



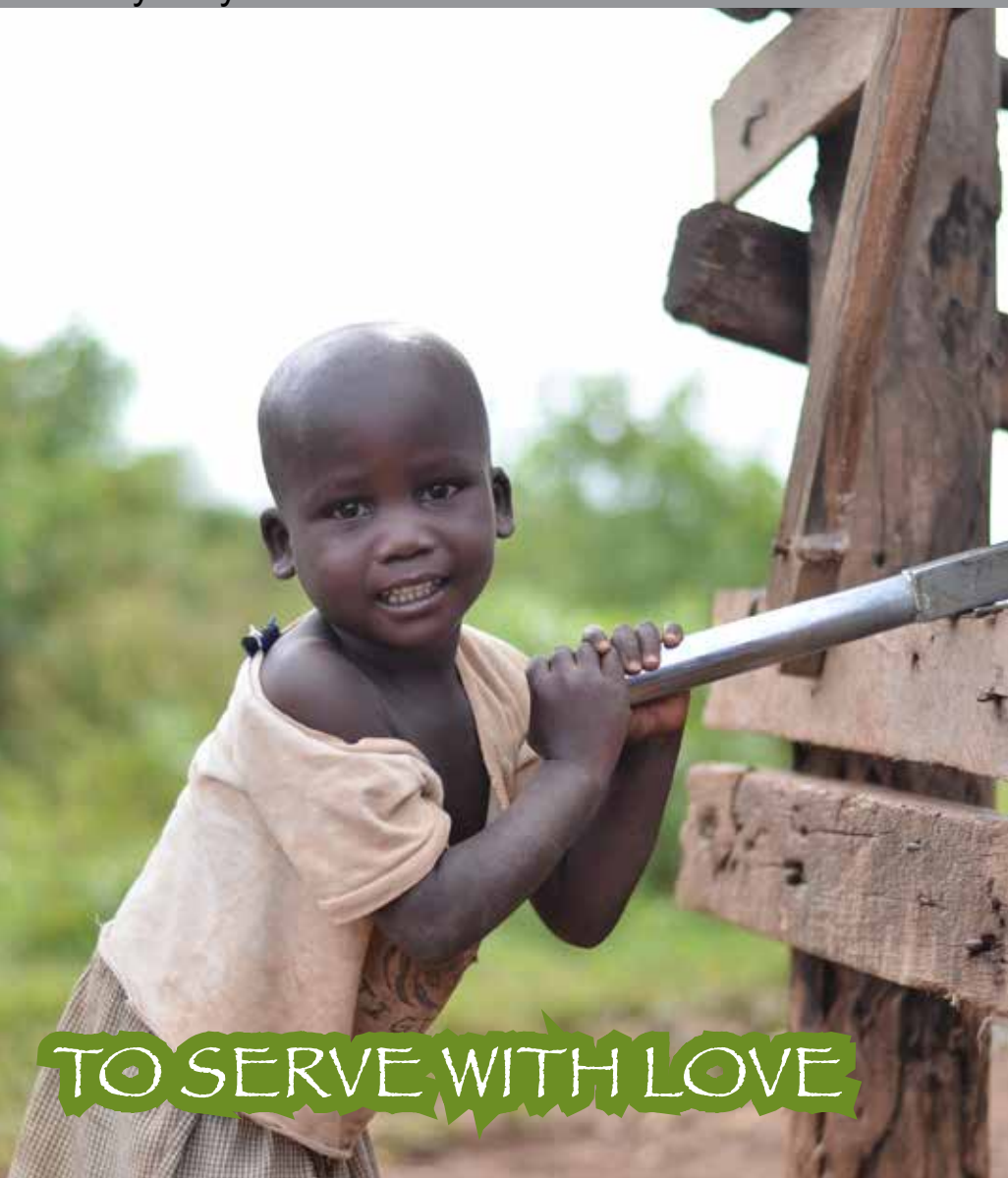
Vol.4 No.1 Issue 7

Jan - Jun 2015

BARAKA

ZA FRANSALIANS

Half yearly news bulletin of MSFS in East Africa



TO SERVE WITH LOVE

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
Chuka, Kenya

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

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

Tel: +91 9495 315 962 (Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS) India

Email: msfseastafrica@gmail.com • Website: msfs-east africa.com



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Chief Editor:

Fr. Clement Sudhakar 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-eastafrica.com

Your valuable suggestions and
comments are most welcome.
editorbaraka@gmail.com

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From the Editor



This issue is the seventh news bulletin of Fransalians in East Africa. As someone rightly said “The church is a workshop, not a dormitory; and every Christian is bound to help in the common cause”. We the Fransalians are part of this workshop “Church” and I am sure that we have been bound ourselves in this common cause. Thanks a lot dear confreres for your tireless efforts and selfless service to humanity.



The focus of this issue “To Serve with Love” is SOCIAL APOSTOLATE of Fransalians in East Africa. Love is the fire of life; it either consumes or purifies. When love is put in our service, it illumines the hearts and radiates joy in the life of the people.

May the Son of man who came to serve and not to be served continue to illumine our hearts that we may in turn bring joy in the people we serve.

May our Heavenly Patron St. Francis de Sales and Our Venerable Founder Fr. Peter Mermier continue to inspire each and every one of you who reads this edition of Baraka.

Vive Jesus.

Fr. Clement Sudhakar MSFS



“Poverty is not the real problem of the modern world. For we have the knowledge and resources which could enable us to overcome poverty. The real problem--the thing which causes misery, wars, and hatred among men--is the division of mankind into rich and poor.”

- Julius Nyerere

Message from Fr. Provincial

Dear lovers of Baraka,

Greetings from Morogoro, Tanzania!
Here is a saying in Swahili: *Mtu ni Watu...* meaning, Person is People!

The Social Ministry of any organization is a response to this age old principle of the role of the society in making a person whole and the role of every person in making the society whole.

I AM because WE ARE! This famous statement from John S. Mbiti the well-known Kenyan Philosopher and Anglican Theologian is a explication of this statement: *Mtu ni Watu...* Person is People.

Since the very beginning of the MSFS mission in East Africa, we have been experiencing the need to be fully integrated into the society at the very grass root level. This helps us to be aware of the challenges that people face in their daily life. This awareness impels us to respond to the needs of the common man. As the Province of East Africa, to some extend we have responded to the situation of need of the social issues - including the health care, taking care of the socially disadvantaged kids, single mothers, aged and sick ones etc. However what is done is only a drop ! Whereas the need is an ocean ! The needs are on the increase every moment.

The reality is that: There is no human organization here on earth than can

address all the social needs of the entire world. But every human being can address the need of at least another human being. When

everyone does so, all the issues are addressed, all the problems are solved. When I become aware of the truth in the philosophy **I am because we ARE**, I must be ready to be part of that WE contributing to the development of another person.

Social needs are in fact external manifestations of the internal deficiency of the human beings and the human relationships. This internal deficiency at all level can be addressed only by another human being. No government, organization or structure can address this need giving the individual wholeness.

As readers of Baraka let us become real Baraka (blessing) for our sisters and brothers who are in need of us!

Wishing you an inspiring time,

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS

Provincial, MSFS East Africa Province

Email ID: johnsonmsfs@gmail.com



The Beginnings of Christianity in East Africa

Part 4: The Arrival of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers)

As the Spiritans were moving to the interiors, towards Morogoro, Kilimanjaro, and to Kenya, a new missionary society landed on the coast of Tanganyika. The Society of the Missionaries of Africa (formerly known as the White Fathers) was founded in 1868 by a charismatic frenchman, Cardinal Lavigerie, the archbishop of Carthage and Algiers and Primate of Africa. He preached vehemently against slave trade in Africa in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris and motivated people to support the missions in Africa. Members of the Society of Missionaries of Africa, set out from Bagamoyo Mission in 1878 on the long journey that would take them to Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza.

The caravan, as it was called, was led by ten young Frenchmen, five designated for the Ugandan Mission and five for that of Lake Tanganyika. The leader of the Ugandan section was Father Lourdel, known affectionately to Ugandan Roman Catholics' as

Mapera (a corruption of' *Mon pere*). The leader of the Tanganyika section was Father Pascal, who



Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS

unfortunately never lived to see his mission field at Ujiji as he died of fever in Ugogo in August of the same year, and was buried secretly on the night following his death, the first from the Roman Catholic Church in the Tanzanian interior.¹

On October 1, 1878 they arrived in Tabora, and made their camp in Kwihara, a short distance away from Itetemya, the chiefly headquarters of (Ikulu) of the chiefs of Unyanyembe. The whole group was divided into two and continued their journey. One group headed for Uganda and arrived there in February 1879, the other group headed for



¹ Ref. Alward Shorter, Tanzania Notes, No.88 and 89.

Lake Tanganyika, and reached there in January, 1879. From there they moved to eastern Zaire and western Tanganyika. They had to face a lot of opposition and hostility from the Arab traders, as the former vehemently stood against slave trade. They opened many missions on their way. But they had to abandon them due to threat and conflict. *For the White Fathers the period from 1879 to 1891 was not one of conspicuous conditions which seemed to conspire and make missionary work well-nigh impossible. As a result, only three permanent stations were founded in the period: Bukumbi in 1883, Karema in 1885 and Kirando in 1888.*²

Karema was the first permanent station of the Tanganyika mission. In 1887 it was made the first mainland see of a bishop: Mgr Jean Baptiste Charbonnier, who succeeded to establish a very intimate friendship with the King of *Ufipa*, *Kapufi*. And thus *Ufipa* became the first Christian Kingdom of Tanzania. Bishop Charbonnier opened Bush Schools in every village and through these schools he proclaimed the Good News. In 1961, when Tanganyika became independent *Ufipa* (today Sumbawanga) was 70% catholic. The history of the Tabora mission of the White fathers was less glorious. Tabora was an Arab foundation (1852) and a slave trade route. The

2 Lukas Malishi, A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, 1990, 18.

missionaries went around long time searching for a suitable place to establish the head quarters. At last, they situated themselves in Ushirombo, where the King *Ndega* of the small *Sumbwa* tribe accepted them. But then the region was depopulated by sleeping sickness and by the attraction of the coast, that the Bishop moved his residence to Tabora in 1912. Tabora Christianity remained always small. However, during the period of the Second World War the town became famous for its institutions. The White Fathers also set up many mission stations in Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda.³

The Missionaries of Africa had local initiatives. Each area had its own particular approach according to its setting. Thus they developed the local languages, had them written and wrote about their culture and customs. Though they also insisted on total change to their Christians yet they were more accommodating to the local traditions and customs.⁴ Today there are 1,737 men serving as Missionaries of Africa in 23 countries throughout the African continent.

(to be continued...)

3 Ref. John Bauer, 2000 years of Christianity in Africa, Nairobi, 1994, 246-247.

4 Method Kilaini, The Church in Africa and in Tanzania particular, available on line..

The noble idea of empowering women in Bukene Parish

The noble idea of empowering women in Bukene Parish and making them self-reliant was materialized when Rev. Fr. John Judie shared the good news that there are some people who want help women in our parish for growing piglets. The Parish priest Rev. Fr. Santhosh Paul in collaboration with the lay leaders of the parish decided to draft a project for women. And they decided to choose 40 women who would benefit from this project. And these women were to be chosen by the leaders of the Small Christian Communities. Based on the proposal of the Small Christian Communities the leaders visited their homes to ascertain their eligibility to benefit from this project. And those who were chosen were given a seminar on how to keep livestock. 20 women were given pig lings and 20 others were given goats on the condition that they should deposit 20,000 Shillings and sign the agreement form that they would take care of the pig-ling given to them. And when their pig delivers they should return 2 pig- lings so that this project could be continued through other deserving women. When they return the pig-lings and goats they would be refunded the 20,000

Shillings deposit. The success rate was more than 80%. Most of the women successfully completed the project and are continuing to grow pigs in their own homes as a source of income. It is a great joy to see the development of this humble beginning and the way the women cooperated with the directives of the project.

In order to organize them better the parish also initiated a self-help-group. The members were from the same group that was participating in the livestock project. The members of the group meet every Sunday evening to discuss about their livestock project as well as to bring their savings. Every member is supposed keep 1000 Shillings as savings. Or if somebody has more she could keep also more than 1000. Every member is entitled to get a loan from the group with the guarantee of two other members. Within one year the group has a saving of 1,500,000 Shillings and 500,000 Shillings as interest earned from lending. There was the transaction of 3,000,000 Shillings within one year. One is given a loan for an interest rate of 5% per month which is the lowest lending rates in Bukene.



The aim of starting this project was to empower women of Bukene and the surrounding villages, to inculcate in them habit of saving, to teach them to spend sparingly, build self-esteem in them and self-confidence, to give them non formal education and to educate them about the necessity and importance of environmental conservation, to help them to come out of their superstitions and to eradicate

When you encounter difficulties and contradictions, do not try to break them, but bend them with gentleness and time.

-Saint Francis de Sales

social evils, etc. The project has its constitution and Bi-Laws written. After one year of working together it brings us the realization that such projects can become powerful tools of social change in Tanzania. We sincerely thank Rev. Fr. John Judie and Our Parish team for their support, encouragement and guidance.

We are absolutely convinced that along with the spiritual nourishment we give to the people we should also help them to become self-reliant and develop themselves economically.

Prepared by SHG Bukene

Fransalian Water Project Dumila

One of the scarcest things in African continent is water. It is a heart breaking scene in many places in Africa where the people walk kilometers to fetch water for drinking and for cooking. Some other places we can see people and the livestock drink the same water from the same pond. Thanks be to God for the gift of water in our parish compound in Dumila. Usually people of Dumila depend on shallow wells and rain water as their source of water. However those open wells gets dried up expect the raining seasons are over. Thus people are in need of pure water facility throughout the year. It is in this context that in Dumila parish we thought of making a water project. Fransalian Water Project was begun in the year

2010. The project was initiated after the survey of the village. Consequently we found there is scarcity of pure water facility. Thus the aim of this project is to provide the villages of Dumila and the nearby places with pure drinking water.

Thus the water project in our St. Francis de Sales Catholic Parish Dumila provides water for hundreds of people in the village. They come in the morning with their containers to fetch water to the specified place near our gate. By Gods providence our bore well is blessed with plenty of water. People are very grateful to our charitable work done through the parish.



Half an hour's meditation each day is essential, except when you are busy. Then a full hour is needed.

-Saint Francis de Sales

FOSTER CARE: Fransalian Pro-Poor Ministries in Iyolwa Mission

Iyolwa Mission in the archdiocese of Tororo in Uganda is the youngest mission of the Fransalians in the province of East Africa. This Mission was entrusted to the care of MSFS on 08.02.2015 by His Grace Dr. Emmanuel Obbo, the archbishop of Tororo. Iyolwa mission is spread across the whole of Iyolwa sub-county which has a population of about 44,000 people, out of them 50% are below the age of 18.

This community suffered the war of 1986 and even a part of Iyolwa Church

was destroyed by it. Iyolwa is blessed with friendly, human, cheerful and generous people though they suffer drastically from acute poverty, alcoholism, polygamy, corruption, lack of schools and possibilities for general human development. Three confreres, Bro. Ssentamu Ruthital, Fr. Thomas Chozhithara and Fr. Antony George are



Fr. Antony George MSFS





actively involved in pastoral ministry as well as social development programmes in Iyolwa mission. The following are some of innovative ministries for the development of the poor and the vulnerable people in Iyolwa Mission.

1. Fransalian Child Care Ministry

Iyolwa primary school has about 1200 students who are accommodated in seven class rooms. Among them about 300 are orphans. These children are either complete orphans or partial orphans or they live like orphans in vulnerable situations. Many of them have lost parents, many of them do not know who their father is, many of them live with their grandparents because their mothers lives with a new partners.

They come to the school at 07.30 am and remains there until 04.00 pm. During the lunch break they roam around the school as they have no possibility of getting food anywhere. Understanding the seriousness of this situation and the need for helping these children to focus on these children, together with our pastoral ministries, we decided to take care of 60 of these children who live in the most vulnerable situation. They are provided with daily meal, school uniforms, study materials, facilities for sports and medical care. We also take care to develop in them some leadership qualities.

2. Fransalian Ministry of Women/ Girl Empowerment



A popular News Paper in Uganda “New Vision”, on 1st of July reported that “one out of every four teenage girls in Uganda are either having children or is pregnant”. This is very much true in the case of Iyolwa. There are many widows and single mothers who live in difficult circumstances in our community. Each woman has an average five children. To support them, to come out of their misery and improve their living environment, we have introduced the following programmes:

- a. 20 women were provided with one each she-goat. In eight month time, they should give back one each she-goat with which we can support others
- b. 20 women are temporarily provided with a small piece of land in which they can cultivate and get food for their family.

- c. Some girls are supported in their education both primary and secondary.
 - d. We wish to promote the cause of women by offering them secure educational environment by providing them hostel facilities during their secondary school education.
3. Fransaliam Ministry of Environment Protection and Conservation

Due to greedy human consumption and massive deforestation a lot of green world has disappeared from the map of Uganda which is causing global warming, climate change and unhealthy living situations. Pope Francis in his latest Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, calls the earth “our common home”. If we are not taking care of the earth, we are destroying our common home. The first ones who suffer from the effect of



it are the poor and the vulnerable in the society (Laudato Si, 49). In order to promote Environmental protection and conservation, we have planted about 500 trees in Iyolwa. Children are taking care of these trees. We have also founded an Environment Day in our Mission which falls on the first Sunday in June. This day is commemorated to bring to the notice of the people

the importance of planting trees and avoiding cutting trees, as well as informing the children about the importance of waste management, proper use of water, use of less water, electricity and other sources of energy.

Fr. P. Antony George MSFS

Where there is love and acceptance, no one is a foreigner

My experiences in India

Like many other students, pursuing higher studies was a dream since my earliest school days until 2012 when my Provincial Superior, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, confided to me about the Congregation's plan to designate me for higher studies. At the break of that news, I was overwhelmed with joy because rays of hope toward the realization of my noble dream beamed brighter. However, I had no clue pertaining to where I would be sent for my studies until April 2013 when a correspondence was initiated between the Provincial Administration and Christ University in India. Everything worked perfectly and by the mid of May, I was admitted at Christ University. On the 29th of May 2014, I set-off from the JKIA Nairobi to India. The journey was long and tiring especially considering that I travelled alone and I had a stop-over of 18 hours at Sharjah airport, but that being my first journey by plane, I was very happy that I had sufficient time to go around the airport. When I arrived at Kochi International Airport in Kerala, I still could not believe that I had reached until I was picked up by Fr. Jose Eriyanickal MSFS who welcomed me and took me to our community at Peechanikad in Angamaly, Kerala. As we were driving home, I noticed the exquisite beauty of the surroundings

as the myriad of rivers meandered all through the paddy fields. I was also surprised by the greenery from the rubber and palm trees which made up

the kaleidoscope of Angamaly a sight to behold. Anyway, since I had to settle my university admission and residence permit, I remained in Angamaly just for a night and set off to Karnataka accompanied by Fr. Jomon MSFS who was on home holidays from Tanzania.



Bro. Kenneth Maina MSFS

I had little knowledge about Karnataka but I developed an interest to learn more about it. I came to know that it was home to Bengaluru, the fifth largest metropolis of India which is famed for its immense software companies from which it derives its pet name 'Silicon valley of India'. However, it had never occurred to me that it was a metropolis surrounded by marvels which would stretch one's imagination into wonder. When I reached in there, I was surprised by its intense and deep aesthetic orientation manifested through magnificent architectural

designs and its art works which are mostly expressed in the places of worship. I was also struck by the sight of animals wandering freely about the streets especially dogs and cows and even buffalos at times.

Bengaluru is densely populated, but due to its superb roads, one can easily access any part of the metropolis by using the state buses which are affordable and easily available as they come on every 10 minutes and run for 24 hours on most of the routes. These are just but some of the spectacular things one can experience in Bengaluru. I was very happy that my university was located in this interesting metropolis. So, when I went to the University campus I was even more delighted because it was an ecological haven set amidst beautiful gardens and clean boulevards. The environment gave me a stronger impetus to invest my time and resources to accomplish the study mission that had been entrusted to me by my province. This was further strengthened by the erudite guidance of my Professors and Animators who painstakingly ensured that I trod in the right direction. Having gone through all that, I still remember the exerting experiences which I went through stemming from the gigantic academic demands set by the university namely; tough philosophical readings, numerous assignments and tough

deadlines. As the wise adage teaches, 'if life gives you lemons, don't cry for oranges but make lemonade out of the lemons and enjoy'.

Thus, I took advantage of those endeavors and learnt how handle pressurizing situations with tact and equanimity such that the exerting experience which I went through eventually turned out to be a very enriching life experience. In my final year of study, I stayed in the community of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara Study House where I had the opportunity to live as an integral part of the diverse spectrum of communities drawn from various religious rites (Latin, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara and Geez Rite of Ethiopia). Another plus point came from the opportunity that I got for studying Indian Philosophy which exposed me to new vistas and this enabled me to understand, experience and appreciate how Indians live harmoniously in spite of their diversity. In that same connection, I consider myself lucky because I got opportunities to interact with people of various creeds of Indian origin like Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs. Therefore, I visited *ashrams* and happily interacted with the different religious people like the yogic god-man Sri Sri Ravi Shankar who is famous in India for his 'Art of Living' Foundation.

I also visited the Tibetan colony at Beilakupe in Mysore where I got a chance to interact with Tibetan Buddhists who took me around their colony and temples and I was in fact thrilled by their beautiful chanting and simple way of life. Back in Bangalore I visited the Mahavira Buddhists, the Jains monastery and the Sikhs Gurudwara. This kind of interaction enabled me to appreciate all religions in a balanced way. For this reason, I must acknowledge that Christ University has a study-friendly milieu which made my stay in India at large a perfect experience.

Since I had the support of my Confreres in India and outside India, I had numerous opportunities to visit different pilgrimage places such as the tomb of Bl. Mother Teresa of Kolkata in West Bengal; the tomb of St. Alphonsa in Bharananganam in Palai, Kurishumula Benedictine Monastery, the tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle in Chennai and the Shrine of Vellainkani in Tamil Nadu. All my visits to those places were always arranged by MSFS Confreres. Apart from the visits to

those pilgrimage centers, I appreciate the wonderful support of my community in Angamaly especially for availing to me the needed resources in time. I also visited many communities and families of our Confreres who always accorded me cordial hospitality whenever I visited. One of the striking things that inspired and touched me in the families in Kerala was the tradition of praying together Rosary and other prayers every evening in the families.

In this connection, I wish to largely thank all my confreres and friends whose support and encouragement enabled me to enjoy my short stay in India as I undertook my studies. Yes, it was my heart-felt experience of being loved and accepted by all during my stay in India. That made me feel at home. I again affirm what is placed on the title:

Where there is love and acceptance, no one is a foreigner!

My experiences in India

Bro. Kenneth Maina MSFS



Innovative Ministries and Social Apostolate in our Province

Fr. Thomas Chozhithara msfs, PCIC Innovative/Social Ministry

“By listening to the spirit and discerning his purposes, we commit ourselves to new and creative apostolates according the needs of the Church in the changing situations of the world.”

Const. 23, of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales

Basing on this article of our constitutions, the 13th General Chapter of our congregation gives us the following orientation “attentive reading of the signs of times is the matrix of innovative, prophetic mission. They are to be the new responses of the Fransalians to the new needs, life situations and problems of people of today”¹. Adhering to this call of congregation, the Fransalians in East Afroca are engaged in variety of formal (institutionalized) and informal (non-institutionalized) innovative ministries and social apostolates. East African countries offer a very fertile ground for these ministries and many of our confreres individually and as in communities took advantage of this situation to exercise their personal aptitudes and interests in the vineyard of the Lord. We call these ministries “innovative” or/and “social” because on the one hand they may not belong to our traditional or original apostolate but at the same time they are in no way contrary to them. We commit ourselves to these ministries because they are very much needed in the contemporary world. It also means that we can exercise our original and tradi-

tional ministries with a new spirit and with new perspective in order to adapt to the new world and for the new generation. The content

of the mission is always the same but the method of communication changes according to the time. These ministries are also called social because they are directly concerned with the development of the society and the human person. In our province we have ventured into some worth mentioning innovative ministries and social apostolates which are either formal (institutionalized) or non formal (non-institutionalized). There are also formal institutions with non-formal programmes. All these ministries which are undertaken by our confreres reflects the salesian characters in other words, **MSFSness**.



Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS

1 . Ref. MSFS, Call of General Chapter 2013, Rome, p.14.



A. Formal Innovative and Social Ministries

The formal innovative and social ministries are apostolates based in an institution with regular planning and ongoing programmes. Most of them are initiated by our confreres and others, like dispensaries, were existing before we took up the mission in the respective parish.

1. Health Ministries

- a. Dispensary at Lububu Parish
- b. Mermier Holistic Healing Center, Morogoro

- c. Dispensary at Chera Parish
- d. Dispensary at Ngurudotto
- e. Dispensary at LCI, Arusha

1. FOSTER (Fransalian Organization for Social Transformation, Education and Renewal) Projects

- SFS Children's Home, Tabora for orphans and street children
- Simba Clay (Fransalian Furaha Project for the visually challenged persons), Tabora

- FOSTER Life, Tabora and Arusha (Propagating principles of healthy living and Stop AIDS programmes)

- FOSTER Care, Iyolwa for orphan children

2. **Fransalian Communications**, Morogoro and Arusha (Youth ministry, Publications, Spirituality courses etc.)

3. **SFS Integrated School**, Katani for orphan children

4. **Water Project** in Dumila, supporting with safe drinking water

5. **Innovative Ministries at LCI** (Language courses, Catechetical and spirituality courses, Programmes for the Youth)

6. Friends of Fransalians

About 40 former students of SFS Junior Seminary have established a society under the guidance of some of our confreres and involved in our mission by way of supporting our missions spiritually and materially.

B. Non Formal Innovative and Social Ministries

1. Youth ministry in all the parishes

All our parishes, besides Fransalians Communications, are involved in

youth ministry and work for youth development. Such initiatives enable the youth to live their lives seriously, thanking God for the gift of life and to focus on their future life as good Christians and good citizens.

2. Poverty Eradication programmes in Bukene, Mkuza, Ngurodotto, Mlologo, Chera and other parishes

Including the above mentioned parishes most of our parishes have initiated one or the other poverty eradication programmes in the parishes with or without external help. In some parishes we have small credit and self help groups, the other parishes offer assistance for the most vulnerable people, like widows, aged and orphan children.

3. Student Scholarship Programmes

With the help of some of our partner organizations abroad like Living Waters Inc. and Maisha Pamoja, we organize student scholarship programmes in our schools and parishes.

4. Women empowerment programmes in Iyolwa

According to the latest statistics, every fourth teenage girl in Uganda is already a mother or is pregnant.² In many cases these girls do not know who is the father of their children.

2 Ref. Daily Nation, Popular Daily in Uganda, July 1, 2015.



Many of them live like widows or single mothers with a few children incapable of taking care of them. Thirty of such women are supported at present to continue their lives with hope and courage.

5. Promotion of Family Life through counselling and seminars

Family counselling is an important part of priestly ministry. Besides these, courses and counselling programmes are offered to promote family life.

6. Association with Lay collaborators

Our province is in association with different lay collaborators in different missions. The most no-

table among these is the association of the former students of SFS Junior Seminary Morogoro, with the title **"Friends of Fransalians"**. This group which registers with the government of Uganda as an NGO, has about 50 members and animated or guided by one of our confreres. It supports our different missions spiritually and materially.

Our communities of Ipuli and Chera are supported by lay volunteers sent by our supporting NGO in Germany **"Maisha Pamoja"**. We are also assisted by lay volunteers sent by the department of social entrepreneurship at the Catholic University of Chile and Valia Institute Mexico and we are also supported by volunteers from Austria. A new partnership was made with Technical University of Karlsruhe (Germany) for the social develop-

mental works in our new mission in Iyolwa.

7. **Commitment to our “common home”- Mother Earth**

With great appreciation for the orientations given by the 13th General chapter and the 7th Provincial Congress; and the personal initiatives of some of our confreres in this regard, the last forum meeting of the innovative ministries and social apostolates in our province, took place on 11.03.2015, reemphasized importance of intensifying the promotion of ecological care and environmental protection, especially in the context of east Africa where thousands of hectares of forest disappeared from the map within short and a lot of careless activities which are against the mother earth are carried on. The forum encouraged the communities and confreres to plant more trees, and encourage others (especially in the parishes and schools) to plant more trees, organize programmes to conscientize people about the dangers of air/water pollution, deforestation, poor waste management etc and their far reaching consequences. With these intentions in mind, the provincial administration exhorted each community to fix an “Eco Day”, once in a year to organize public programmes to promote ecological care and environmental protection.

C. **Looking ahead with Hope**

We have made a long and successful way in the field of innovative ministry and social apostolate though we had the limitations of insufficient financial resources and less number qualified and adequate personnel. We are aware of the fact we can do and we have to do much more in our given context to involve in more ministries for development of people. We are already working on the embarkation of some projects such as:

1. Intensifying youth ministry in the parishes and schools
2. Broadening the women empowerment ministry
3. Popularizing the Mermier method of mission preaching
4. Establishment of Media Center
5. Establishment of a Retreat/Renewal Center
6. Establish special fund for the poor in our communities
7. Rejuvenate the Family Apostolate in our parishes
8. Introduce more programmes to promote respect and love for our “common home”- mother earth.

Innovative Ministries in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales

Fr. Jayaseelan Selvaraj MSFS

General Councillor

General Secretary for Social Apostolates and Innovative Ministries

More than ever before, we live in an era of most advanced scientific developments, inspiring innovative inventions and immense information technologies. The one catch-word that has captured the attention of the modern world and is spoken far and wide and all across the fields of Research, Education, Science, Business and Management is innovation. It is popularly understood as the process of involving deliberate application of information, imagination and initiative in deriving greater values from resources, and including all processes by which new ideas are generated and transmitted into socially useful results.

The spirit of Innovativeness has been the spring of wisdom and knowledge that accentuate the success of every civilization and invention. It is the creative way of responding to the needs, challenges and changing concerns of the society. Change and innovation are

the integral components of both biological and spiritual growth. It signifies the power of the human person to transcend the limitations

of the time and space and to realize the very purpose of the creation of the human person in the image and likeness of the Trinitarian God.



Fr Jayaseelan Selvaraj MSFS

Christ Event is the prototype of God's personal and innovative way of involving in the lives of the people. Jesus says that "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Mt 5:17), clearly spells out that the Good News of our Lord



Nothing is so strong as Gentleness, Nothing so gentle as real strength.

-Saint Francis de Sales



Jesus Christ is the new way of making present the one true God of Love in a more experiential way in the lives of the people in their struggles, fears and anxieties. Throughout the Christ-event, in His Incarnation, Ministry, Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension, we find the innovative response of God to the cries and the sufferings of the people. The coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church are again the innovative ways of manifesting His unconditional and unparalleled love for His own people. From the descent of the Holy Spirit on Mother Mary and on the Apostles and the spread of the Church throughout the world is a Divine Call to the Disciples of Jesus Christ to participate in the ongoing process of sanctifying and redeeming the people in an innovative way in and through the Church.

In the footsteps of his Divine Master Jesus Christ, we find the innovative pastoral initiatives of St. Francis De Sales in winning the people back to the original Faith at Chablais Mission. Our MSFS Constitution No. 6 inspires us to be innovative in our missions like

St Francis de Sales: While making full use of the existing means available to him like preaching, writing, meeting individual persons and communities, St Francis de Sales sought creative and innovative ways to be more effective at the service of the Gospel. He invited all to realize their God-given vocation to become more human in the mold of Christ. Like St. Paul, he became “all things to all” (cf. I Cor 9:22) to win them all for Christ.

The birth of our Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales was the innovative pastoral response to the diminishing faith and the spiritual life of the people of Annecy. In his writings Fr Emile Mayorz underlines that along with Father Peter Mermier, the first MSFS were “renovators”, since Father Mermier himself was the “Renovator of the Pastoral Mission in Savoy”. To be “renovators”, it is even part of the very nature of our MSFS Congregation. At the time of Father Mermier, at our Foundation, we have been called “Missionaries”, because of the urgency of the missionaries activities, to which Father Mermier responded. For Father



Mermier, in a religious situation, in France, of indifference and unbelief, the return to God could only be obtained through the preaching of the word of God, and very concretely by the “Parish Missions”. In the very intuition of Father Mermier, a profound missionary intuition to give a pastoral response to the urgent missionary needs is a component of our mission, as MSFS: to be “renovators. We have to act the part of leaders, of formators, of guides, of counsellors in a total fidelity to the Church.

The vision of New Governance of our Congregation brought forth yet another wave of inspiration in the innovative leadership and missionary endeavours of our Congregation. It envisages a new mindset to refocus on our Missionary Life as the communion of fraternal fellowship, communication of the shared vision and the consolidation of our missionary endeavours at the service of the Kingdom of God. True to

the vision of the new Governance of the Congregation, the Call of the 19th General Chapter reorients us to recommit to the vision of ‘One body one Mission’ in the spirit of collegiality, collaboration and net-working of ministries, resources and personnel. We seek to initiate and pursue new and creative ways to be effective missionaries for the sake of God’s Kingdom in season and out of season. Our MSFS Constitution further emphasizes the fact that while being faithful to the original apostolates we have the openness to discern what God’s Spirit is asking us to be at a given historical moment and in a particular cultural context. By listening to the Spirit and discerning His purposes, we commit ourselves to new and creative apostolates according to the needs of the Church in the changing situations of the world. Following the missionary zeal and apostolic boldness of our founder, Father Peter Mermier, and trusting in God who called us into this way of life,

we make ourselves available for new apostolic ventures (n.23).

be instruments of Truth, Justice and Peace.

The 19th General Chapter of our Congregation continued to echo the innovative nature of our Congregation in its statements that we re-affirm our resolve to evangelize the world by reaching out to people of different cultures, religions and languages and by being faithful to our Foundational Apostolates: It also invites us to reaffirm our renewed commitment to the attentive reading of the signs of the times as the matrix of innovative, prophetic mission. To realize this, we resolve to promote Spiritual Leadership, after the example of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to be counter witnesses to religious indifference and materialism. Filled with missionary zeal, in fidelity to the Universal Church, we engage ourselves in the mission of evangelization. Being challenged by the sufferings, especially of the poor, in a world marred by falsehood, injustice and conflicts, we commit ourselves to

True to the innovative nature of our Congregation, we find MSFS confreres working over 26 Countries involved in the service of the people through the following innovative ministries in our Congregation: social apostolates of justice, peace, health and healing, home for senior citizens, AIDS patients, prison ministry, physically and mentally challenged, youth ministry if indicated by the Provincial, herbal medicines (alternative medicine), Legal aid, counselling service to hospitals, schools, couples and individuals; journalism (media and publications), home for orphans and street children, rehabilitation homes for the empowerment of battered women, tailoring schools, computer training centres, accountancy-book-keeping, automobile training for street boys, training counsellors for AIDS patients, dispensary for villagers, chaplaincy to hospitals, retreat preaching and counselling, animation of Fransalian associates.



The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.

-Mahatma Gandhi



Since the last two decades, we find a number of outstanding outcomes of the Innovative Ministries in our Congregation. A number of Fransalian NGOs and centres in our Congregation have been involved: in empowering the poor and the suffering, in educating the orphans, poor, street children, in equipping the youth with life skills through formal and non-formal technical and printing institutions, in spreading the Gospel of Love through folk arts and dance, in creating second-line leadership and providing them with ongoing formation through Spirituality Institutes and Pastoral animation centres, in healing the sick and the suffering through the holistic healing centres and dispensaries, in empowering the women and tribal communities through various self-help groups, in caring for the senior and sick people through homes for

the aged and rehabilitation centres, in assisting the farmers and daily wagers through innovative horticulture farms and methods and in reaching out to the masses the Gospel of Christ through the Fransalian media and communication centres.

We often hear that many people especially the young are very disenchanted with the way we animate the Liturgical services and render our support system to the people. In this context, we are enlightened to be very attentive and magnanimous in our innovative service to the prophetic words of Our Holy Father, Pope Francis in the *Evangelii Gaudium*: "The Church must be attractive. Wake up the world! Be witnesses of a different way of acting, of living! It is possible to live differently in this world". Entrusting to us, the Consecrated people, the task of *waking up*

the world, the Pope urges us to approach the lives of the men and women of today in the light of two pastoral categories that have their roots in the newness of the Gospel: *closeness* and *encounter*, two ways through which God himself is revealed in history culminating in the Incarnation. He continues to say that our journey together “matures towards pastoral fatherhood, towards pastoral motherhood, and when a priest is not a father to his community, when a sister is not a mother to all those with whom she works, he or she becomes sad. This is the problem. For this reason I say to you: the root of sadness in pastoral life is precisely in the absence of fatherhood or motherhood that comes from living this consecration unsatisfactorily, which on the contrary should lead us to fertility”(EG.60).

Today, as one Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales, we are

once again called to be more innovative in our thought, compassionate in our words and joyful in our actions in the changing and challenging scenario of the world. Our visibility as the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales and our Missionary Life in the foot-steps of our Founder Father Peter Mermier can be more relevant and more meaningful only when we innovatively respond to the signs of the time. Innovative and creative ways of responding to the faithful is possible as Pope Francis says that when we stop hiding in our offices or going out in our cars wearing sun glasses. Let us continue to be more innovative and inspiring in our all our Ministries in the foot-steps of our Patron St. Francis de Sales and Founder Father Peter Mermier and in the legacy of our pioneers of great vision and Mission of our Congregation.

Live Jesus!



In this life
We cannot do
GREAT things.
We can only
do small things
with **GREAT** love.

-Mother Teresa

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. -Rabindranath Tagore

The Urgency of Healing Ministry Today

Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS

God so loved the world to give his only son Jesus that whoever believes in him may have eternal life (Jn3: 16). God's love is such that he has created the human beings in his image and likeness (Gen 1:27). By the original sin the image and likeness was faded and the incarnation was designed that we become his partners in the redemptive activity.

The preaching is followed by the healing and the casting out demons. The early Church was so much aware of this ministry and that is why we have in the first written Gospel of Mark one third is the healing and the miracle stories of Jesus.

Today it is more than any other time the healing mandate is so relevant. Much scientific knowledge is available today but the numbers of psychological, sociological and physical problems are on increase. Many of the sickness like leprosy, small pox, T.B. (tuber culosis), polio and yellow fever are mostly eradicated from most parts of the world. But every year we have a new list of sickness like HIV (aids), Ebola and swine fever. Some psychological imbalance has crept in the society and so in some counties the legalization of the homosexuality has come.



A special consideration to be given to the economically backward countries because they are the poor of Yahweh. In many affluent societies



Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS

people thought money was the solution for their problems but the result was that the solely relaying on the economy, the healing could not be brought out.

Everyone is a potential healer

The very fact we preserve our life and help others to lead a healthy life, we are exercising the healing ministry. Only the practical problems are that many may not know the practical application of the exercise of the ministry.

Very often in a village people may not know that the healing properties are given in the trees and in the fruits. One may sell the precious oranges(machungwa) for a cheaper price in the market and purchase one coco cola(which is good to clean the toilet only).

The first parents were allowed to eat all the fruits in the garden except the fruits of a particular tree. Even today there is a need of choosing the food and drinks especially when one is sick. When blood pressure is high one should take honey, oranges and molonge(muringa olefera). Whereas when the blood pressure is low one should take coffee, salt and sugar. When one can manage without an injection and surgery with a capsule, one has to go for the capsule. Among the option between a tablet and capsule the first one is preferred. When one can have a good diet and avoid even an herbal medication go for the first choice. Good exercise, proper rest, good laughter, coupled with spiritual life is a remedy for many ailments.

Let the youth prepare themselves to become would be parents. Let the

children get the right to grow peacefully in and out of mother's womb. The message of the recent encyclical of the Holy Father Pope Francis is clear- live peacefully and allow others to live peacefully in the nature.

A Healer is a Prophet

The healer stand for his duty as a prophet he stands for the truth. He helps others to exercise this ministry. When we lead a healthy life up to the point the creator has designed, he or she is exercising the healing ministry without formally narrating the word healing. In the hospital the curing of the sickness can take place. But a healer works out the healing as an instrument in the hands of the Lord. He acknowledges



that Jesus is the Lord himself the healer even today. Healing is the duty of each human being as he or she preserves life and safeguards the peaceful life of other.

The silver Jubilee of the healing Ministry

From Peren (Nagaland), via Telpara (Nilambur) to Lububu(our first mission in Africa) my healing ministry was as a mere pastor. But the turning has taken place in Itaga (Arch Diocese of Tabora). The people were in queue so much so I had to be a full time healer of the Lord. The first case was of religious sister having diabetic and that too mainly with prayer that she was healed. My healing ministry till I left Itaga was mainly with water. It is after coming to Morogoro in 1997 I start using the herbs and its products as a healing compliment for the healing. Some people in India think that the herbalism is slow and not very practical in the modern society. But

based on my experience in this field for the last quarter century I should say that the herbalism with prayer is faster than any other therapies without any side effects. The prayer affects positively the n natural order and the creator through the healer exercise the ministry. Jesus made use of the water (Jn2:1ff) and the mud (Jn9:1ff) for the healing. Some time with words and by touch or by look he exercise the ministry. Last decade we had the optical ministry in collaboration with the Rotarians of Germany.

So called sicknesses are only the symptoms

Mainly through the cough or fever body eliminates the toxic elements. The so called allergies are the sign that the body can anymore tolerate the toxic elements. In the hospital the admitted patients or the patients of the OP (out Patients) the medicines given are almost same except the fact more nursing care



are given to the admitted ones. When a car or a computer gets stuck up or alarms are given, we consult the manual or a mechanic. In the case of the sickness we should refer to the creator or the Scripture. The proper use of natural elements like water, mud, light and air are used for the faster healing. The correct choice of the food and drinks with proper fasting can bring out the healing still faster.

Only God can heal

Unless the creator sustains us we cannot survive on earth. God heals

us in different ways and his ways are marvelous. Many healers have come out with faith and prayer for the healing actions of the Lord in a tangible way more than ever today the healing ministry is needed in the world.

So many thousands of people belong to different tribes and different age groups have benefitted from the healing ministry in East Africa. I thank the good Lord for making me an instrument to bring out his healing touch. May the good Lord bless all the clients and collaborators.



Glimpse at FOSTER

Fransalian Organization for Social Transformation, Education and Renewal



SFS CHILDREN'S HOME

- Began in the year 2002
- We care for the children in need by providing for their basic needs and education so that they may become model citizens of tomorrow
- Total number of students: 68

SIMBA-CLAY

- Began in the Year 2007
- We facilitate the differently-abled to empower themselves and to become self-reliant.
- Beneficiaries: 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-borne diseases.
- Total number of students undergoing training for the year 2015 : 10

FRANSALIAN COMMUNICATIONS : MOROGORO – ARUSHA

- Fransalian Communications is the organ of the Fransalian Scholastics in Tanzania.
- Aimed at assisting in the integrated development of the youth in East Africa, especially cultural, social, spiritual, and psychological dimensions
- The mission of Fransalian Communications is to reach more young people in order to inculcate in them the values which would help us to create a future integrated generation.
- DIOCESES OF SERVICE: MOROGORO, ARUSHA and MOSHI.
- TARGET GROUPS: Primary, Secondary and University students





Let us ask for
the grace
not to tire
of asking
forgiveness,
because
He never
tires
of forgiving.

~Pope Francis

*Today Fransalians work in nine
countries in Africa*

- **Chad**
- **Kenya**
- **Zambia**
- **Uganda**
- **Namibia**
- **Tanzania**
- **Cameroon**
- **South Africa**
- **Mozambique**



You Learn to Love by loving.



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**

| “God blesses
abundantly a
cheerful giver”

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. Soosai Raj Robert MSFS
Provincial Bursar
P O Box 12, Morogoro
Tanzania

Cell: +255 782 240 626

email: rajmsfs@gmail.com



**There is nothing small in
the service of God.**

-Saint Francis de Sales