



Vol.2 No.2 Issue 4

Jul - Dec 2013

BARAKA

ZA FRANSALIANS

Half yearly news bulletin of MSFS in East Africa

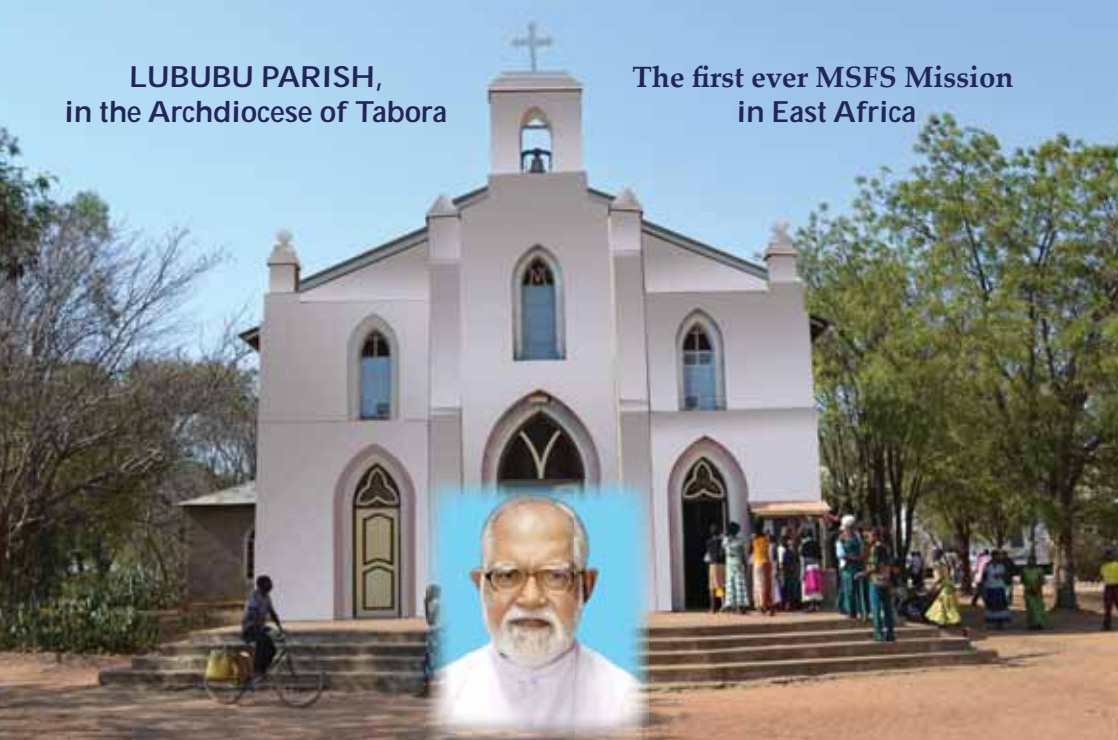


Silver Jubilee Celebration Special



**LUBUBU PARISH,
in the Archdiocese of Tabora**

**The first ever MSFS Mission
in East Africa**



**Late Fr. Devasia Kuzhupil MSFS
Pioneer among the Pioneers
Called to eternal life on January 12, 2013**



**FRANSALIAN PIONEERS TO THE LAND OF AFRICA
Fr. Augustine Mangatt MSFS, Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS and
Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS.**



Silver Jubilee Celebration Special



Chief Editor

Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS

Associate Editors

Fr. Robert Soosai Raj MSFS

Fr. Sijo Pendanath MSFS

Designed by

Sojan Puthussery Joseph

Publishers

MSFS Provincial House

P.O Box 12, Morogoro

Tanzania.

email: provincialeastafricamsfs@

gmail.com; johnsonmsfs@gmail.com

Web: www.msfs-east africa.com

Your valuable suggestions and
 comments are most welcome.

pathiyiljohn@gmail.com

CONTENTS

Editorial.....	4
Message from Fr. Provincial	5
A Word of Appreciation	6
Heart To Heart	7
Man Proposes God Disposes	12
The Healing Touch	14
Strange Ways Of God	17
The Beginnings Of Christian Missions In East Africa.....	22
Congratulations	25
Memorable Moments	27
Silver Moments To Cherish.....	29
Jubilee Cross Celebrations.....	32



From the Editor



“The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us;.....” (John 1:14). The mystery of Incarnation is a wonderful fact to reflect upon. God comes down to the level of human beings. That too not as an adult but as an infant taking the form of a tiny seed in the womb of the Virgin Mary at the start of the life of a human person. That shows how much God wanted to be part of humanity, how much he wanted to redeem the human beings from the very beginning of life itself from its very the womb. Our God is a God who learned to be human through the hard realities of being born biologically from another human being, a God who underwent the pain of being chased by the cruel enemies, a God who lacked the basic security in life from his birth.

As Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales we are celebrating the 25 years of reliving the Incarnation Experience in the continent of Africa. Being plucked from the soil in which we were born we were planted in the soil of Africa. Our pioneers never knew what was in store for them in the new place where they were sent. Our missionaries had to learn the language of the people like little kids starting with the smallest word to the longest sentence. We learned to speak the language of the people little by little. Despite our temptation to live our culture and to speak our mother tongue we have tried our best to be reborn into another culture and traditions of the people. But still we have a lot to learn from the mystery of Incarnation.

And so, incarnation still challenges us to become effective missionaries. Jesus touched the lives of the people with whom He lived. The Jubilee of 25 years of our existence in Africa reminds us to be more committed to our mission and to love the people as Jesus did through His incarnation.

In this Issue of The BARAKA Magazine we highlight the Silver Jubilee celebrations of our presence in East Africa. I thank all those who contributed to this edition. Very specially I extend my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Rev. Fr. Francis Devadoss MSFS who was the chief editor of the previous editions of ‘Baraka za Fransalians’, for his dedication and creativity. On behalf of the Baraka Editorial team I wish Fr. Francis Devadoss God’s blessings especially for the successful completion of his studies.

I wish you all, dear readers of Baraka, God’s abundant blessings especially this New Year 2014.

Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS
Editor

Message from Fr. Provincial



Dear Readers of *Baraka*,

On December 31, 2013, MSFS Congregation completed 26 years of its presence and ministry in Africa, especially in East Africa. In all the previous three issues of *Baraka* a few pages were devoted to the Jubilee celebrations and its significance.

However the editors decided to dedicate this issue of *Baraka* exclusively for the Jubilee. I am sure you will welcome it. The purpose of dedicating this issue for jubilee matters is to allow all that happened to rekindle in us the missionary zeal of our pioneers. It is also to thank God who has enabled us to do what we have done; to appreciate and thank all those who were instrumental in making the MSFS in East Africa what they are today.

The Jubilee year was a time of thanksgiving. We offered at the feet of the Lord, our missions, our people and everything entrusted to our care. United in the Lord as the Fransalian Family in East Africa we are inspired to move forward with renewed strength, clearer vision and a stronger sense of purpose.

Dear Readers of *Baraka*, I sincerely acknowledge the great role you have played in our life and mission in East Africa. As you hold this "*Baraka*" in your hands, just say a small prayer for us and bless us and our good intentions and resoluteness: to work more zealously for evangelization, bringing values of the Gospel into the lives of our people; providing quality education; taking care of the orphans and the needy, curing and caring for the sick. We need your Blessing, God's *Baraka*. May God bless your generosity.

May God bless the hands that hold this *Baraka*!

May God bless Fransalians!

May God bless all those who are part of our mission and ministry!

May God bless Africa!

I wish you refreshing good reading of *Baraka*.

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS

(Provincial - East Africa Province)

johnsonmsfs@gmail.com

A Word of Appreciation



(The following is an extract from the Speech by Hon. Joel Bendera, the Regional Commissioner of Morogoro, Tanzania. Hon. Regional commissioner was The Guest of Honour of the Jubilee celebrations)

“.....I congratulate the Fransalian fathers who are celebrating 25 years of their presence in East Africa. These missionaries have left their families and their mother country, made the choice of serving the people of God in the land of Africa. They sacrificed the joy of being with their near and dear ones, gave up the joy of living in the security of the homeland, and came to this part of Africa, without knowing what is ahead of them. I appreciate their courage to learn a new language totally new to them and to live among us.

I recognize their presence in my Region, Morogoro, in Tanzania and in East Africa in General.

The coming of the Missionaries to our country brought drastic changes to the lives of the people. Their life of dedicated and selfless service has brought challenges to the lives of the people of this time. Along with the mission of preaching the Gospel, they also brought the light to the people through quality education, to rescue people from the darkness of ignorance. And this education builds up the foundation of life, and the people are enabled to live with self-confidence.

What brought the Fransalians to this land is the love of God which is burning in their hearts as it was burning in the heart of their founder Fr. Peter Marie Mermier. That is why despite getting sick especially malaria, attacked by the robbers, and even after facing many challenges and difficulties, they continue to serve the Lord without giving up, without getting disappointed. Without this love of God they would not have survived with their ministry in this land of Africa.....

..... May the good God protect Fransalians, lead them and grant them good health and new vigour to continue their mission for God and His People.

Tumsifu Yesu Kristu.”



HEART TO HEART

REFLECTIONS OF A PIONEER OF EAST AFRICA MISSION

by Fr Augustine Mangatt MSFS



To write about the pioneering efforts of a mission, like that of East Africa, is exciting. Gratitude fills my heart.

I am humbled and yet full of joy at the way God used me and my confreres for the task.

To be one of the members of the Pioneering Team that came to East Africa is a privilege and a responsibility. It is a privilege because the Congregation trusted us to initiate the process of implanting the Congregation in Africa. It was a sense of pride that accompanied us to know that through us the wish of our Founder who desired to work in Africa as a missionary was being realised. It was a tremendous responsibility, as the preparation for this missionary journey was minimal, and therefore we had to depend entirely on the mental and creative resources of each other;

the material, and spiritual help that came from the confreres especially from the Superior General at that time, Fr Emile Mayoraz. Above all, it was a tremendous responsibility to depend on the Providence of God, where our faith was tested from moment to moment and where we had to shelve the grandiose plans that any pioneer would have. We had to trust God leading us and guiding us through persons we met, the Church dignitaries that welcomed us, and in the opportunities that events and situations unfolded to us.

I also realise the tremendous responsibility that we the pioneers owe to generations that follow us by sharing with them our experiences so that they welcome the grace of being pioneers themselves in frontier missions with greater generosity and greater zeal. It is with this end in view I share, with the readers of Baraka, a few of my reflections.

1 : DIFFICULTIES AND SACRIFICES ARE PART AND PARCEL OF NEW BEGINNINGS IN MISSION. LET THEM NOT

If you close your eyes to facts, you will learn through accidents. ~
African proverb



GROUND YOU. MAKE THEM YOUR STEPPING STONES.

There will be difficulties galore, situations that beckon us to give up and get to the security of the past way of living. Insecurity and lack, at times, of basic needs and ordinary amenities of life will sap our hope and dream. Never get discouraged. Do not give up. These are normal

and expected aspects of any new foundation. They are transitory. Beginnings have to be sown in tears, sweat, deprivations, and sacrifice. Otherwise, a beginning worth the name is not a realistic beginning. Once you remind yourself why you are where you are ;once you know you are there not alone but with the entire Congregation and in Jesus name, new ways and solutions will offer themselves. You will dare to change your course. You will dare to give a second or third chance to your efforts. Once you keep the goal of

mission before you, difficulties and challenges become opportunities for missionary adventure with God on your side and your team

members by your side. Our first presence and undertakings whether in Tanzania or Kenya were in the most difficult and inaccessible places, like Lububu and Chera, in those days. I believe that was the right way to do so. Our presence in those places

was an expression of our genuine love for the people, who needed us. No doubt, therefore, God in his bounty provided us with new presence in more strategic places like Morogoro or Mlolongo in course of time and in His time.

2: SEEK FIRST GOD'S PLAN FOR HIS PEOPLE. PERSONAL DAILY PRAYER IS A DAILY IMMERSION IN GOD'S VISION AND STRENGTH AND IN PERSONAL CONFIDENCE.

Mission is God's work and we are



privileged to be invited by God to be His partners. Therefore, we must always be in unceasing quest of God's Plan for His people: the poor, the sinners, the deprived, the lost, the seekers, the rich, the sick, the holy, the children, the old, the young, the married and not-married; those who live in cities and those who live in villages and country side. In short, God's plan that is all inclusive and that radiates His Peace, Love, Unity and Justice. He reveals that plan first and foremost in the Bible as we listen to His message in today's world. The only way to ensure we are open to God's Plan is to commit ourselves consistently, daily to personal prayer. It is in these moments of prayer we will be illumined by God's Plan. It is in these moments of Prayer we will see if our human planning is in accord with God's Plan. Let me share with you a secret, if at all, it is a secret. I have tried, and try, without fail, to spend 45 minutes in personal prayer every day. In these moments I have been enlightened by God

of his vision and plan; I have been questioned about my plans that do not fit into His plan; I have been given courage to give up what I considered most dear to me because it was opposed to what God wanted; I have been given light and peace when God's

plan and my plan synchronized; I have been given the joy of being the servant of the Mission of Christ .There is no other way to be the servant of the Mission of Jesus except in union of love and communion with Jesus in prayer and life .

3:HAVE A MISSION PLAN:LONG TERM AND SHORT TERM AS A SIGN OF YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION

Our human resources, be they in the form of personnel or material or financial, are very limited. But there is much we can do with limited resources, if we plan and see how the few personnel and the little that we have can be used to realise a part or portion of the vision-plan of the mission at a time. Thus we remain focused and within a reachable and achievable goal. We get the satisfaction of using maximally whatever we have for the good of the mission. Such a mission plan and planning are an important sign of a man of faith rooted in realism and human situations .Such an approach instils confidence in us to speak boldly, clearly and convincingly to so many people of good will who are ready to help us in mission. Such an approach instils confidence in our donors to give generously for the works of the mission. East Africa and its confreres can legitimately say that they have



exuded this kind of a spirit in all their partners in mission work. The amount of generous help that we have received in East Africa Province from various quarters is indeed formidable. Whoever gave us in whatever form trusted us as dependable, reliable and committed MSFS. We have a great challenge to grow in that spirit and contribute that spirit in the larger family of our Congregation.

4: MISSION WORK IS THE WORK OF TEAM TRINITY, IT IS THE WORK OF TEAM GOD AND MAN. IT HAS ALSO TO BE THE TEAM WORK OF MSFS BROTHERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATES

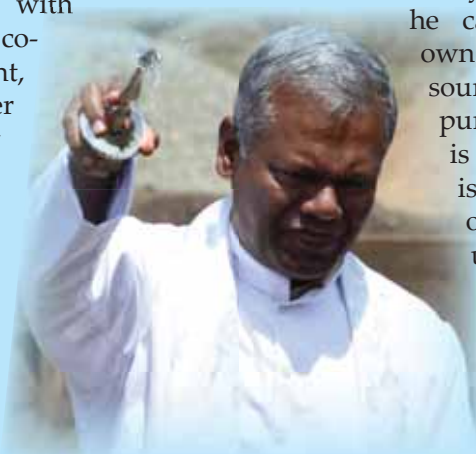
Mission work, if it is of God, then team aspect characterises its very essence. It is the work of Team Trinity. It is the work of Team God and Man. Therefore in our Congregation it cannot be but a Team Work of confreres and all those associated with us. Each and every co-operator is important, significant and his/her contribution is very valuable. Therefore, in my pioneering work I have learnt to trust all workers in mission, be they my confreres, the catechist, the elders in the villages, the architects, masons,

cooks, secretaries etc. I have learnt to ask for their cooperation. I have learnt to appreciate what they did. I have been grateful to them and will always be. I have realised that at times trust was not properly used by others. But it has always paid rich dividends by way of effective service for the growth of the mission. Therefore, I strongly advise my confreres to be generous in encouraging others and supporting them especially when they are in difficult situations and undertaking challenging tasks. Our union in the goals of Mission will drive us forward together in the right direction.

FINALLY:

There is no final word or final advice to anyone who is engaged in the Mission of God, because infinite are the ways in which God can show His love for His people. Infinite are His ways in which

he can tap our own meagre resources for His purposes. What is important is to offer ourselves unconditionally to Him and for His love.



PERSONAL PROFILE

Name : Augustine Mangatt
Date of Birth : 09-02-1948
Place of birth and upbringing : Cheruvandoor, Ettumanoor, Kerala, India
First Profession : 04-05-1972
Perpetual Profession : 23rd Janu. 1976. Vinayalaya, Bangalore
Date of Priestly Ordination : 14-08-1976
Place : St. Sebastian's Church, Cheruvandoor

Appointments and Responsibilities held in the Congregation

Mermier Farm, Hebbagodi : 1976-1980
SFS Seminary, Ettumanoor/Procurator : 1980-83
StellaMaris, Vizag/ Superior : 1983-86
SFS Institute Philipnagar /Manager,
and director of Pre Novitiate : 1987
In the Pioneering team to Tanzania : December 31, 1987.
Mission coordinator, Tanzania : 1989 – 1992
Regional Superior, Tanzania : 1993-1996
Mission Coordinator, Africa : 1996-2009
MSAF- Chairman. General Councillor : 1996-2001, 2001-2007
General Bursar : 2007 - till today
Areas of Experience : Administration, Pastoral.
Areas of Interest / Talent : Frontier Mission.
Present Address : Via delle Testuggini, 21.00143
Rome. Tel. 0039065005150.
: Email : amangatt@yahoo.com

"Put Jesus crucified in your heart and all the crosses of this world will seem to be roses. Those who have felt the punctures of the crown of thorns of the Saviour who is our Head will in no way feel any other wounds". St. Francis de Sales (Letters 1420; O. XVIII, p. 221)



MAN PROPOSES GOD DISPOSES

by Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS



A tragic incident occurred in my life towards the end of 1989. I was the assistant priest in Lububu Parish in

the Archdiocese of Tabora then. In the parish we were extremely happy because we had received a brand new Toyota Hylux double cabin pick-up sometime before. A few months later I was driving to Nzega from Lububu with that pick-up. Sr.Eusebia of the Congregation of 'Mabintiwa Maria' and a few parishioners of Lububu were also with me. We were almost reaching Itobo. And then suddenly the pick-up skidded off the road and overturned twice. Providentially all of us except Sr.Eusebia escaped with minor injuries. Unfortunately Sr.Eusebia was seriously wounded and was rushed to the dispensary at Itobo. But we could not save her as she later succumbed to her injuries

Just before she died, Sr.Eusebia had enquired about my condition and had asked for me. I was also being treated for my injuries in the same dispensary. As I approached she smiled and asked for my blessing. Her eyes and face brightened with joy for a moment. I went away being confident and at peace because I knew she had forgiven me for the accident and

that we were reconciled to one another. Later I was informed that God had called her to her heavenly abode. May she rest in peace!

The accident and the subsequent death of Sister, no doubt were very painful and challenging experiences for me. But in those moments of distress all my Confreres supported me. The Sisters of 'Mabintiwa Maria' also were very understanding and supportive. All the parishioners of Lububu parish accompanied me with their prayers. All these strengthened my belief that I was not alone. The Fathers of Nzega Parish and the Archdiocesan authorities took care of the legal matters and the court case.

However due to this accident and the subsequent court case, I was banned by law from traveling out of Tanzania till the legal procedures were completed. So I could not take part in the ordination ceremonies of my two younger Brothers- Xavier OFM(Cap.) and Pius MSFS in 1990. It was a very disappointing and distressing moment for my parents and dear ones at home. Till the last moment they were hoping against hope and waited for my arrival.

All in all these incidents and experiences enabled me to put my trust in God more firmly and strengthened my belief in his providence and my resolution to be faithful to his will always.

Love Jesus! Trust Jesus! Live Jesus!



PERSONAL PROFILE

First Name : ThomasKochuparampil
Date of Birth : 28.11.1956
Place of Birth : Anickad, Kerala, India
Ordained to priesthood : 26.04.1983
Life Status : Catholic Priest, Member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales



Work Experience

Assistant Priest, Palasa, India : 1983-1985
Assistant Priest, Penugonda, India : 1985-1991
Assistant Priest, Lububu, Tanzania : 1988-1991
Provincial MSFS , East Africa : 1996-2005
Superior and Administrator, Arusha : 2006 till today
Languages Spoken : English, Swahili, German, Malayalam
Contacts : PH. + 255 789 188237
Email : tomkpil@gmail.com
Present Address : Lumen Christi Institute
Post Box 1187 Arusha, Tanzania

Studies

B.Ph (Bachelor of Philosophy), India : 1979
BA (English), Shillong, India : 1979
B.Th, Pune, India : 1983
P.HD, Germany : 1996



*A missionary Journey is mostly into the unknown.
But the journey of Missionary is always with God who is known.*

“If the cockroach wants to rule over the chicken, then it must hire the fox as a body-Guard”. ~ Sierra Leone proverb



THANK YOU LORD FOR THE JUBILEE

Thank you for your Healing Touch!

by Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS



Gratitude

We have just finished celebrating the silver jubilee of our arrival in Tanzania to establish African Mission and the 175th year of the founding of the MSFS congregation. Many thoughts came to my mind to thank the good Lord. In the book of Leviticus (Lev 25:8-22) God gave the reasons to celebrate the jubilee. In the curing of the ten lepers (Lk 17: 11-19) Jesus taught us that all should thank God for all the favours received.

Missionary – healer: Puzzling questions

I came to Tanzania on December 31, 1987. As a missionary I always sensed the urgency of the healing ministry. When I was working in the Archdiocese of Tabora, I prayed and gave the people some water. Then healing took place. The Lord who worked his first miracle at Cana (Jn 2:1-12) knows to change water into wine. He knew which material is to be used as medicine in a particular case.

At the beginning of our ministry, the people in Tabora Region wondered; “are there any Christians in India?” How can a missionary come from Asia to Africa? Someone asked if our parents were also Christians! Who would explain to them that the first evangelization of South India was

done by St. Thomas the Apostle in 52 AD! There came other questions too: “How can a Catholic priest be a healer just by praying and using the natural things around? Can really the Archbishop of Tabora (Late Mgr. Mario Mgulunde) allow the healing ministry in his Archdiocese?” (Just a couple of months before we reached Tabora, someone was asked to quit the place for doing the healing ministry, or they might have heard of some scandals of great catholic preachers and healers from other countries!!).

New Centre in Morogoro

In the year 1998 we shifted the place of my ministry to Morogoro for the sake of convenience of the public to have better and easy access. When we – the then Provincial superior Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil and I - went to seek the permission of the bishop of Morogoro Rt. Rev. Telephore Mkude, the bishop told us “If the Archbishop Mario Mgulunde (Tabora Archdiocese) could allow you why can’t I? You go ahead with the same ministry in my diocese”. Whenever he meets me he calls me near him by name and encourages me of the healing ministry.” The new centre was named Mermier Holistic Healing Centre and is located near to our MSFS Provincial House and SFS Junior seminary Kihonda. But the people named the centre as, “Kwa Father” which means “To the Father”. Anywhere in Morogoro if we ask





for kwa
father they
can direct
you easily.
Some how
I liked the
usage of
the name
'kwa Father'
because the
ultimate

aim of our earthly journey is to reach
the heavenly Father and His Glory.
I cared, Lord cured

The Lord was good to the healing
Centre and to me to heal thousands
of cases from A to Z, including HIV
and Cancer. The Lord is ready to heal
the soul, the mind, the body and the
environment. The babies are brought
to me for a blessing as a thanksgiving
for getting one child after so many
years of marital life. The healing
miracles of Jesus is seen live to anyone
who has faith. God is able to heal us
even without the help of a knife or
needle. He can heal us by a glance, by
a word or by a touch. When we make
use of the created realities for the
healing purpose, he is there to bless us.
Our mandate to be healers

When we offer our difficulties for the
glory of the Lord, he will give more
grace to heal others. Jesus emptied
himself and took our human form that
we may have life and life abundantly
(Jn 10:16). I do thank the Lord for the
ministry of healing. I do pray to the
Lord that many may come forward
to develop their charism of healing.

Because the people are eager to see
more healers in the future and the
mandate of the Lord - to preach, to heal
and to cast out demons (Mk 16:15-18),
- still remains with us. The more we
suffer for the Lord and His Kingdom,
the more powerful we become as
instruments in the hands of the Lord
to carry out his mandate.

As a healer I have seen the heart of the
people which our Saviour Jesus used
to see going around Palestine doing
good for the people. While engaged
in healing ministry especially during
treating the sick, I am fully into the
ministry and may not be aware of what
is happening outside. While clients
explain about their sickness I used to
get the entire picture - more than in
a medical scanning. The support of
the Holy Spirit is much greater and
effective than the academic degrees
or the great medical library or the
sophisticated modern equipment.

Prayer of my Parents!

The parents have their own desire
for the future of their children. The
desire of my mother was that I should
become a world famous doctor who
can cure any sickness. Whereas my
father prayed very earnestly that I
should become a great missionary
priest. God is so great that He granted
both the prayers.

Tumisfu Yesu Kristu.... Milele Amina

**Let us praise Jesus ... now and
forever Amen**



Our “Mganga” (Doctor)

Name	: Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS
Born on	: 25th March 1951 (At Athirampuzha, Kerala, India)
Joined MSFS	: June 1968 (Philosophy in Nagpur)
1st Profession	: 10th June 1976 (Vishakapatanam)
Priestly Ordination	: 19th June 1979 (Athirampuzha, Home Parish)
First Appointment	: New parish of Peren, Nagaland (1979-1981)
Parish priest	: Thelpara, Nialmpur (to establish parish and the primary school (1981-1987)
Arrival in Tanzania	: Among the 4 Pioneers- 31st Dec 1987
Language Course	: Pastoral Centre, Kipalapala, Tabora- (Jan 1988- June1988)
Pastoral Experience	: With the White Fathers at Usongo Parish (July 1988-Dec 1988)
Pastoral Work	: Lububu Parish (24th January 1989 – Dec 1990)
Parish Priest	: Itaga Parish and later full time healing Ministry (1991-1997) Mermier Holistic Centre 1998 till today
Mermier Optical Centre	: 2005 till today



“True prayer heals our body and soul”



Strange ways of God: His Divine Providence

by Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS



In the year 1990 when I was working as the Principal of Tanuku SFS School, the then-provincial of Visakhapatnam province, on his way to Nizamabad, came to Tanuku parish (with a firm intention to come there or as a casual visit of which I am not sure). While we were having supper he remarked that he is going to Nizamabad to request somebody to go to Tanzania to teach in the seminary. Impulsively I said: "why not I father?" He retorted: "Are you serious about it?" I had no hesitation to say: "Of course I am serious". Then he told me that the matter had to be placed in the next council meeting which would take place probably within the next three months. I do not know whether Fr Provincial continued his journey to Nizamabad. But



within a few days I got a letter from him stating: "Fr. Thomas you are selected to go to Tanzania and so you can get ready". It was indeed surprising as I had forgotten about my statement at the table. However it was challenging for me and I took it up as a challenge. This is how I reached in Morogoro in the year 1991. God's ways are

wonderful and God uses strange ways and means to shape the destiny of man. At times, the force of circumstances can become the providence of God. But was there such a force working behind me? I do not know. But I was here. Praised be the Lord!

My first journey to Lububu through the never ending road is unforgettable. The long stretch of road gave the false impression that you were entering into the sky from the edge of the horizon. A strange experience, interesting but very tiring! I can never forget my first Christmas in Africa at



Lububu. I mumbled in the Swahili language my Christmas mass. It was my mass in Kishwahili with the parishioners within a fortnight of my arrival in the place, the first mission of MSFS in East Africa. I spent the next whole day without uttering a single word for I did not see anybody. Even if I came across a human being I was not able to speak to them. To break the ferocity of this mundane silence, I still recall with deep feeling, I played with the cocacola can and listened to the clinking sound. Thus I spent hours waiting for my companion who was on Christmas tour mass in the outstations. I say strange destiny in a strange way led me to Africa. Praised be the lord.

If my reaching in Tanzania was strange, the implanting and growth of East Africa province also was equally wonderful and strange. Four simple missionaries set off from Visakhapatnam province to take up the mission centre in Tanzania following the invitation of late Archbishop of Tabora, Michael Mihayo in December 1988.

If the invitation was from Archbishop Michael Mihayo by the time our Missionaries arrived in Africa, he was replaced by late Archbishop Mario A. Mgulunde.

Strange to say that the present Archbishop of Tabora, His Grace Paul Ruzoka, the then Rector of St. Charles Seminary Itaga was the one who received these four men at the Julius Nyerere International Airport Dar es Salaam. Among the four three are still working in East Africa; the fourth one went back to India after few months due to health reasons.

Lububu etymologically means dust and truly Lububu is a dusty place. Lububu was the first centre which was entrusted to MSFS in the year 1989. Lububu, a parish opened in the year 1930 by White Fathers and looked after by them, was closed due to the lack of priests for few years.

It is situated by the side of the international dusty highway going from Dar es Salaam to Burundi. Lububu, a parish with many outstations scattered in the jungles nevertheless was very welcoming to MSFS fathers. All our missionaries learned the primary lessons of mission work in Africa from Lububu. Watching the vast horizon with its countless stars on a clear night, sitting in the front portion of the presbytery of Lububu gives the impression that you are at the door steps of the heaven. Lububu with its little hillocks rising from the ground a few meters looks like a beauty spot



on the face of the universe. The well-shaped mango trees as if pruned by unknown hands of a great artist scattered in the vast horizon, add beauty especially on a full moon night. Yet this beautiful Lububu which became a parish in 1930 even today remains the same in spite of the fact of the efforts of a number of Missionaries one after another trying to give it a developmental boost. I wonder whether any of the new ventures began by our fathers like the aspirancy house tailoring centre, the baby classes, the maize powdering mill, the water tanks, are still operative today. This was Lububu our first Mission. This continues to be our Mission today. In fact this far flung-area from habitation and development gave MSFS a long leap to Morogoro. Had it not been to the inconveniences of life, like lack of running water, power, transportation, the zeal and fervor of MSFS in East Africa would have not seen the growth that it sees today after 25 years. God's ways are indeed full of surprises and unimaginable. Yes, as the Late Archbishop Mario Mgulunde said MSFS were "not walking but running" and the drive and push of the running was the providence of God. If we reflect deeply we will see strange destiny led in a strange way by the unseen hand of God for His glory. Praised be the Lord.

In 1996 when I visited Fr. S L Paul in USA he asked me how many members were there in East Africa province. I answered: "Twelve." He had a sarcastic laugh, and exclaimed: "12 members in a Province!" Indeed ours was a Province and with only 12 members! This tiny province of 1990s has grown and grown far and wide beyond human expectations and dreams and the credit, strongly I feel, goes to the unknown hand of God, guiding the destiny of the province in strange ways beyond our understanding. A clear proof for my statement, to be true, is the number of motor vehicle accidents that took place. But all were protected by the unseen hand of God not even causing a scratch on the body till today. Reasonably we can believe that the one who had been holding us as the apple of



"Our vocation is to give light and warmth in to the lives of others"

his eye will hold us in that way in future too. Praised be the Lord.

Our trustworthy bank is the bank of Providence. The amazing way the parishes and institutions came up and are coming up baffles even ourselves. If someone were to ask you what is the permanent source of your income for the province of East Africa, I wonder if the answer would be satisfying to the enquirer, for as a Province, we do not have a substantial permanent income. What is our medical insurance and social security?. Nothing whatsoever. We are aware of it. In fact we have not seriously thought about it. Is it wise to go forward in this way? As a human person, thinking in a human way, I say it is not all wise. But in this situation we have to simply depend on Divine providence. The Lord asked the disciples: "When I multiplied 7 loaves for you how many baskets full remained as a balance? When I multiplied the 4 loaves how many basketful you collected?" We need not be over worried about our future or our security, although we, as normal human beings, should bother about it in a reasonable way. For, we have lacked nothing even in moments of dire need. The Providence of God will definitely guide our destiny. Praised be the Lord.

25 years in the life span of a human person it is rather a long period

but in the life span of a province it is rather a small period. As St. Francis de Sales said it is not how many years you live but how you live that matters. For us when we look back at our 25 years history the growth and achievement we have arrived at, is something fantastic but the credit goes to the unseen hand of God who had been guiding the destiny of individuals and the province. Everybody has his own history and a deeper reflection on the history of the person will definitely lead him to stand and wonder for a moment in the way God has guided him. Will not this God of ours who made us to do so much from nothing, for last 25 years, will he not guide our destiny however strange it may be to a successful conclusion? We have every reason to hope. Let us hope for a better future for the glory of God, for a better world of peace and justice, a world of equality fraternity and liberty.

Praised be the Lord.





Fr. Thomas Olickal arrived in Tanzania on November 28, 1991. He worked in Itaga parish and was also teaching in Itaga seminary. In 1993 he was appointed Rector in SFS Junior seminary, Kihonda Morogoro. In 1999 he was appointed Rector in Fransalian House Kola. From 2000 to 2005 he worked in Kenya as parish priest of Chera Parish in Meru diocese and later as Rector of the SFS Aspirant House Ndagani. He served as a Provincial of East Africa Province from 2005-2011. In 2011 he went to USA to work. There he was diagnosed to have colon Cancer. At present he is undergoing treatment in Kerala India. Let us continue to pray for Fr. Thomas Olickal very specially that the Lord, the healer of all, may touch him and heal him.

"Considered in themselves, tribulations certainly cannot be loved, but considered in their origin, namely in the Providence of the Divine Will which has brought them about, they are to be loved with an infinite love. Just consider Moses' staff: laid on the ground, it was a ferocious serpent; in the hands of Moses it was a wonder-working wand. In like manner, tribulations in themselves are terrible, but considered as a manifestation of the will of God they are indications of love and delight. Likewise, love either removes the harshness of the trial or renders it lovable". St. Francis de Sales



The Beginnings of Christian Missions in East Africa

A Historical Perspective (Part 2)

Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS

The Second Coming of Christianity in East Africa

The history of the second coming of Christian missionaries to East Africa begins on the ever beautiful island of Zanzibar. In the middle of 17th Century Zanzibar was not very much populated like today. It was a lonely island with few inhabitants. The destiny of Zanzibar was changed in 1841 when the Sultan Seyyid Said of Oman decided to move his capital to Zanzibar.

"His desert upbringing seemed to motivate him to industriously develop the lush Islands. He treated Zanzibar like an Oasis of the sea. He enforced massive tree planting schemes, dug numerous wells, and built lodgings enough for hundreds of visitors. He knew that visitors would linger at an oasis. He also knew that much trading would occur if the site was well provisioned and safe. He would of course expect to get a percentage of all transactions there, in exchange for keeping it that way."

Sultan Seyyid invited traders from India and later trading houses were established in Stone town by

American, German, French and English firms. He was tolerant towards other religions. "As a devout Muslim,

he set an example of tolerance for the religious needs of others while simultaneously exuding confidence in the religion of his ancestors. For a long time his successors followed this pattern, allowing the establishment of several Hindu Temples, two Cathedrals, one each for Catholics and Protestants, a Zoroastrian Funerary and Mosques for every major and minor branch of Islam, all within the same City."

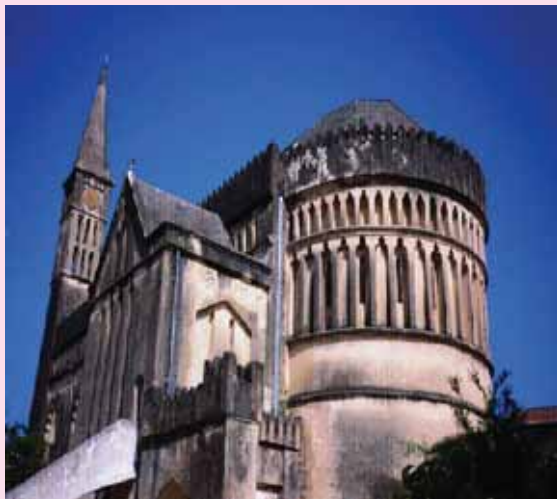
The second coming of Christian faith to East Africa was initiated through the zealous efforts of two charismatic Protestant German missionaries Johann Ludwig Krapf and John Rebmann (1844-74). Johann Krapf sailed to Zanzibar in January 1844. He was the first missionary to visit the sultan of Zanzibar seeking



permission to do missionary work, which was granted. He translated the New Testament to Swahili.

After 2 years another missionary from the Church Missionary Society, John Rebmann joined Krapf and they together proclaimed the Word among the Mijikenda in the land of Rabai Mpya. The Mijikenda (“the nine tribes”) are the nine ethnic groups along the coast of Kenya, from the border of Somalia in the north to the border of Tanzania in the south.

When the missionaries told some of the people of Rabai that they were sinners (and need for forgiveness from the Saviour), they felt insulted. ‘Who’, they asked, ‘has been defaming us to you?’ Neither did they feel any great need for the missionaries’ remedies. When evil came, they had their own ways of defeating it. When a dangerous spirit was about, the Rabai elders circulated, with a roaring muansa. The muansa was like a large drum. A type of rope was pulled through a hole in it, producing a terrifying sound. All the people of Rabai had to go into their homes and shut



Picture: Anglican Cathedral Zanzibar¹

their doors. Krapf and Rebmann deliberately opened their doors. When the elders came to ask them why they had not observed the rule, the missionaries spoke about the ‘deceptions’ of these things. ‘Burn your muansa and build and attend schools instead’, Krapf advised. The shocked elders simply replied, ‘You are a true mchawi (spirit-medium)’, and left the missionaries to continue with their foolishness.²

For the people of Rabai, sin was only a social evil and the love of God was manifested in rain and palm wine. The missionary work of Krapf and Rebmann bore very little fruit in this land: thirty years

¹ This picture was taken from the website of lonely planet [http://www.lonelyplanet.com/tanzania/zanzibar-archipelago/images/anglican-cathedral-zanzibar-town\\$4285-3#content](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/tanzania/zanzibar-archipelago/images/anglican-cathedral-zanzibar-town$4285-3#content)

² W.B. Anderson, *The Church in East Africa 1840-1974*, Dodoma (Tanzania), 1977, 3.



of missionary work, six converts and six catechumens. However they were determined to continue their challenging missionary work. They sustained themselves by sketching out a new vision, not of conversion of Galla as Krapf had originally dreamed, but of a chain of mission stations stretching from Rabai Mpya across the continent of Africa to the western shore. They passed the chaaga land (today Kilimanjaro region) where the people were friendly and listened to them. They were surprised to see Mount Kilimanjaro with white snow caps, which no Europeans could believe at that time: snow near the equator! But when Rebmann tried to carry on his travel to the land of Wanyamwezi (today Tabora) in order to start a station there, he was refused a passage by the Chief Makanga of Moshi, who was suspicious. They also visited the Kamba chief, Kivoi. The Kamba were responsive to the message of the Gospel. Krapf and Kivoi were attacked by the bandits and the latter was killed. Soon Krapf became seriously ill and had to return home in 1853.

However Krapf was not ready to give up his original dream for the Galla mission, nor his missionary zeal. He returned to East Africa in 1862 to support his old time missionary friend Thomas Wakefield establishing a Methodist Mission in Galla. But Krapf had to go back home due to his severe illness. The Methodists had to face

a lot of resistance from the Maasai, who were at that time hostile to the Christians.

It was David Livingstone who made Zanzibar famous with his anti-slavery speech in 1857 appealing to England to send missionaries to Africa. Livingstone's speeches led to the creation of the Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). In 1860 this group sent Charles Mackenzie to be "Bishop of Central Africa". The group's mainland base was abandoned three years later and they moved to Zanzibar for its communication networks, food and labour pool. They set up a "hostel for released slave boys" in Kiungani then in 1873 purchased the old market square where slaves were once sold. This was the start for Christ Church Cathedral whose cornerstone was laid on Christmas day 1873.

(to be continued..)

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Congratulations to Fransalians of East Africa!



Mr. Ezekiel Maka

For the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, the year 2013 was a year of multi blessings. They are celebrating 175 years of their evangelization work since the beginning of the congregation and in particular, for the East African Province 25 years of their evangelization work in the continent of Africa.

We, the lay people, all over East Africa, thank the Lord with all our hearts, for the blessings and graces and His great love towards us especially as he has enabled us to celebrate this Jubilee. We also thank and congratulate the Fransalian Family for the building up of this mission in Africa following the footsteps of their Founder Fr. Peter Marie Mermier, who was led by Jesus Christ himself, the Missionary of the Missionaries, the great Founder of all the missionary congregations with the help of the Holy Spirit.

When we look back in to the missionary journey of 25 years in

the continent of Africa, we see a lot of blessing we received from God through these servants of God. In the Province of East Africa, we have seven parishes in Tanzania, two in Kenya and two in Uganda. Along with this we have a Junior seminary in Tanzania. In the mission of providing education to the society, the congregation has embarked on giving quality education to the children and the youth through the establishment of the primary schools and Secondary schools and also non formal education through the establishment of the Technical schools. The building up of a Home for the children who live in difficult situation and who are left alone on the streets has been a daring step of the Fransalians in their Missionary Journey.

As a result of their missionary zeal and hard work, many youth are inspired and express their desire to become Missionaries in the Fransalian Family. And we have



the fruit of their labour through the persons of Fr. ZakariaBurofero and Fr. Innocent Ngowi.

When we look ahead after all these blessings and success which the congregation received, we all have the duty to preserve and to protect these blessings with a purpose of spreading it to the coming generations. Lord Jesus commanded us: "Go in to the whole world, proclaim the Gospel to all creatures" (Mk. 16: 15-16). I take this occasion to appreciate and congratulate the Fransalians for obeying this command of the Lord with their whole heart. Eventhough many of them come from a different culture from that of Africa, they have learned to be part of the people of Africa through their missionary life and living together.

We the lay people from all over East Africa, thank the Good Lord for the gift of Fransalian Fathers for the various services their render to us. The truth is that, those who need their service are much more than the strength of the personnel they have now. What we can do is to pray to the Lord, for their good health of the body and soul; so that they get the strength to do the work for the Lord and also that the Lord may grant us many more new and zealous missionaries.

Mr. Ezekiel Maka is the chairperson of the Parish council of Mkuza Parish, Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Praised be the Lord Jesus Christ!



"On the lips of children and of babes you have found praise, Lord!"







SILVER MOMENTS TO CHERISH

TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF MSFS IN AFFRICA

by Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil MSFS



"The much awaited, well anticipated and deeply prepared events of our Silver Jubilee in East Africa, are becoming part of the past..." wrote Rev. Fr.

Johnson Kallidukil, our provincial in his circular dedicated exclusively for the Msfs jubilee year in East Africa (cfr. *Provincial Circular EAP- JK.18,*

hearts gratitude to God for the innumerable blessings showered upon the Eastern African Mission. Though fragile human instruments, God has used us for His mission in the past quarter of a century. In this short article, I recall some of the beautiful and significant moments of the jubilee celebrations to highlight some insights for our missionary journey ahead in East Africa.

Let me start with the motto that we had chosen to reflect and meditate



on November 8, 2013). Yes, indeed this jubilee was well anticipated, its programmes carefully prepared so that it became an occasion of new blessings and renewal in mission for the confreres and the people. A recall to mind of the jubilee events and programmes evokes in our

for the jubilee year: "We have done all things in Him who gives us strength" (cfr. Phil.4:13). The motto invited us to look back at the quarter century of our missionary life and activity with gratitude and to decipher in all what took place, the hand of God. The motto is a further





invitation to confidently entrust our life and mission into the powerful hand of God so that we can do all things in Him and for Him.

At the province level the Jubilee Year was opened on September 14, 2012 at the Salvation Hill, Lububu, Tabora, Tanzania. It was a very touching emotional moment when **Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS** one of the pioneers and the first Provincial Superior of MSFS East Africa Province, opened jubilee year with the following words in Swahili: *“Kwa idhini niliyopewa na uongozi wa Shirika la Wamisionari wa Mt. Fransisko wa Sales nawatakia ninyi nyote neema na Baraka kwa wanashirika wote kwa ujumla hususani wanashirika wa Provinsi ya Afrika Mashariki, kwa furaha tele moyoni mwangu nafungua rasmi mwaka wa jubilee ya miaka 175 tangu kuanzishwa kwa Shirika na miaka 25 ya uwepo wa Shirika katika bara la Afrika.”* Translated into English as: With the task entrusted to me by the authorities of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, and wishing graces and blessings to you all and the entire MSFS Congregation, especially to the members in the Province of East

Africa, with great joy in my heart, I declare open the Jubilee year of 175 years of the foundation of the Congregation and 25 years of the MSFS presence in the continent of Africa.

Prior to the Jubilee Year inauguration on the same day morning, the Jubilee cross was blessed in Lububu Parish church and from there it was carried by the confreres walking with the pilgrims marching towards the Salvation Hill. The Mass was officiated by Rev. Fr. Faustin Rwechungura, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Tabora. Each confrere taking turns and carrying the jubilee cross along with the pilgrims from the Parish church to the Salvation Hill was a unique experience. It was a historical march of 4 kilometres symbolising the 25 year historical march of MSFS in East Africa. It reminded each of us about our primary task as missionaries: to proclaim “Christ and him crucified” (cfr. 1Cor 2:2) and to live the mystery of the cross for one’s own sanctification and that of the world.

The passing on of the Jubilee Cross and its journey to every Msfs community and mission units in East Africa brought renewal of faith, healing, reconciliation and myriad of blessings to the people and to the communities. The daily recitation of the special jubilee prayers, the recital of ‘*Magnificat* of Fransalians,’ by the confreres and the faithful in the parishes helped us to relish with gratitude the rich blessings of the Lord in our missionary life. Through



the various mementos, like 'T-shirts, kitenge, jubilee souvenir cards, bible diary, we made the people aware of the spirituality, missionary zeal and dynamism of our patron St. Francis De Sales and our founder servant of God, Fr. Peter Mary Mermier. The jubilee celebrations proclaimed the rich missionary heritage and vibrant missionary presence of our Congregation in the different parts of the world, especially in East Africa.

The concluding ceremony of the Jubilee year was held on October 26, 2013 at St. Francis de Sales Junior Seminary Morogoro. The Jubilee year was concluded with a solemn thanksgiving Eucharist presided over by His Lordship **Most Rev. Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro**. The Bishop in his message recalled the hard times we had to go through in the past and appreciated the works done by the MSFS in East Africa. Honourable **Mr. Joel Bendera the Regional Commissioner of Morogoro** blessed the gathering with his gracious presence and inspiring message. The presence of many priests and

religious and large number of people, representing our parishes and institutions was really an expression of their genuine concern, love and solidarity with us and our mission. The Jubilee celebrations brought to our consciousness of the solidarity in mission which priests and religious are called to show to build God's kingdom.

Planning together, praying together, working together and celebrating together in this jubilee year has been a great privilege and a unique experience for each of us. Fr. Provincial exhorts us in his special circular of jubilee: 'Concluding of the year of our jubilee is not the end of jubilee; on the other hand we begin yet another phase in our missionary life in East Africa.' In the new phase we are beginning, let us drawing inspiration from the past. The fire of deep love for Christ and for the people of Africa manifests in the missionary zeal of our confreres and in their indomitable courage and perseverance. Let us 'dare for more' in our being and doing to be truly Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales in Africa!



"A family is like a forest, when you are outside it is dense, when you are inside you see that each tree has its place". ~African Proverb



Jubilee Cross Celebrations in St. Joseph Mlolongo Parish, Nairobi

St. Joseph Mlolongo started in 1990 as a small station under St. Jude, Athi River Parish. Later when Fr. Augustine Mangatt came to Mlolongo in 1998 the substation of St. Joseph was established as a parish and entrusted to the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales by the Bishop of Machakos Diocese. Under the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, the parish has grown. Now it has four stations including the parish centre. Last year the fifth station was made into a sub-parish. The missionaries of St. Francis de Sales have established a boarding cum primary school of St. Francis de Sales Katani. Katani is one of the substations of Mlolongo Parish. A day secondary school has been opened at St. Joseph Mlolongo parish centre. There is a mission Hospital also in the area of St. Joseph Mlolongo station. In the precincts of St. Joseph Mlolongo parish there are other institutions run by other religious congregations: two mission secondary schools, a boarding for primary schools and a pre-school.

The parish community is new and young. It is growing on daily basis with new people moving from Nairobi to Mlolongo.

The preparations of St. Francis de

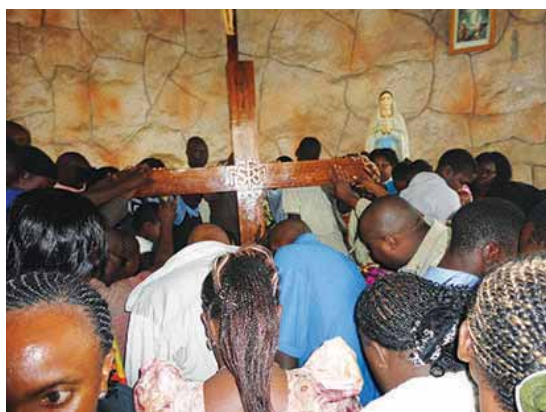
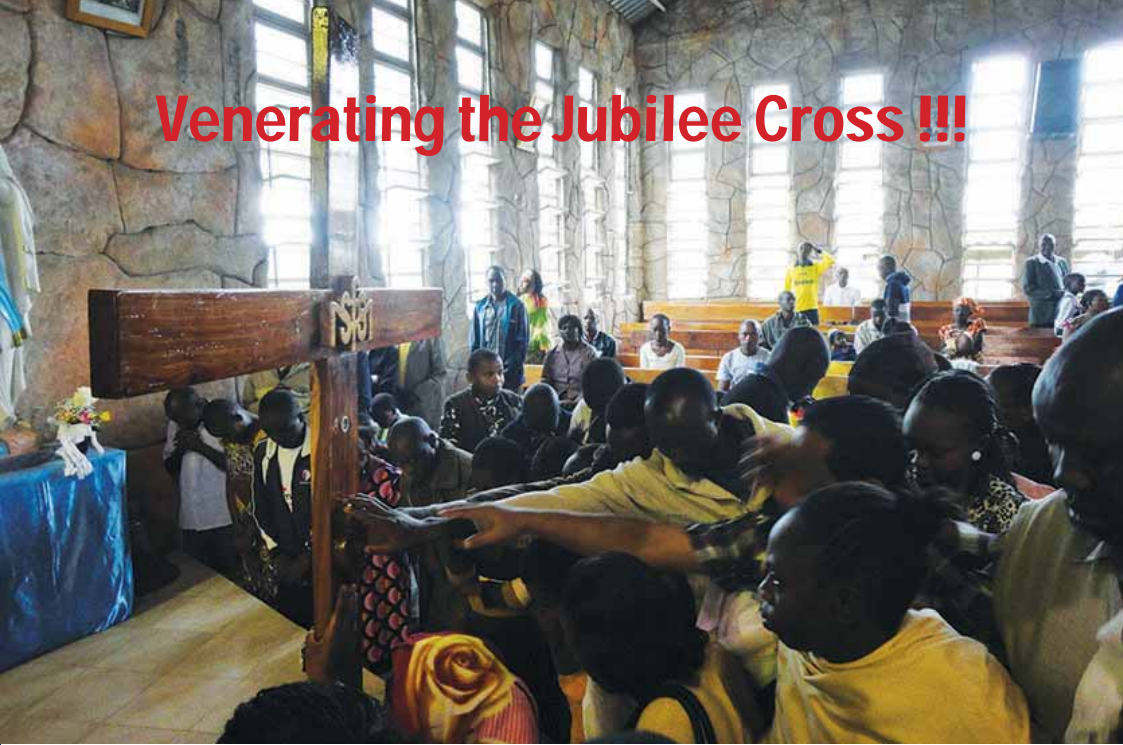
Sales Jubilee celebrations started with earnest when the cross came accompanied by Fr. Jomat on March 26, 2013. The cross was taken to Meru Chuka Parish, which is also entrusted to the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

The cross came back to St. Joseph Mlolongo on April 4, 2013. The Jubilee celebrations were on Sunday April 5, 2013 at the parish centre. At all the masses the people were told the history of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales by the catechist Gabriel. By the end of the first and second mass Christians were blessed with the Cross followed by a brief veneration. After the third mass Christians were also given last blessing with the Jubilee Cross followed by one hour veneration of the cross led by Fr. Jomat.

It was a big surprise for the Christians to learn that in the cross was a relic of the bone of St. Francis de Sales. The Christians were happy and glad to know more about the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales and their Patron.

Compiled by Chris Mutisya & Peter Katua - Chairpersons St. Joseph Mlolongo (parish centre)

Venerating the Jubilee Cross !!!



Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (Fransalians)



Our Patron
St. Francis de Sales



Our Patroness
Mother of Compassion



Our Founder
Servant of God Fr. Peter Mermier

Do you like to join our Congregation?

Qualifications required to be a Fransalian Missionary Priest:

- Catholic young man of deep faith
- Have good morals and sound catholic family background
- A person of good reputation in the local church and society
- Should have finished higher secondary education and eligible for bachelor studies or above in East Africa / Eligible for Plus Two or bachelor studies or above in India
- Age not more than 23 years unless you have higher educational qualifications, Capacity to live in community
- A man of self-discipline, good character, and right motivation
- Good health of mind and body, Balanced, sociable, generous nature
- Sincere desire to become a missionary religious priest
- Readiness to work anywhere in the world, even in challenging conditions

Vocation Director Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales

P.O. Box 575
Tororo, Uganda

P.O. Box 896,
Morogoro, Tanzania

P.O. Box 376 - 60400
Ckuka, Kenya

SFS Bhavan, Peechanikad, Angamaly, Kerala - India - 683 572

Tel: +255 756 031 972 (Fr. Innocent Ngowi MSFS) East Africa

Tel: +91 949 533 4174 (Fr. Jose Eriyanickal MSFS) India

Email: msfs-eastafrika@gmail.com • Website: msfs-eastafrika.com





Their new constitution was blessed and released by Rt. Rev. Telephore Mkude, Bishop of Morogoro, on the day of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Fransalians. Fr. Pius Kochuparampil MSFS is their Spiritual guide. Contact: +255787054548 (Fr. Pius Kochuparampil MSFS)

Do you wish to join hand with us?

- A prayer for the Mission
- Offering Mass intentions
- Sponsoring a candidate to priesthood
- Sponsoring an orphan child in his/her studies
- Supporting a development project in a Mission center

Contact Persons:

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS
The Provincial Superior
P.O. Box 12, Morogoro
Tanzania
Cell: +255 787 766 555
email: johnsonmsfs@gmail.com

Fr. Sheejan Kallarakaal MSFS
Provincial Bursar
P.O. 12, Morogoro
Tanzania
Cell: +255 784 377 306
email: sheejanmsfs@gmail

“God blesses
abundantly a
cheerful giver”

*Fresh or fading,
you are still part of the plant.*



"The Lord tenderly loves those who have the happiness of abandoning themselves totally to the fatherly care of Divine Providence. They do no stop to consider if it is advantageous or not to their own interests. Let us be convinced that the fatherly heart of God will never allow anything that is not for our greater good" (St. Francis de Sales)