was begun solely depending on the providential care of God has really become a refuge centre for many visually impaired people and those affected by improper pigmentation.

SFS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL

“The heart of education is the education of the heart” says Fr. Peter Mary Mermier, the founder of MSFS congregation. Bearing this in mind to educate the little hearts who were deprived of education, the SFS Mission Primary School was started with the aim of eradicating ignorance with the tool of education for the children living within the vicinity of Tabora town. Because education is the

best medium through which we can reach out to the people to make them aware of their rights and make them capable of what they can achieve. Thus accordingly being a mission school, the primary school is at its best to help the poor and needy by providing them with free education, and thus provides them necessary opportunities to come out with flying colors in their future. In this enormous task of educating the young minds the commitment of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy is a great contribution.

It was a long cherished dream for the whole Project at Ipuli and for the people of Tabora and its vicinity, who eagerly awaited to have a good Secondary School with better facilities. This dream was actualised on March 7, 2012 when it was officially inaugurated. It has also gained the confidence of all the people that this school will shine in the future giving light to many people. God has blessed the school so enormously that day by day the reputation of the school is spread because of its standard and the quality education. “ it is shocking to know that, ‘less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons, was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn’t happen’. The effort that the FOSTER takes for eradicating may amount to nothing when compared to need of the world but still it has its telling effects in the lives of many children who had no idea about their future. So through all these different projects the FOSTER, with the help of God and the generous hearts, continues to cater the needs of the children to discover themselves, their inborn talents and abilities. so that they can develop themselves to be good citizens.

Fr. Antony Rajesh MSFS

OUR MISSION AT BUKENE

The Bukene parish traces back its history to June 3, 2002 when it was officially declared and erected as an independent parish community by the then Archbishop of Tabora, Most Reverend Mario Abdulla Mgulunde. Until then it was the substation of Lububu parish. It is situated in the region of Tabora, 100 Km from the



regional headquarters. The Bukene mission belongs to Tabora Archdiocese and is cared by the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. Fransalians together with parish mission get involved in education mission with an English

Medium Primary school which has also boarding facilities for both boys and girls. The parish bears the name of the Ugandan Martyrs, St. Charles Lwanga and his Companions and it has 28 substations which nurture 64 small Christian communities. There are two priests residing in the parish, looking after the spiritual needs of the faithful. Sisters from Ancillae Secular Institute are also rendering their service in the mission. The sisters are mostly helping in the running of the school and the boarding and they run a Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) centre as well as a tailoring centre as their own.

S.F.S English Medium Primary School is situated within the premises of the parish. It renders service to the villagers to have access to a qualitative education, at a very low expense. The school has around 300 children and most of them are from in and around Bukene territory.

The Bukene mission is growing faster with the help of God as well as the support of the people and confreres. It is one of the most vibrant missions in the Diocese as well as in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales. All praise and thanks to God.

Decennial Jubilee Celebrations Of The Opening Of The Bukene Parish

With immense joy and profound gratitude to God, St. Charles Lwanga Parish in Bukene, Tabora Archdiocese, Tanzania celebrated its Decennial jubilee celebration of its existence, on June 3, 2012. The event of decennial jubilee was marked with three days of celebrations starting from June 1, 2012. On June 1, 2012, the first day 258 catechumens were baptized and received to Catholic faith. And the day was colored with various competitions for traditional dances, poems, drama etc. Fr. Sebastian Williams MSFS, the parish priest of the mother parish Lububu was the main celebrant of the day.



On June 2, in a very solemn celebration, 57 couples received the sacrament of marriage. The solemn wedding ceremony lasted for 5 hours! Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS the Provincial of the East Africa Province of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales was the main celebrant of the Eucharist who also blessed all the marriages. The marriage celebration was culminated with a fellowship meal. The same day the people of Bukene could witness a competition for eleven church choirs from different outstations.

BARAKA

On June 3, Sunday was the Jubilee day. The day began with a solemn procession around the town, starting from the old church for about 2 Km. The Archbishop of Tabora, Most Reverend Paul



R. Ruzoka presided over the Eucharistic celebration with participation of many priests and thousands of faithful. The Archbishop gave a beautiful message about the Christian life centred on the Holy

Trinity, as it was also the feast of the Holy Trinity drawing examples from the life of St. Charles Lwanga and his companions to show how courageous we should be, to live our faith.



On this beautiful occasion of jubilee a small booklet on the history of the parish was also officially released by Rev. Fr. Provincial, after which the first copy was given to the Archbishop. After the Eucharistic celebration, the whole Bukene community shared a fellowship meal as an expression of their unity and sharing their love. In the evening the finals of choir competition was conducted and thereafter Rev. Fr. Provincial distributed the gifts to

the winners of the competitions and concluded the celebrations.

Fr. Santhosh Paul MSFS

LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE AT A GLANCE

Lumen Christi Institute (LCI), a MSFS centre for Philosophy, Pastoral and Human Resource Management has entered its second year of existence. It is an institute which is directly managed by the Superior General. The year 2011 was a year of multitude of blessings. Lumen Christi Institute, a venture of the entire Congregation was officially blessed and inaugurated on the 14th May 2011 in the presence of our beloved Superior General Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes, the General Curia, a good number of government officials and a good number of faithful from the parishes around LCI. At present on the staff there are six priests and one brother who are rendering their services from different provinces.



Philosophy Programme

The new academic year for Philosophy at Lumen Christi began on September 5, with 20 students having been registered for Philosophy, of whom eleven belong to the Province of East Africa, five for Southern African Region, three for the Mozambique Mission and one for the Archdiocese of Arusha. Two more Fransalians, Fr. Mathew Pallichankudiyil MSFS from the Southern African Region and Fr. Gijo Panamattam MSFS from the Chad-Cameroon mission has joined the staff, making the Institute truly an Institute of the entire congregation. LCI was also blessed with some visiting Professors from the Leuven University who came to serve the Institute in teaching Philosophy and Psychology.

Swahili language course

LCI, seeing the need of rendering Swahili language course for the missionaries and volunteers, decided to render this service with pastoral and social exposure facilities. So far LCI has successfully

conducted a quite good number of 'Kiswahili language courses'. The intensive one month programme introduces students to an in-depth knowledge of Swahili and exposes the students to the culture and religion of the people of Tanzania.

Pastoral Animation

LCI, knowing the need of focusing on training the lay leaders for dynamic and effective pastoral ministry in the African context, has completed a new building for Pastoral Animation. LCI is poised to launch a nine month long Formators' Course (2014), Catechetical Courses (September 2012), Retreats (every June and December), and short term courses in Pastoral Counselling (October 2012).

Foster Life Tanzania

LCI's Human Resource Management programmes are being realized through Foster Life Tanzania, a non-profit making Organization which was registered on December 5, 2011. It is promoting life by various programmes like Training the Trainers (TOT), seminars, awareness programmes on HIV/AIDS and drug addiction etc., with the help of youth in and around Maji ya Chai. Foster Life Tanzania is to initiate agricultural and food sustainability projects through seminars on farming and also by establishing grain-banks in the villages. In order to improve the quality of life of women and other socially marginalized sections of the society, Foster Life Tanzania will focus on gender issues, conflict management and human rights. The long term vision of Lumen Christi Institute is to establish a University to offer opportunities for the poorer sections of the people of Africa in the field of higher education. Thus Lumen Christi, as an undertaking of the entire Congregation of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales is to become a catalyst for new evangelization, social transformation and renewal in Africa. LCI is very grateful to the General administration, benefactors and well wishers who make generous contributions to the growth of the Institute.

Fr. Mathew Thazathukunnel MSFS

AFRICA FOR THE FIRST TIME: COME AND SEE (JN 1:39) AFRICA

“Come and see” says the Lord Jesus Christ. To experience the unquenchable love of God, to become his real followers, we have to be with Him and taste His goodness. So also in order to know the goodness and sweetness of Africa, one has to come to Africa, leaving behind all his misconceptualized ideas and the inhibitions that he has.

It was on the October 19, 2011 we (Fr.Simon Raja MSFS and Fr. Antony Rajesh MSFS) reached the land of mystery in Dar Es Salaam Airport. As we were high above in clouds, when we looked down, we could not see any gigantic building or a four-lane road, and it all appeared to be a real forest. Seeing this, there was a little fear within our hearts although we expected much worse things. But landing at the Airport, we saw our fathers with their smiling faces, welcoming and waving hands towards us when we were bewildered at the new situations. And it is there that the real taste of the African mission began.



Fr Rajesh MSFS

When we made up our minds to come to Africa, there were so many who thought that we had become insane and are to be put into lunatic asylum or that we are entering into the land of oblivion. Some even went to the extent of bidding adieu to us completely as none could fathom what the land of the African Continent is? And now after completing few months of our stay here, we could boldly say, “Africa is not what we think of, but it is a very pleasant and beautiful place to stay.” Because what we see here is not what we heard. The people here are so simple and manifest a

deep genuine sense of fraternal affection and concern towards us. The sense of cordiality, even if when one is a stranger not knowing their tongue, is manifested with exchange of warm greetings and a broader smile which has no language barriers. Despite the poverty, when a stranger enters their homes, they are ready to provide what they have. When the whole world is in a hurly-burly routine, rushing to the church for momentary comforts, in times of crisis and difficulties, and gets tensed when the Liturgy exceeds five minutes, herein we find the people with a lively involvement, a generous offering from what they have and a well-prepared celestial choir, participating in the Mass with full dedication to God.



Fr Simon MSFS

The natural beauty of Africa beguiles us and teaches us as to what extent the people are one with it, especially the way the animals move around freely without the fear of being harmed by anyone. Our journey to Mikumi National Park in the company of our Fr. Provincial elucidated how much the nature is kept untainted by human touch.

The Snake Park in Arusha with a wide variety of big, venomous snakes of Africa and the house of Cultural Heritage with mind-blowing carvings of wood and paintings are a wonderful sight one should never miss in life. The whole world believes in the false notion that happiness of life depends on having more and more and thus in the process of trying to realize this notion they lose the real happiness of life. On the other hand, the people of Tanzania as we experience, though struck by poverty, not much to possess yet remain as happy people in life. They live out the present more joyfully than brooding over the past and future. The other amazing quality of these people in upbringing their children is that they never use harsh words or methods to correct them but only rebuke them gently. It is also a wonder to see that they don't

easily become a prey to anger, the momentary madness that the hurly-burly world suffers from often.

Tanzania, having around 40% of Christian population and being a peace-loving country in the whole of East Africa is a wonderful soil for great missionary activities. Again it is one of the ten poorest countries of the world as its economy is heavily dependent on agriculture. On the other hand if we look into the natural resources of Tanzania, it is abundantly blessed with vast quantity of them like gold, diamond, coal, iron ore, uranium, nickel, tin, platinum and other minerals and it can boast of being the third largest producer of gold in the African continent after South Africa and Ghana. But the sad fact is that it does not profit much from goldmines as it allows 100% freedom to the multinational companies of Barrick from Canada and Anglo Gold Ashanti (AGS) of South Africa in extracting and exporting gold. In fact it gets only 3% as royalty rate on gold exports and almost 10% of profit from goldmines including of all taxes. These foreign companies too aggravated the poverty of the locals as they've replaced, according to some survey, almost 400,000 small-scale miners and have left them jobless. And the government, though signs agreements with the foreign companies, yet it is not ready to disclose anything to the public about the profit from goldmines. Though rich with precious minerals, yet Tanzania remains the poorest as it is in deep slumber.

At this juncture, if the age-old saying, "Our God is a God of surprises; our God is a certain God in uncertainties and a compassionate God in unparallel circumstances" is true, then He can spring big surprises in inspiring the leaders of Tanzania to change the mining laws so as to profit more or inspire the big organizations of the world to come to the aid of Tanzania to unearth the rich minerals and develop the economy of the country. We also strongly believe that great missionary activities can change the sad face of Tanzania into joyful through mass-education and awareness programs about the riches they possess and the means to be on a par with other countries of the world.

If God wills, there is nothing in the world that is not possible; so trusting in the providence of God and keeping in line with the first mission proclamation of Jesus, “He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; to proclaim liberty to the captives...and free the oppressed” (Lk 4:18), let us, as missionaries join hands with our brethren of Africa to sweat and make a difference in Tanzania.

Finally we can only proudly say that despite the sad plight of Tanzania on the one side, it is really a wonderful country and we are very happy to work here among the wonderful people of Tanzania.

We do not want to eulogise merely the continent of Africa but rather these are our experiences which reverberate in our minds when we compare what we heard of Africa and the reality that we experience now.

Fr. Simon Raja MSFS

FRANSALIANS IN EAST AFRICA

“Well begun is half done” goes the saying. As we the Fransalians of East Africa Province going to celebrate twenty five years of God’s blessings in the African soil, we remember our first four pioneer MSFS Missionaries who on Dec 13, 1987 landed in Tanzania for Christ’s Mission which was always a dream of our founder Fr. Peter Marie Mermier who longed to start evangelization in African continent. Landing in the African Continent, following the invitation of the then Archbishop of Tabora Mario Mgulunde, the pioneers put their tooth and nail together to implant Christ’s Message.

Our pioneers were entrusted with the Lububu mission, Our Lady of Grace Parish which was started by the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) in the year 1925, who later gave back the parish to the Diocese due to lack of personnel and the Diocese also could not give any service to this parish due to lack of personnel and also it was a remote and poor parish. It was here that God planned for the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales to take up their

first mission. The people of God were very happy to receive MSFS Fathers after staying for a couple of years without a shepherd. The presence of the MSFS Fathers brought life and hope to the faithful of Lububu parish which was very explicitly seen in the increase of the catholic population.

Though the culture, language, and food were new, it did not hinder them in any way as they were able to read the signs of time. They had a good integration with the Christians and non Christians and their service was based on the principle 'everything by love nothing by force'.

Realizing the dream of the founder of the Congregation Fr Peter Mary Mermier, who wanted to send the missionaries to the African Continent, and responding positively to Jesus' command, "Go and proclaim the Good News to the whole world", the MSFS Fathers, responded positively to the invitation



of local Bishops and extended their services within and outside Tanzania. In Tanzania, the missionaries are offering their services in the dioceses of: Morogoro, Dar es Salam, Tabora, Kahama and Arusha. In Kenya, they are working in Machakos and Meru while in Uganda they are in Tororo Arch diocese.

As we the MSFS Missionaries, flash back to where we have come from, where we are and where we are heading to, there are numerous reasons to thank the Lord for the blessings and achievements of the past twenty three years. When Christ washed the feet of his disciples He gave them a good example of being a servant. This servant aspect is being exercised by us in our Parishes, schools and institutions.

Moved with compassion for the poor and the orphans, we established Ipuli children's home, where the children who are abandoned by their parents and those who are orphans, receive

their basic needs just like any other ordinary child. In order to enhance faith formation we established centres of Holy Pilgrimages in many parishes such as Mlima Wokovu in Lububu parish, Kategile and Kashishi in Itaga parish. Every year thousands of Catholics and non-Catholics participate in such pilgrimages and draw many graces and blessings. Being aware of the current challenges faced by the contemporary youth , in collaboration with the parish councils we have taken the initiatives of organizing seminars and workshops to enlighten the youths on contemporary challenges to help them to face and to overcome them.

Our scholastics while in formation in Morogoro and Arusha very actively take part in the youth ministry. In Morogoro, brothers are organizing Spirituality Seminars for priests, religious and ordinary faithful twice in a year. Inter school cultural competitions once in a year and two youth Seminars per year for the students of Sokoine University is a great contribution for the youth of today. In Arusha our brothers in philosophy animate youth in the parishes and 'Foster life' movement. Their involvement in youth ministry becomes a positive contribution to equip them to become good animators of youth for their future ministry. In the field of Education we have established six English medium schools, one Junior Seminary, two secondary schools and two Technical schools. The aim is to help people to get rid of ignorance and produce competent people who can move the country forward by their education and service. As we are heading to the celebration Silver Jubilee of our presence in East Africa, we thank the Almighty for the numerous blessings and graces we have received. Our Sincere applauses goes to our pioneers who laid a strong foundation of presence amidst various challenges, also our former Provincials, collaborators and our well wishers and benefactors.

Bro.Charles Ouma MSFS

PASTORAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF MSFS IN EAST AFRICA AND THE PRESENT CHALLENGES OF PASTORAL WORKS

The Missionaries of St. Francis de sales came to the continent of Africa on December 31, 1987 and began its first mission in Lububu Parish in Tabora archdiocese. From the very beginning of its mission in East Africa the missionaries have given priority to the pastoral and spiritual care of the Christ's faithful in the region. The pioneer missionaries who ventured to the African continent had begun the mission of the Congregation in the interior parishes such as Lububu, Itaga and Kahama Mbulu, in order to evangelize. The zeal of the early Missionaries is still carried on unblemished by all the members. The pastoral care of the faithful is taken care mainly through the frequent celebration of the Eucharist even in the villages that are far and difficult to reach. Through the help of various benefactors and funding agencies the missionaries took initiative to establish permanent structures of worship in interior villages wherever the missionaries are working. Because of this the people of villages could come closer to the sacramental life. In order to enhance faith formation the missionaries established centres of Holy Pilgrimages in many parishes such as Mlima wa Wokovu (Salvation Hill) in Lububu parish, Kategile and Kashishi in Itaga parish. Every year thousands of Catholics and non Catholics participate in such pilgrimages and draw many graces and blessings. Many people in East Africa are new to pilgrimages and they have no accessibility to any pilgrimage places except the pilgrimage to Ugandan Martyrs' shrine in Uganda. Hence the starting of pilgrimage places within their reach has made the people of those areas to understand the meaning of Holy Pilgrimages.

Challenges of the Mission Works in East Africa

There are many challenges and hardships in the pastoral field even today. A good number of people in the villages are still infants in catholic faith and they live together with the traditional worshippers and the people of other religions. And still many of them continue

in their traditional beliefs along side of Catholic faith. Their faith is a mixture of Catholicism and traditional religions. There is a dire need of deeper faith- formation.

Traditionally many tribes were polygamous in East Africa. Though most of them have received catholic faith we can see the sentiments of polygamous life in many. Even after receiving sacramental marriage many return to polygamous life. There should be more effort to teach the people on Christian values in family life in order to instil Christ's love in the life of the faithful who live family life.

Illiteracy and ignorance are still prevailing in many villages. Even those who have accepted Catholic faith are still afraid of black magic and witchcraft. It is one of the major challenges the missionaries face in their pastoral field. To root out the problem of illiteracy the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales have started primary and secondary schools, non formal education centres, holistic healing centres and dispensaries in many places. We can hope that at least in coming generation one can find a more stable and a better literate society who are grown deep in the Catholic faith.

Fr. Santhosh Paul MSFS

A PROFILE OF FRANSALIAN FORMATION IN EAST AFRICA AND ITS CHALLENGES

Formation is sharing the work of the Father who through the spirit , fashions the inner attitude of the Son in the hearts of young men and women.(Vita Consecrata No.66) So Fransalian Formation is understood as facilitating conditions that are conducive for one's growth as a mature and well integrated person who aspires to follow Jesus in Fransalian way of life. We dispose ourselves to be formed by the Father through Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit (Ref. Const. Art 120) This is a long process which is achieved by assisting, encouraging and challenging the candidates

to transform themselves to be persons of God, rooted deeply in the person of Christ; to be men of Church, totally committed to her mission and imbued with the charism and mission of our Congregation.

From the very beginning of Fransalians missionary presence in East Africa, formation was given topmost importance and a formation programme was initiated. The first venture was to establish a Formation house and it was materialized by the establishment of St. Francis de Sales Seminary at Lububu (1990). Later on the St.



Francis De Sales Junior seminary was established in at Kihonda, Morogoro(1993). For the scholastics coming for their theological studies Fransalian study House established at Kola Hills,Morgoro (1999) in the vicinity of Jordan Univerity college. For the indigenous candidates to continue their religious formation the Fransalianum Noviciate was started (2000) at Kibaha, in the archdiocese of Dar es Salaam. The establishment of Fransalian seminary Ndagani (2005) for the asparancy and Pre-noviciate stage of formation and Arusha Lumen Christi Institute for the Philosophical studies (2009) shows the commitment of congregation for the formation of indigenous Fransalians. Our constitution article 123 says the aim of our formation is to be become Christ-like, fully human and wholly dedicated to the loving and serving God and His church,

after the example of our Patron, SFS and our Founder Mermier. It implies growing in intimacy with the triune God and becoming more aware that we belong to the pilgrim church journeying towards perfection. This calls for a healthy level of human maturity, marked by growth in self knowledge and inner freedom, that would facilitate responsible decisions and professional competence for effective ministry. Again our General Directory speaks article 99.

Our formation has three basic objectives:-

1.Human formation: To facilitate the formation of true men, to guide each one under formation to become a fully integrated person developing oneself physically intellectually and emotionally. This human formation is the basis of all other formation.

2.Religious Formation: to facilitate the formation of men of holiness, to guide each seminarians on novices to live a genuine life of faith following the Lord in close friendship with Him, inspired by the scripture and faithful practice of prayer.

3. Missionary formation: to train faithful and efficient apostles, to equip each one to become an effective and committed missionary according to the spirit of St. Francis de sales and of Fr. Mermier.

Therefore, we can say Fransalian Formation is a call for a radical transformation in all the dimensions of human experience: emotional, moral, socio-political, intellectual, spiritual, and vocational dimensions. This can be the greatest challenge we face in the formation.

Our human experience shows that the spiritual dimension is central to all the other dimensions of human experience. The transformation, which is envisaged in our constitution, is an essentially spiritual transformation. In short, the goal of the spiritual journey is transformation, and the purpose of prayer and other spiritual practices is to foster transformation. Transformation is a process of conversion. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds. so that you may discern what is the will of God what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:2);

Transformation aims at transformation of one's consciousness, to Christ consciousness or to gospel consciousness, which leads to Self-transformation. This transformation is a call to conversion. a change of heart or 'Metanoia'. Here conversion means a turning from irresponsible behavior and a turning toward responsible behavior, The Initial conversion is a preliminary shift from irresponsible to the responsible behavior and the ongoing conversion is a continuous, persisting development in all dimensions. Fransaliam formation aims at becoming Christ like (Phil.2.5), becoming obedient unto to death. To have an incarnation attitude, of a servant, to serve others and ready to, give up oneself.

Formation begins with the call from God. Holy Spirit is the agent of formation. Formation is a call to be docile to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Formation is a process of discovering our true self. Aim of our formation is to reach a healthy level of human; emotional and intellectual maturity. Our constitution says, Formation should enable the formee to read the signs of the time respond to the needs of people anywhere in the world. It should enable one to relate well with men and women. Fransaliam formation aims at Progressive introduction into to the Salesian spirituality. It should also enable one to promote what is good in all cultures and society. Each member has to contribute to the cause of formation. Formation is an ongoing process. It is a life long journey. It is a

pilgrimage.” our Patron encourage us, “Let us not be discouraged by what we cannot do, but let us encouraged by what we can do” SFS Our Patron teaches us that the way to overcome the flesh is by starving our flesh. It is a non-violent way of overcoming our lower self. By starve means feed our flesh with spiritual thoughts or positive thoughts. It is said that “you become what you think”. Or Patron SFS says “you become what you love” True formation is this transformation from man off flesh to become man of spirit. Late Pope John Paul II said:”Religious life is journey or way of life contemplating the face of Christ of Tabor and Calvary”(Vita Consecrata)”. Yes, Formation is that journey ... it is a journey leading to transformation. It is process of becoming Christ, or process of forming Christ in us... It is a process of letting Jesus to live in us, as St. Paul says in Gal 2.19 ... “it is not I who live but Christ who lives in me”.

Goal of this journey is to become Christ like The means of this journey is contemplation or meditating the face of Christ (.Lk2: 19) as Mother Mary did,...deny yourself and Take up your cross and follow it is a challenge ... only the audacious can pursue.

Fr. Reji Joseph MSFS



Our newly professed members

Our first fruit from African soil

Fr. Zachariah Bureffero was born in the region of Kigoma, Tanzania. After his primary education, by his personal interest and encouragement from his parents he joined S.F.S Junior Seminary for his secondary education in Kihonda-Morogoro. Impressed by the Charism and Mission carried out



by the Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales he opted to join the congregation of MSFS.

After being equipped with the required knowledge for Christ's mission at various levels both in philosophy and theology, he was ordained a priest on 23rd May 2009. For the congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales he is the first priest from the African continent. Fr. Zachariah after his ordination he worked in different fields like pastoral and formation. Now has been designated for Doctoral Studies in Catechesis and youth animation from the Salesian University in Rome. We wish him God's Blessing for his studies.



We look on him: Deacon Innocent Vincent Ngowi

Deacon Innocent Vincent Ngowi MSFS hails from the region Moshi – Tanzania. After his primary and secondary education he joined the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales on 15.01.2002 for the initial formation in Lububu. He did his Pre-Novitiate and Novitiate from the year 2002 to 2004 and made his first profession on 16.07.2004. And there after he did his philosophical studies in Jordan University College - Morogorro from 2004 to 2007.



Then he did one year of regency (Pastoral year) in children's home Ipuli 2007-2008. Again he came back to the Jordan University College - Morogorro for his theological studies during which he made his final profession on 28.08.2010 and received the order of diaconate on 01.10.2011. Now he is preparing for his ordination to priesthood which will be held on 28.07.2012 in the Parish Mother of Compassion-Mjimpya Relini in the Arch Diocese of Dar es Salaam. The whole community of East African Province wish you all the blest and God's choicest blessing upon you in your preparations and especially on the day of ordination.



*Fr. Provincial with
Nuncio of Tanzania*

LOOKING FORWARD!

Holy Pilgrimages Hija Takatifu....

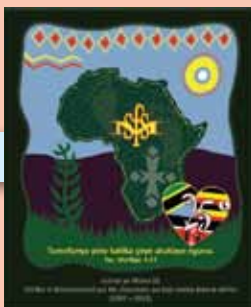
August 11	- Hija in Katagile fi Itaga, Tabora
September 14	- Hija to Mlima wa wokovu Lububu, Tabora
October 7	- Hija in Kashishi, Itaga, Tabora

Jubilee.. Jubilee.. Jubilee..

MSFS in Africa 25 Years (1987-2012)

MSFS Foundation 175 Years (1838-2013)

Our venerable Founder Servant of God Fr. Peter Mermier called to eternal glory 150 years (1862-2012)



The official opening of the jubilee year will be on September 14, 2012
at the Salvation Hill Lububu, Tabora
We invite you to join us to thank God for the manifold blessings.

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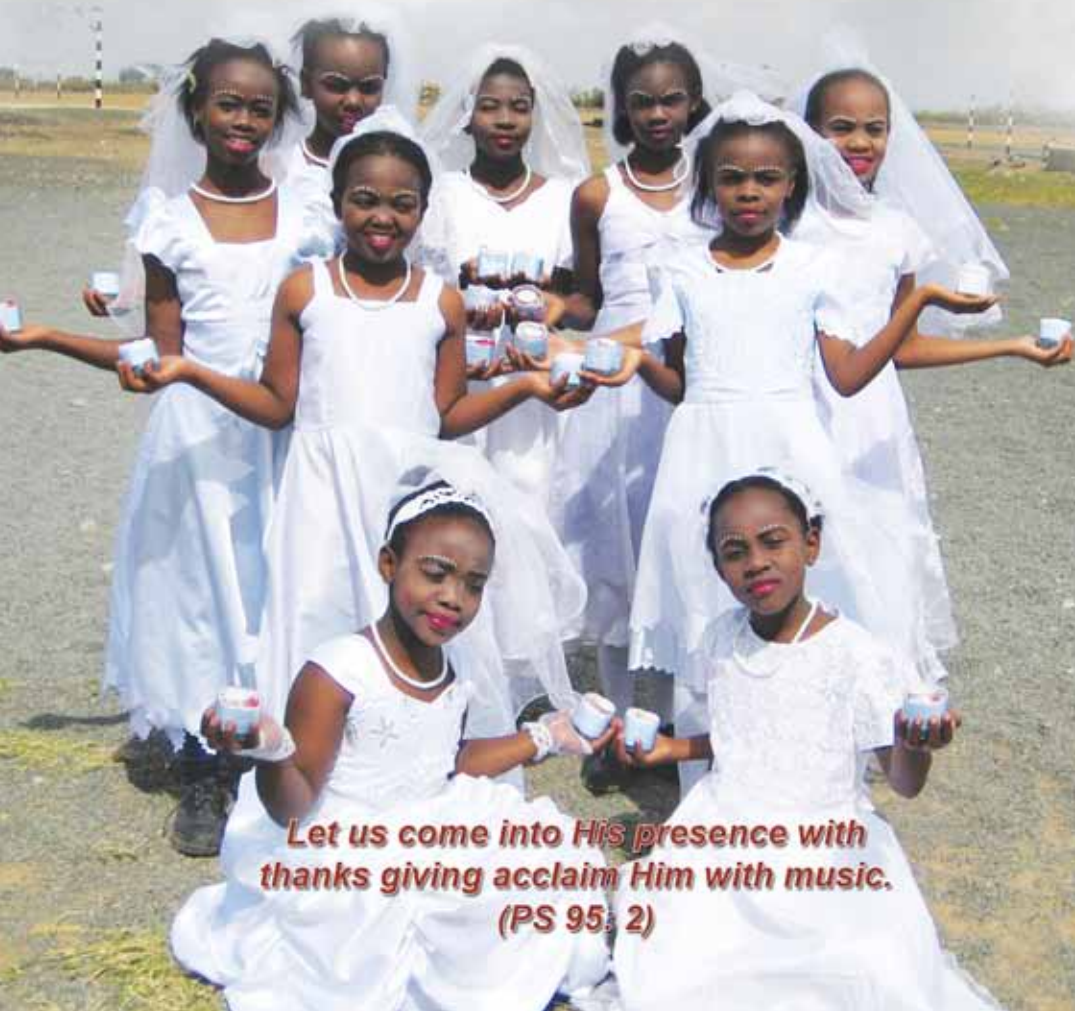
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Half Yearly News Bulletin of MSFS East Africa Province

Baraka is the half yearly news bulletin from the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS) working in East Africa. It carries news and views from East Africa meant for YOU... We wish you a good time with Baraka rejoicing over the blessings of God upon each one of us.



*Let us come into His presence with
thanks giving acclaim Him with music.
(PS 95: 2)*