

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

## Fransalians - Province of East Africa

Provincial House P. O. Box 12 Morogoro Tanzania

Tel: +255 787 766 555; +255 754 652 166 [www.msfs-eastafrica.com](http://www.msfs-eastafrica.com)

E-mail: [johnsonmsfs@gmail.com](mailto:johnsonmsfs@gmail.com); [provincialeastafricansfs@gmail.com](mailto:provincialeastafricansfs@gmail.com)



Provincial Circular MSFS - EAP- JK.34

September 1, 2015

Beloved Confreres,

The month of September is at hand! During this month, there are three very important celebrations or events that mark the core of our Spirituality: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Feast of the Mother of Compassion and day on which our Holy Founder Fr. Mermier was called to eternal glory. All these remind us of the "Way of God". *The Way of God* was nothing but the way of the cross and suffering. This was the way of God by choice! His Choice had a purpose. His purpose had a value. That value based purposeful choice bore fruit. That fruit is our salvation, our vocation, our consecration.

### Rootedness and Relatedness - The Holy Cross

The feast of the Holy Cross tells us vividly that for God, cross is the way and not the end. The very shape of the cross tells us that we are to relate to God and to the other. As consecrated persons this implies also being mediators. As priest and religious, I am not a mere "distributor" of goods of God, but I am a living link between God and God's people. I am to be rooted in God and therefore I can relate to the other. That is the cross of my life. The deeper I am rooted in God, the better and wider I can relate to the other. As ordinary human beings, if we stand and stretch our arms to either sides and remain so for a few minutes, it would be really demanding; our arms would feel the pain. This is the pain of being a living link between God and His people.

It is very easy to be flat on the ground and to stretch the hands! Today many religious prefer this position to other positions. Without relating to God we relate a lot to the other! Whatever may be the apostolate, this position is incorrect, insufficient and eventually harmful. In this position of comfort, we are no more people who communicate God, but we communicate ourselves. It is in this context the person projects the "I" ! When one is filled with "I" syndrome, one really becomes a CROSS! In the negative sense that life with such a person becomes difficult. There will be no more joy to live and to work with such persons. Community life becomes miserable; apostolate would be characterized by chaos! Instead of crucifying one's ego on the cross of Christ one will become a cross to crucify others on it; the cross is used as the flag post to hoist ones ego.

On the way of the cross, Jesus experienced the most humiliating and excruciating pains a human being can ever think of. However we must note that Jesus never reacted. He only responded. Is not our life sometimes a chain of reactions? In an event of reaction we the human beings are the sole agents and source of action. But in responding to a situation we invite the Spirit of God. Others gave to Jesus all things without being gentle. But Jesus received everything and responded by being gentle. Others turned to be the crosses that resulted in suffering for him. But Jesus bore the cross that resulted in their salvation.

## **Joy in Sorrows - Mother of Compassion**

If it were to be about making fuss, Mother Mary had all the reasons in the world to be the fussiest woman in the world. If it were to be about being depressed and miserable, Mother Mary would have been to the maximum possible to be in a deplorable condition, for she had all the reasons to be so. But she chose to be different. What the Lord and the world gave her was one thing. But what she decided to give to the world was different. Mary chose; she responded and did not react.

My dear Confreres, to choose means to decide our destiny. Of all the blessings God has given to us one of the most important gifts is the power and possibility of choice. Our choices today determine our tomorrow. We win or lose by the way we choose. In our lives till now, there may have been many times when others have succeeded in violating our free will but the one power they can never have is how we choose to respond to this violation. However, exercising the free will negatively today can mean a life time of regret. Right choices may cause pain and suffering today. But they would bring you blessedness (beatitudes). Generations after generations, Mary is called Blessed - for the choice she made. Mary had no choice as to what should or could happen in her life. But she had the choice as to how to respond to what happened to her life.

There is no mission station or institution that can offer us only what we want and all that we want. There can never be a fellow confrere, religious superior or companion or collaborator, staff who would perfectly fit into my frames! That is the gift of life - with infinite variety - God has given to us. In what God gives to us we have no choice. But in what we give to God, we have the choice. Even our vocation is his gift. (You did not chose me but I chose you. Jn. 15:16) In all that happens to us, there are "offers", "opportunities", "blessings" and "challenges". Despite her sorrows, today Mary is blessed because of her choice.

There are people who are struck by sorrows. One time bitter experience in life becomes the whole of their lives. Their wounds are never healed for they want to expose it all the time and win sympathy. God can never turn our sorrows into joy, unless we ourselves make a choice for that. May the Mother of sorrows - inspire us to be persons of blessedness and blessing.

### **Fr. Joseph Kunnappilly MSFS**

The health condition of dear confrere Fr. Joseph Kunnappilly is a great concern for us. In the given situation we are providing the best in our capacity and possibility. Since August 1, he is admitted at Lissa Hospital, Thiruvampady, Kozhikode, Kerala, India. It is a private hospital run by Catholics. This is 5 kms from his home town. One of the reasons for the selection of his hospital is that there is now facility of Dialysis under the pain and palliative care. He needs to undergo dialysis every alternative day. Three weeks ago his condition was so bad that he could not even sit up on the bed on his own. Even talking was difficult. Memory was fading.

Since one week he has shown considerable improvement. But the situation is still unsteady. He has lost weight. The sugar level is almost all the time above 500 units. There is swelling on the face and the legs. At the back and on the heels the tissues have become very soft due to the friction on the bed as he is most of the time lying down. Doctors are trying to prevent the development of bed sores.

I met the doctor who is attending to him. According to him, we have our limitations. The dialysis process that was started 7 weeks ago is getting disrupted due to the blockage in the veins. At first the terminal was fixed on the veins on hands, then on the leg, neck, thigh and now on the hip. After a few sessions the movement of the blood would be slow and then the terminal has to be shifted. If the dialysis process can be continued regularly there is no worry. As he has the issues with his heart, another angioplasty may have to be done. But now his body is not able to cope with the effects of Anastasia.

As I was in India for one week, every day morning and evening I was spending time with him a few hours. All those 7 days, I could also take the Holy Communion to him. There is a lay person who attends to him throughout. His family people also take turn to attend to his needs. The previous day of my leaving India the condition of Fr. Joseph worsened very suddenly and was in ICU. He was also given the sacrament of anointing the sick. Now he is out of ICU and is in the room.

Fr. Joseph is greeting all of you. He says: " I can only pray for all the fathers and brothers and our congregation in Africa" .

Let us continue to remember Fr. Joseph in our prayers. Nothing is impossible for God. Let us submit him to the Holy Will of God.

### **Annual retreats 2015**

By the Grace of God and with the co-operation of all concerned, the two sessions of the annual retreats were conducted well in Tororo, Uganda and in Lushoto, Tanzania. I thank each of you dear confrere for the cooperation and the good will, bearing with all the troubles of long journeys and making the retreats well as part of our community exercise. We also thank the Benedictine Monastery in Tororo and the Retreat Centre of Precious Blood Sisters in Kifungilo, Lushoto for providing us with facilities and making our stay good and pleasant. Our sincere thanks go to Rev. Fr. George Mathew CSSR and Fr. Devasia Manalel MSFS for guiding us in our retreats.

My dear Confreres, if you have anything to share by way of appreciation, comments, concerns or suggestions regarding the retreat, you are welcome to share with me: write to provincialeastafricansfs@gmail.com

### **Hearty Welcome to Rev. Fr. Raparthi Prasad**

Rev. Fr. Raparthi Prasad of the Archdiocese of Visakhapatnam, India has volunteered to work with us MSFS in East Africa as an Associate Member. He was born in the year 1977 and was ordained priest in the year 2008. He has worked in India in various capacities as Parish Priest, Teacher and till recently as the Secretary to the Archbishop. As he shared with me, it was his great desire to work in a mission land. With the due consent of the Archbishop of Visakhapatnam and the Provincial Council, with a clearly drawn contact between the MSFS EA and the Archdiocese of Visakhapatnam Fr. Prasad is accepted as our Associate Member for a period of two years starting from August 1, 2015. **We extend to Fr. Prasad a very warm Welcome.**

Fr. Prasad is appointed to the MSFS Community of Mkuza as the Assistant Parish Priest. We say *Karibu sana! Kazi njema!* We also thank His Grace Prakash Mallavarpu for allowing Fr. Prasad to have this mission exposure in Africa.

Contact of Fr. Prasad: +255 684 673 349 Email. frpvprasad@gmail.com

### **Hearty Welcome to Scholastics from India to LCI, Arusha**

Three MSFS scholastics of the South West India Province have opted for the Africa Mission and the Provincial Administration has decided to send them to Lumen Christi Institute for their Philosophy Formation. It is indeed a daring step and we appreciate it. On behalf of LCI and on behalf of the African Mission we extend to Bro. Antony Keyzakhottam MSFS, Bro. Robin Karumathy MSFS and to Bro. Vinu Ponnor MSFS. We wish them a good time of learning and formation at LCI.

#### Contacts:

|                           |                               |                       |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bro. Antony Keyzakhottam; | powergracetony@gmail.com      | Cell +255 683 629 723 |
| Bro. Robin Karumathy;     | robinjoykarumathy96@gmail.com | Cell +255 683 629 344 |
| Bro. Vinu Ponnor;         | vinuvarghese077@gmail.com     | Cell +255 683 629 801 |

### **Salesian seminar for the scholastics**

From September 14 to 18 our Scholastics at Fransalian House Kola will have five days of intense seminar on Salesian Spirituality. It will be followed by the annual retreat from September 20 evening till September 25 evening. Both the seminar and the retreat would be animated by Rev. Fr. Devasia Manalel MSFS. We wish them an enriching time. We thank Fr. Devasia for accepting our request for this seminar and retreat.

### **Message from Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoaz MSFS**

On the occasion of the Meeting of the Major Superiors of Western Provinces, USA, GAH and General Curia held in May in France, Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz had addressed the members gathered. His message was so inspiring and challenging that Rev. Fr. Superior General has instructed the Provincials to make the message available to all the confreres. I would be sending that message very soon to each one of you. Please read and imbibe spirit of that message.

### **Prayers requested**

- **Fr. John Bosco Khakha MSFS**, 53 years old, of North-East India Province died of cardiac arrest on July 9, 2015 at Udalguri, Assam, India.
- **Rev. Fr. Ladir João Brondani MSFS** 48 years old, of Brazil Province, died on August 1, 2015, in Brazil.
- **Fr. Baptist D'Souza MSFS**, 53 years old, of Pune Province died on August 19, 2015 in Pune, India.
- **Mr. Muthu Samy**, the beloved father of Fr. Antonysamy Muthusamy, died on July 7, 2015 at the age of 82.
- **Mr. Antony Poikunnel**, the beloved father of Fr. Joseph Poikunnel died of Cancer on July 18, 2015 at the age of 65.
- **Rev. Sr. Bridgit Mampally CMC**, died on July 27 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania at the age of 75.

*May they Rest in PEACE!*

Kindly offer the suffrages for the departed confreres as required of our Rule of Life.

### **Our Homage to late Sr. Brigit Mampally CMC**

Sr. Brigit CMC who was called to eternal life on July 27, 2015 was very closely associated with us. As she was residing in Kurasini, Dar es Salaam, she was ever ready to assist us - and all the congregations - with the matters of immigration/visa. Ever ready to work joyfully, she served the mission with a cheerful heart. The documents of most of us have gone through her hands at one time or other. With deep sense of gratitude let us remember her and the entire CMC family and pray for them.

### **The new House for the General Administration in India**

Through the Circular of the Superior General the news about the New General Secretariat House in Hyderabad has reached you already. Our sincere congratulations to the General team for this new step.

Below is the postal address of the same:

MSFS HOUSE  
H.No. 19-29, PLOT 266  
STREET NO. 15  
GOUTHAM NAGAR, MALKAJGIRI  
HYDERABAD 500 047  
TELANGANA. INDIA

### **MSAF Meeting - 2015**

The 12th annual meeting of MSAF (Mission Superiors Africa Forum) was held on June 29, 30, 2015 at the Holy Cross Retreat Centre in Cape Town, South Africa. All the five units of MSAF were represented by the respective superiors. It was a beautiful occasion of coming together sharing our news and views and to plan for the future expansion. Many common issues were discussed. Rev. Fr. Thumma Mariadas MSFS the Asst Superior General also addressed the meeting through the inspiring message he had sent. We express our sincere thanks to Fr. Babychan Arackathara MSFS and the confreres in Cape Town for hosting the meeting very well.

### **Pilgrimage to Holy Land**

**Fr. Mathew Chavely and Fr. Sunny Vettickal** had the opportunity to visit the Holy Land and to do the three weeks renewal programs from July 12 to August 1, 2015, at the Notre Dame Centre, Jerusalem. We thank God for this opportunity and those who made this experience possible.

### **Home Holidays**

Fr. Susai David from July 20 to September 20, 2015  
Fr. Sunny Mattathil from August 25 to October 25, 2015

We wish them a good time with their dear and near ones.

## **Regional Assembly Southern Africa Region**

Our Confreres in Southern African Region, together with the Provincial Superior of North East India, had their Regional Assembly in Cape Town, SA. from August 4 to 6, 2015. They reflected on the theme, *Fransalians in Southern Africa: Consecrated for the Mission of Compassion*. The Assembly also elected the Fr. Job Karikkampally MSFS and Fr. Thomas Vanderkunnel MSFS as the Councillors and Fr Lukose Perumannikala MSFS as the Regional Bursar. Our sincere Congrats to the new team and the entire mission of SA Region.

## **Provincial Congress- Visakhapatnam Province**

The Provincial Congress of the Vizag Province will be held from September 23 to 26, 2015. They have chosen the theme: *MSFS of VIZAG Province: To be Witnesses as Praying and Fraternal Communities in the Mission of Faith Renewal*. Let us pray for the blessings of God up on them and the entire congregation. Being our Mother Province - we have a special obligation to pray for them. We wish Rev. Fr. Chinnppa Reddy and the all the participants in the Congress, all the blessings of God.

## **Welcome to Bro. Mutume Ventino Peter MSFS**

The Southern African Region has decided to send Bro. Ventino to do the Theology at JUCO. So Bro. Ventino will be a member of the Fransalian Community Kola, Morogoro. We extend to him a warm welcome to Morogoro and to East Africa and wish him all the best in his further studies and formation.

## **Fr. Varghese Chettupuzhakaran MSFS - Our Thanks and Appreciation**

Rev. Fr. Varghese Chettupuzhakaran MSFS rendered service to the General Administration as the Superior of VDM Community in Rome for two consecutive terms. He has placed his services at the benefit of the whole Congregation through the Generalate from June 2009 till June 2015. He was also instrumental in facilitating the study matters of our confreres who are students in Rome. On behalf of the entire Province of East Africa, I thank Fr. Varghese for his commendable service rendered. We wish him the blessings of God wherever he is sent.

## **Joy of the Gospel - 2016**

Fransalian Liturgical Calendar with daily readings and reflections are ready for the year 2016. The Biblical Diary titled Joy of the Gospel was initiated last year and it was well appreciated and accepted. Our thanks and appreciation to Fr. Benny Koottanal MSFS and his team at IIS for this commendable work. For the Province of East Africa we have ordered 1000 (One thousand ) copies. I earnestly request each one of you to make every effort to make the Joy of the Gospel reach everywhere. The price of each copy can be finalized only after the consignment reaches and the clearance is done. Let us pray that everything will go smooth.

## **Hija Takatifu Lububu - Celebrating 25 Years**

The Holy Pilgrimage Lububu of this year 2015 - to take place on September 12, will mark the 25th anniversary of the Hija (Pilgrimage to the Salvation Hill) in Lububu. I am sure you have received the invitation and the requests for prayers and special intentions to be



prayed for. The pilgrimage is preceded by Novena. The pilgrimage is conducted in honour of the exaltation of the Holy Cross. On September 13, there is also the celebration of the Parish Feast of Our Lady of Grace Parish Lububu, Tabora. Let us pray for all the pilgrims and all the participants in the Hija.

### **Hija in Kategille, Itaga**

The traditional Holy pilgrimage in honour of Our Lady at Kategille took place on August 16, 2015, in a very colourful manner. The Hija was preceded by novena for nine days, with Holy Mass, special prayers and the sacrament of reconciliation. On the day of Hija there was Solemn Mass officiated by Fr. Innocent Ngowi MSFS the parish priest. The Mass and the procession were attended by over 1200 faithful. People from neighbouring parishes and dioceses together with their priests came for the Hija. Let us thank God for His blessings. Congratulations to our confreres, sisters and all the faithful of Itaga Parish for this graceful event.

### **Mkuza Parish - A year dedicated to the Eucharistic Lord in Family**

The year 2014-2015 was a year of blessings from the Lord for the entire parish of St. Francis de Sales, Mkuza, Tanzania.

It all started in the month of October 2014 and culminated in June 2015 with the grand celebration of the CORPUS CHRISTI. As a brainchild of Rev. Fr. Mathew Chavely the former parish priest of Mkuza parish the programme of Eucharistic procession and blessing of the Eucharistic Lord, made the faithful of the parish more united, rejuvenated in faith and devotion to the Eucharistic Lord.

The day with the Eucharistic Lord would start with the arrival of the Eucharistic Lord in the houses of the faithful. The leaders had prepared the faithful already and arranged the whole programme in their SCC/ BCC according to the directives from the Parish. People would receive the Eucharistic Lord at the small walkway before their house. Then after singing the Hymn of the Holy Eucharist all would go to the house and the people of the family enter inside the house together with the priest carrying the Eucharistic Lord. Inside the house the family members are given chance for praying before the Eucharistic Lord, priests would meet the members and talk to them, confession, caring for the sick and finally the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Then the members would offer thanksgiving and the procession would proceed to the next family. The procedure would follow till the last house in the SCC/BCC and where the programme of the day is concluded with the Holy Mass and agape by evening.

The eight month programme of the Eucharistic year and the family was concluded with the Eucharistic convention in the month of June. The Convention was a great event in the life of the faithful of our parish. It lasted for 7 days and all these days there was adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 24 hours. People remained with the Lord and poured out their problems and difficulties, and many were touched by the Lord and received manifold blessings and graces. We were also graced by His Lordship Salutaris Melchior Libena, the President of the Liturgical committee of Tanzanian Episcopal Conference, Rev. Reginald Sipendi, a renowned charismatic preacher, Rev. Fr. Denis the Rector of St. Mary's Diocesan Junior Seminary and other priests and lay persons.

There were morning sessions of discourses on different topics such as Bible, Sacraments, Faith and its enemies, Word of God, Liturgy, etc., teaching on the Holy Eucharist, Confessions, Counselling sessions, Public Eucharistic adoration, Benediction, Healing services and ended with the Eucharistic Celebration .

Many people of catholic faith and other denominations from our parish and other places received very many graces from the Eucharistic Lord every day. The grace-filled year of the Holy Eucharist got over with the Solemn Mass on the Solemnity of the Corpus Christi Sunday in which 140 children received their First Communion and the Eucharist procession in the village which was attended by more than 4000 faithful. It was a joy to note that even the faithful of other denominations, faiths requested for the blessing of the Eucharistic Lord in their families.

As our Patron St. Francis de Sales teaches us, the devotion to the Eucharistic Lord is the centre of our Christian Life. Let us grow in this devotion by spending enough time in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord. Let us be united with Him for our sustenance as He is the SUN of our Spiritual Life.

***Reported by Fr. Pius Kochuparampil MSFS***

### **My Tentative Programs**

#### **September**

- 12 Pilgrimage in Lububu
- 13 Parish Feast in Lububu
- 14-15 Council Meeting - Mwakata
- 16-17 Visitation Mwakata, Kagongwa, Isaka


### **Concluding thoughts**

Beloved Confreres,

God's invitation today for us is to live a life of purpose. Let us believe that everything that God sends to us, in everything that happens to us as the permissive will of God, God provides us with the means and raw materials in order that we can live our life. Sorrows in our lives are not for the sake of sorrows; cross on ways are not burdens or blocks but they are part of the building materials for our future. As we celebrate the Feasts of Holy Cross and the Mother of Compassion, let us seek the grace to be joyful in our lives - no matter what the life offers us; no matter what God allows to happen in our lives. What matters is how we respond to God, ourselves, others and to the realities of life.

United in prayers,

Yours in the Eucharistic Lord,



Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS (Provincial MSFS East Africa)

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col 2:2-3