



## MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

### Fransalians - Province of East Africa

Provincial House P. O. Box 12 Morogoro Tanzania  
 Tel: +255 689 882 711; +255 624 027 880  
[www.msfs-eastafrica.com](http://www.msfs-eastafrica.com)  
 e-mail: [provincialeastafricamsfs@gmail.com](mailto:provincialeastafricamsfs@gmail.com)

Provincial Circular EAP – MT.07
Sep 30, 2018

**My dear Confreres,**

My dear Confreres!

I wish you all a very happy Founder's day! May the life and example of our beloved founder, Venerable Father Peter Marie Mermier continue to guide our Congregation and each one of us.



### COMMUNITY LIFE: THE LEGACY OF OUR FOUNDER

As we are preparing ourselves for the 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, we are asked to remind ourselves of the legacy of our beloved Founder, Venerable Father Peter Marie Mermier, particularly of his ardent desire to live in a community. Fr. Mermier was a priest of the Diocese of Annecy. He began preaching Parish Missions in 1821 together with Fr. Joseph Maria Favre, a diocesan priest of Chambery. Many diocesan priests joined them in this new endeavour of Mission preaching. Fr. Mermier longed to establish a religious community that will follow the ideals of St. Francis de Sales, especially those of charity. Fr. Mermier was convinced that religious life was indispensable to Mission work. He wrote; "The sincere and constant wish of the missionaries has always been to establish a close unity among themselves and to form a Congregation." Fr. Mermier and his companions were residing at the Major Seminary of Annecy and their presence was appreciated by everyone in the seminary. However, Fr. Mermier felt that they need a house of their own to live their religious and community life. He found a house in La Roche, where they celebrated Holy Eucharist together and prayed together the breviary. It is said that every day after supper they came together for recreation and there was a great deal of cheer and joyful laughter. They longed to come



back to their communities after Mission preaching and retreats in parishes. The community life was further strengthened when the first house at La Feuillette was established in 1837.

The Congregation was officially established in 1838 after years of their living together as a community. When they made their first profession on October 24<sup>th</sup> 1838, Fr. Mermier said: "I desired only one thing and I asked it of the Lord, that is, to be able to live as brothers in a religious community." He wrote in 1844: "What is more important is the spirit of the rule: self-renunciation, the sacrifice of our ease and facilities to become all to all, everywhere, always, in the least things; to be like the grain of wheat buried in the soil. Charity and gentleness towards our neighbour are the fruit of our love of God. Read frequently chapter 13 of the First Letter to the Corinthians." Fr. Adrian Duval writes that "for our Founder, missionary action and religious life are inseparable."

Fr. Mermier exhorted the confreres, as he was proceeding to Rome for getting the approval for the Congregation in the following words: "You will remain perfectly united at all times showing a warm and cordial regard for one another like brothers who love each other and possess the true zeal of Jesus Christ and St. Francis de Sales our glorious and illustrious patron and who wish to seek nothing else but the greater glory of God, the salvation of souls as well as their own salvation." As he was returning from Rome, he wrote: "I end my letter in asking you, dear Missionaries, to imitate the Holy Trinity, that all may be one – that they may be one as we are one: that is my prayer on this beautiful feast of the Holy Trinity."

Fr. Mermier goes on to speak of a Community, wherein the spirit of religion has to reign, where all the members are brothers, where all pursue the same goal and where all use the same means, where perfect harmony reigns: that they may be one. No doubt we are far from this perfection, but it is our duty to aspire for it and to work to attain it.

Fr Mermier wanted community life for two important reasons: first of all to have regularity in spiritual and fraternal life as a daily on-going formation for the missionaries who needed the space of the community to replenish their spirit and bodies after the intense days of conducting Missions in the parishes; to test the quality of their lives by living the challenges of the community and to ensure continuity in carrying on the renewal of faith through parish mission preaching which would not be possible through a gathering of missionaries that are scattered. There is an urgency now to ensure that these purposes of a local community are continuously strengthened so that our communities become power houses for the work of missions. (The above extracts are from Monsieur Mermier by A. Duval).



The 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter invites us to go back to our basics, particularly to live our consecrated life in the community. Community life is the legacy of our Founder and it is the wellspring of all our missionary endeavours. Our Charism is based on community life and it unfolds in our apostolates (Const. 7 and 22). The General Chapter is inviting us to understand that our vocation is basically a vocation to community life rooted in the Gospel. We can overcome the challenges of community life, when we are rooted in the Gospel values. Our beloved Superior General has made this year as the year of the Local Community to remind us that we need to live our religious life in and through our community. Therefore, let us critically examine our community life and live authentically as children of God for the mission of Christ.

## YEAR OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

We have been reflecting upon the theme of the Year of the Local Community - **Revitalising My Local Community: Space for Communion and Mission**. I would like to remind you all that we have decided to celebrate the Year of Local Community in the following manner:

- Monthly recollections based on the theme of the Year of Local Community.
- Daily half an hour of adoration.
- Minimum half an hour of personal prayer.
- Conscientious efforts to practice Salesian virtues particularly gentleness, cheerful availability and hospitality.
- Regular reading of our Constitutions and General Directory in common.
- Regular reading of Salesian literature, particularly books on the Little Virtues.
- Monthly Community meeting and submission of monthly financial statements.
- Avoid the use of mobile phones during common meals and common recreation.
- Conclusion of the year with a Holy Mass in every Apostolic community presided over by Fr. Provincial or one of the Councillors (December 2018 – January 2019).

Let us continue to seek God's Grace that we may consciously revitalize our local communities by creating space for communion and fellowship to witness Christ through ministry and community life.

## FOUNDATION DAY

October 24<sup>th</sup> is the Foundation day of our Congregation. I request every local community to have at least half a day of prayer and recollection based on the first Reflection Paper for General Chapter XX, and also to make devotional renewal of our vows.

## ACTION PLAN OF THE 8TH PROVINCIAL CONGRESS

It is already one year since we had our Provincial Congress. I request every community to make an evaluation of the Action Plan in the community meetings and send to me a report.

## ANIMATION PROGRAMME FOR SUPERIORS

There will be an animation programme for Superiors on December 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. It will be guided by Fr. Philip Thomas MSFS. The Superiors' Forum meeting will be held on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018. I kindly request all the superiors to take note of the dates and to attend the animation programme and forum meeting without fail.

## STEWARDSHIP FORUM MEETING

Stewardship Forum meeting will be held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2018. The bursars are requested to present the budget for 2019 on 14<sup>th</sup> of November. There will be also training for Quickbook accounting programme on 15<sup>th</sup> of November.

## DELEGATES OF GENERAL CHAPTER

The following confreres are elected as the delegates of East Africa Province for the 20<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, which will take place from February 1<sup>st</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Guwahati, India.

1. Fr. Panthalanickal James

2. Fr. Kallidukil Johnson

The following confreres are the substitute-delegates:

1. Fr. Kochalumchuvattil Thomas

2. Fr. Thekkekara Jacob

Hearty congratulations to the elected delegates for the General Chapter XX.

## PRE-CAPITULAR COMMISSION (PCC)

Rev. Fr. Superior General has constituted Pre-Capitular Commission in preparation for the General Chapter XX. The members of the commission are Fr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara, Secretary General of the Chapter (SGC), Fr J. Stephan, Fr Suresh Babu, Fr Manoj Tirkey, Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial of Northeast India , and Fr George Parampukattil, General Counsellor.

## FRANSALIAN DUMILA MISSION SCHOOL



Fransalian Mission Pre-Primary School at Dumila was officially opened by Fr. Mathew Thazhahtukunnel MSFS, Provincial of East Africa Province and blessed by his Lordship Rt. Rev. Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro on 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2018, in the presence of a large number of priests, religious men and women and laity. A number of Government dignitaries graced the occasion. The school had a humble beginning in the parish hall with 70 children in 2017. Now a new school building is completed and there are 150

children studying in the school. We are indebted to *The George and Jane Shinnors Charitable Fund* and the *MSFS Franco-Swiss Province* for their generous contributions for building the



school. May God bless their generosity and support for our missions in Africa. I place on record the dedication and hard work of Fr. Joseph Poikunnel and Fr. Amal Neerolickal for completing the school construction in record time. Hearty Congratulations dear Fathers!

### LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE

The inauguration of the 9<sup>th</sup> academic year of Lumen Christi Institute took place on 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2018. It began with the Holy Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rev. Dr. Peter Kanyandago, the former Vice-Chancellor of Ugandan Martyrs University. The Inaugural function began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. Fr. Devasia Manalel welcomed the Chief Guest and the entire audience and Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil read out a brief report of the past academic year. Thereafter, Dr. Peter Kanyandago, enlightened the gathering with his *Lectio Brevis* on *The Importance of African Traditional Wisdom and Culture and the Cultural Elements in solving the Present Day Problems*. The vote of thanks proposed by Brother Luwanga Antony marked the end of the Inaugural function. There are 60 philosophy students, 20 participants in the Formators' course and 45 catechists in this academic year.

(Reported by Fr. Devasia Manalel)



### HIJA TAKATIFU



The holy pilgrimage (Hija Takatifu) to the Salvation Hill, at Lububu took place on 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2018. Rev. Fr. Faustin Rwuchungura, the Vicar General of Tabora Archdiocese was the main celebrant and he exhorted the faithful to follow the Gospel values in their life. Over 2000 pilgrims, including a large number of priests and religious participated in the procession from the parish church to the Salvation Hill.

(Reported by Fr. Francis Kallikatt)

### HEARTY WELCOME TO THE PIONEERS OF MALAWI MISSION

On 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2018, five priests and three scholastics accompanied by Fr. A. Santhiyagu and Fr. Kanikkai Nathan landed in Dar es Salaam in view of taking up the Mission in Karongwa Diocese of Malawi. A team of three priests will go to Malawi by the middle of October. The other three priests will remain in Tanzania until arrangements are made to take up another parish. Hearty welcome dear Fathers and Brothers to Tanzania!



## FR. JOSEPH KUNNAPALLY



I visited Fr. Joseph Kunnappally on 17th of September in Lizza Hospital, Thiruvambady, Kerala and we celebrated together the Holy Mass. He is having daily four Dialysis and has problems with his eyesight and memory. His movements are restricted to hospital premises as he is having problems with his legs. Despite his ailments, he is cheerful and has an optimistic outlook towards life. Let us continue to keep him in our prayers.

## TRANSFERS AND APPOINTMENTS

**Fr. Sebastian Palakudy** is transferred from Ngurdoto community and is appointed to Fransalian Scholasticate Community in Morogoro with effect from 25.11.2018.

**Fr. Martin Pendanath** is designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Kikunde (Masai Kusini) in the Archdiocese of Arusha. He will be attached to the MSFS Provincial House community, until the new mission is taken up officially in January 2019,.

**Fr. Devadoss Francis** is appointed as the Bursar of Mount St. Thomas Community in Chennai by the Provincial of South East India.

**Fr. J. Packia Sathish Kumar** from South East India Province is appointed to SFS Junior Seminary, Kihonda, with effect from 05.09.2018.

**Fr. Berin Charles** from South East India Province is appointed to Ibihwa Mission. He will reside in SFS VTC Community, Mwakata, until we take up the mission in November.

**Fr. Arockia Doss** from South East India Province is appointed to Ngurdoto Community with effect from 05.09.2019. He will also render his services in Lumen Christi Institute.

## INFORMATIONS

**Fr. Sony Kochumalayil**, presently rendering his pastoral services in the diocese of Würzburg, Germany, will be undergoing treatment in Kerala from September 2018 to May 2019. He is attached to SFS Bhavan Community, Peechanikad, India.

**Fr. Susai David** is appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Baunach in the diocese of Würzburg. His address is:

Pfarrgasse 4, 96182 Reckendorf , Germany, +49 1511 0630287

**Fr. Jomet Kollapallil** has reached Leuven, Belgium for studies. He resides with the Assumption Fathers. He is attached to the MSFS Community of East Africa Province in Europe. His address is:  
 Paters Assumptionisten VZW  
 Halvesraat 14, 3000 Leuven, Belgium, +32 465627338

### OBITUARY

**Mrs. Batthula Chinnathalli** (82), grandmother of Fr. R.V.P Prasad passed away on 21.08.2018 in Vizag, India. Please pray for the departed soul.

**Mrs. Mariamma John Manalel** (87), the mother of Fr. Devasia Manalel passed away On 22.09.2018 in Kerala, India.

**Ms. Ruth Butler** (84), benefactress of Fr. James Panthalany (during his priestly formation) passed away on 22.09.2018 in Switzerland.

**Mr. Joseph Makumbi**, uncle of Bro. Ssentamu Ruthitcal died on 27.09.2018 in Uganda.

May they rest in peace!

### MY TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date	Programme
Oct 06	Returning from India
Oct 08	LCI
Oct 09	Uganda
Oct 11	Morogoro
Oct 16 - 23	Malawi
Oct 24	Foundation Day, Morogoro
Oct 27	Diaconate, Morogoro
Oct 28 - 29	LCI
Nov 04	150 <sup>th</sup> Jubilee celebration of Evangelization in Tanzania
Nov 05	Mlolongo
Nov 07	Kalamira
Nov 08	Visitation Iyolwa School
Nov 09	Agururu
Nov 10 - 11	Visitation Osia Parish
Nov 15 – 16	Provincial Council Meeting, Morogoro
Nov 19 - 30	Classes at LCI

My dear Confreres,

I wish you all once again a happy Founders Day.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS  
Provincial - East Africa Province

Salesian Thought

“Charity is humility that is ascending, and humility is charity that descends.”