



Vol. 6 No. 1 Issue 11

Jan - Jun 2017

# BARAKA

ZA FRANSALIANS

Half yearly news bulletin of MSFS in East Africa



**Rev. Fr. Mathew Thomas Thazhathukunnel MSFS**

Our new Leader - The Provincial Elect of MSFS East Africa Province  
*(He will assume the office on July 15, 2017)*

*The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want! (Ps.23.1)*

# **Sisters of the Cross**

*in East Africa*

*Raised to the status of an Independent New Province*

## **East Africa Province**

**Congratulations!!!**

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross, generally known as Holy Cross Sisters of Chavanod, was founded in the year 1838 at Chavanod in France. Together with Mother Claudine Echernier as the Foundress, Fr. Peter Marie Mermier (also the Founder of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales) founded the Congregation with:

### **The Vision**

*"Make the Good God known and loved"*

*&*

### **The Mission**

*"Reveal to all the Merciful Love of the Father and the liberating power of the Paschal Mystery."*

Today the members are working in three continents in 15 countries. Holy Cross Sisters from India landed in East Africa - Tanzania in 1979. In 1996 the mission unit was raised to the status of a Delegation. On April 26, 2017 the Delegation was raised to the Status of a Province. The first Provincial of this new born Province Sr. Lucy Maliekal assumed the office on the same day. At present the Province head quarters is at Mttoni Kijichi, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Now the Province has 52 professed members of whom 40 are from East Africa and 12 are from India.



***We the MSFS East Africa Province congratulate to you dear Rev. Sr. Lucy Maliekal SC  
and all the Sisters of East Africa Province  
and the entire congregation on this new and very significant step in your presence  
and ministry in East Africa.***

May God go before you.  
May our holy founders intercede for you.  
With blessings !  
Fransaliens in East Africa

*May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. Numbers. 6:25*

The opportunity that God sends does not wake up him who sleeps. (Senegalese)

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# *Editorial*



Greetings of peace, love and joy and a warm welcome to our Eleventh issue of Baraka! It gives me immense pleasure to bring Baraka into your hands. This issue of Baraka would reach you at a time of transition in the administration in our Province leadership. On behalf of the entire editorial team I extend a hearty congratulation to Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, the Provincial Elect of the MSFS East Africa and wish him all the best for his leadership as the New Provincial Superior. It was a long dream to have a magazine for the Province and it was accomplished through the efforts of Fr. Johnson Michael Kallidukil MSFS, the outgoing Provincial of MSFS East Africa Province. Our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Fr. Johnson for his dedication to the cause of this magazine, whose support and encouragement helped Baraka to take shape and continue to express God's Baraka in our Apostolates.

St. John Paul II once said that we are Easter People and Alleluia is our song. We have just concluded the Easter Season and have been nourished spiritually to earnestly long for God in our life. But Most of us may tend to forget to count on the blessings of God when faced with difficulties and sufferings in life.

John went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As Mike the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation, telling stories as usual. They talked about politics, the state of the economy, their families and kids. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, Mike said: 'I don't believe that God exists.'

"Why do you say that?" asked John. "Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me John, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God who

would allow all of these things." John thought for a moment, but didn't respond because he didn't want to start an argument.



Mike finished his barbering job and John left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and uncombed. John turned back and entered the barbershop again and he said to Mike, the barber: "You know what? Barbers do not exist." "How can you say that?" asked the surprised barber. "I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!"

"No!" John exclaimed. "Barbers don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside."

"Ah, but barbers DO exist! That's what happens when people do not come to me."

"Exactly!" John affirmed. "That's the point! God, too, DOES exist!" "That's what happens when people do not go to Him and don't look to Him for help. That's why there's so much pain and suffering in the world."

Let all our spiritual preparations and celebrations not end with Pentecost, rather let us continue to celebrate the Love of God and be grateful to him for his blessings.

Wishing you all God's abundant Blessings on you!!!

Joyfully Yours,

**Fr. Clement Sudhakar MSFS**

## **Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS**

### **our beloved Provincial-Elect writes.....**

My dear Confreres and Friends of Fransalians,

*Greetings of peace and joy from Tanzania!*

The Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales are in East Africa for the last 29 years. Let us thank God for the blessings that we have received over the years to spread the Good News of Christ in East Africa and for the phenomenal growth of the Congregation in the African continent. It is the grace of God together with the dedication and hard work of our confreres that has led the Congregation to spread in ten countries in Africa. We are also indebted to our friends, benefactors and various organizations for the spiritual and material help that we have received to spread the Good News of Christ in Africa.

As we thank God for the blessings that we have received, let us also be aware of the challenges that we face in the contemporary world to spread the Good News of Christ. Pope Francis exhorts religious to be "witnesses of communion, of joy and the Gospel, and go evermore to the peripheries to proclaim the Good News". Let us not to be lost as administrators and managers of parishes, institutions and schools; rather let us know the "smell of the sheep", as Pope Francis tells us in *Evangelium Gaudium*.

As Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, we are called to renew our missionary mandate individually and collectively. Our call is to enliven the Gospel in our personal and community life and to fill the hearts and lives of the people entrusted to our care with the joy of the Gospel. It demands from us greater generosity to be at the service of the people of God and to ward off anything that comes in

the way to fulfil our missionary mandate. Let us make ourselves available for the primary evangelization and renewal of faith in Africa. As the number of confreres is on the increase in East Africa, let us also look forward to be missionaries in other parts of Africa.

We are celebrating this year the 450th Birthday of our beloved patron St. Francis de Sales, the great missionary of Chablais. Let us renew our commitment "to study St. Francis de sales, imitate his virtues and use his methods of guiding people" in our missionary endeavour as Bishop Joseph Rey exhorted our first missionaries. Let us be guided by the missionary spirit and fervour of our beloved Founder, Servant of God Father Peter Mermier in all our undertakings in Africa.

My dear confreres let us renew and relive the missionary mandate and pastoral commitment entrusted to us by the Church as well as our Congregation in Africa.

I sincerely thank each one of you and the General Administration for placing your confidence in me to animate our beloved Province for the coming three years. Let us work together as one family for the greater glory of God in Africa.

*Yours devotedly in Christ*

*Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS*



# MSFS to Bisil, Ngong Diocese Kenya

It is another milestone in the missionary presence of Province of East Africa to start a new mission in Kenya with the new MSFS Community House in Bisil in the Diocese of Ngong. The plot of land was procured as early as the year 2009 in view of the future expansion of the MSFS presence in Kenya. With the blessings of the Local Ordinary of the Catholic Diocese of Ngong, Most Rev. Bishop John Oballa Owaai, MSFS is now initiating a new pastoral, educational and social project in Bisil focussing on Massai community which constitutes 90% of the population of the area. There is a strong existing Catholic presence in Bisil under the parish of Kajiado. Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy MSFS, who is designated

to pilot the project is already residing in Kajiado Parish and is engaging himself in the pastoral works in the parish and is working hard on the project. It is our hope to start the project at the earliest.

The blessing of the plot and the blessing of the foundation stone for the priest house done on May 26. The foundation stone for building MSFS house was laid by Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel the Provincial Elect. Rev. Fr. Patrick Ngaai the Priest in charge of Kajiado Parish took the initiative for the meticulous arrangement of everything. Other MSFS Confreres, the people around the area, the Parish council and the leaders of St. Mathew Catholic Main Centre in Bisil were present to add colour to the occasion.

**The ceremony of blessing the plot and the foundation stone for the Project in Bissil, Kenya took place on May 26, 2017.**



Let us entrust this project to the hand of the Lord.

We wish Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy MSFS and all the confreres in Mlolongo - Katani in their united efforts to bring this project to fruition. We also gratefully remember our mission friends who prayerfully support us in our endeavours.

# Angelina Lyaka - Maria Goreti of Tororo, Uganda : Some reflections

Ms. Angelina Lyaka also known as the Maria Goreti of Tororo, Uganda gladly accepted Martyrdom in the year 1927, in order to preserve her chastity as the bride of Jesus. Her Memory is celebrated on May 6, every year in the parish of Agururu, Tororo, Uganda. Her grave is in the vicinity of the parish church of Agururu where MSFS serve.

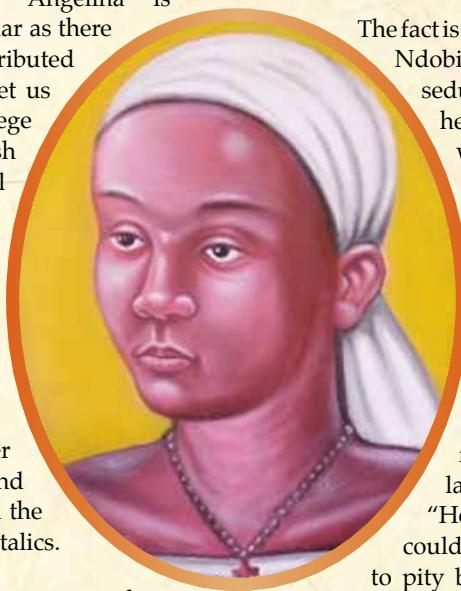
Devotion to Dada Angelina is becoming more popular as there are many blessings attributed to her intercession. Let us consider it as a privilege to serve this parish where her mortal remains are kept.

Testimony on her devotion to Christ

Here is a testimony from Fr. Willemen a Mill Hill Missionary who was her spiritual guide and pastor: Excerpt from the testimony is given in italics.

Every time I made my pastoral visit to Dabani, Angelina whose home was next to the mission was always among the first Christians to come for confessions in order to receive holy communion. It was during one of such visits about February 1927, that she came to me to share the sad story that Ndobira, a married man, had hatched a plan to force her marry him as a

second wife and had actually threatened to kill her if she dared to refuse him. However Angelina told me that she had refused him to his face. She was very sad and disturbed and wanted me to help her. I praised her and told her then and there, rather to stand on her Christian Faith. She asserted of her willingness to die rather than to commit what she termed a mortal sin by marrying Ndobira.



The fact is that later the evil minded Ndobira in an attempt to seduce Angelina wounded her with bush knife. She was rushed to the Tororo Hospital with the help of neighbours.

When I arrived in the hospital ward, I found Angelina, she tried to sit up in bed and painfully greeted me; "Baba" (which means father / Dad, in Swahili language) she called, "He has now killed me!" I could not help to be moved to pity but at the same time to joy of this little African girl who was now giving her life, rather than to commit sin. I thanked and praised God for giving this little girl courage to preserve Chastity and to give meaning to chaste life, to the society where there is no regard for chastity at all. She must have been in great pain, but she was struggling not to show it. She received the last sacraments and was quite

resigned to die. Before I left she said, "Baba, how can I pray here in this hospital? Please give me your rosary so that I can at least say the rosary till I die." The mother, who was sitting at her side, was rather revengeful, "You know all this," She said. "You must get this man punished." I tried to calm her. Angelina, however never uttered not a word of revenge.

Later I visited her again in the hospital and she gave me some ornamental beads asking me to remember her. She was also visited by the other Fathers and in one occasion in the morning of May 6, 1927, Fr. Moran gave her the last blessings after getting her in a very critical condition. Angelina expired the same day, a holy death. The very same day, she was laid to rest near the little catechumenate of Agururu (Now Agururu Parish, Archdiocese of Tororo) which was also used at that time for the Fathers to say mass for the Christians.

### The Matter that Matters

The life and conviction of Angelina must serve as true inspiration for us. She had made no public commitment to a life of chastity. Nor she had an obligation from a private vow which is known to us. Yet her baptismal commitment and her deep love for Jesus was strong enough to give her firm conviction to die rather than to commit sin. It is important to note that she made her

decision in freedom. Without a chaste heart one cannot enjoy freedom. Human sexuality is evidence of a great trust bestowed by God on a man and woman. It is a sacred domain reserved for God, for it is there the miracle of creating a new human being is accomplished. God has revealed to us that sexual intimacy is to occur only within the sacramental marital union. Thus here God guarantees his loving and sanctifying presence. Any sexual act committed outside the sacrament of marriage indicates our selfishness, destroys our sensitivity to, and aptitude for true love and brings us closer to our spiritual death and enslavement by the power of darkness.

What is the quality of our conviction and commitment concerning our vow of chastity? It is not our constitutional demands or legal obligations or social pressure that should motivate us to live a chaste life. What matters is our love for Jesus. If not for the love of Jesus any of the vows or any sacrifices that we make in the name of vows do not have meaning and merit.

Let us also pray through intercession of Dada Angelina that we are also inspired and strengthened to live our life of holiness even if it demands great sacrifice from our part. Let us join in spirit the numerous devotees and faithful, the bishops, priests and religious come to pray at the tomb of venerable Angelina Lyaka.



**Rev. Fr. Stephen Nadakuzhakal** - from Srikakulam Diocese, India has volunteered to work with MSFS East Africa Province as an Associate Member. He arrived in Tanzania on May 3, 2017. We extend a warm welcome to him. At present he is learning the Swahili language at LCI Arusha. He is rich in life experience for the past 75 years! He spent 47 years as a missionary priest in Andhra, India.

*Kila la heri Baba! Mungu akubariki, akulinde !*

# The Beauty of Angelina Lyaka Memorial Day and St. Bruno Sserunkuma Parish Day Celebrations on May 06, 2017 at Agururu Parish, Tororo Archdiocese, Uganda.

*The Lord is good!  
All the time.  
And all the time!  
The Lord is good and that is  
His nature, Wao!!!!*



*Mr. Dennis Zami Atibuni PhD*

Indeed WAO was the FEEL of the Angelina Lyaka Memorial Day Celebrations on May 06, 2017. Commendations by and large applauded the beauty of the day, stating as marvellous the organised setting of the tomb of the golden lady Angelina Lyaka, the site and flow of the Holy Mass. That the celebrations were successful was re-echoed several times by so many people of God who congratulated the material, moral, and spiritual generosity of our sponsors and benefactors through Fr. Sunny Mattathil – Parish Priest of St. Bruno Sserunkuma Catholic Parish Agururu, members of Agururu Parish Council, preparatory committee, and ad hoc committee. Equally

commendable was the generosity of the Catechists, Zonal Leaders, Basic Christian Community Leaders, and indeed Christians of the parish.

The occasion was graced by Msgr. Kevin Musisi – Vicar General of Tororo Archdiocese, Most Rev. Denis Lote Kiwanuka - Archbishop Emeritus of Tororo Archdiocese, Msgr. Omodoi Hippolytus, Several Reverend Fathers, Reverend Sisters, and Reverend Brothers among the ministers of God present. The cultural, political, and civil dignitaries present included His Highness Moses Stephen Owor – the Kwar Adhola and his cabinet ministers, Honourable Sarah Achieng Opindi – Cabinet Minister of Health of the Republic of Uganda, Mr. Martin - Commissioner of Refugees, the Mayor of Tororo Municipality, District Leaders of Tororo District, and civil servants of the district and the municipality. Pilgrims at the occasion came from all over Tororo Archdiocese and as far as Teso Sub-region, Bugisu Sub-region, Busia Sub-region, Kampala, Tanzania, and beyond. Hundreds walked on foot from Busia Deanery. The magnitude of the function



surprised the Guest of Honour – Msgr. Kevin Musisi who was attending and officiating in place of the Archbishop for the first time. He promised (amidst a jubilant applause) to take to the archbishop a clearer picture of the day.

The Angelina Lyaka Memorial celebration was adorned with a rich menu of activities before, during, and after the day. Notable among the activities preceding the day were the Rosary, Holy Mass and Angelina Lyaka Novena prayers which were animated by different parishes and priests for nine days. The following priests selflessly sacrificed to lead Holy Mass during the novena: Fr. Joby Maruthomalayil of St. Jude Osia Parish, Fr. Siljo Cherian of Iyolwa Parish, Fr. Stephen Mutisya of Osia Parish, Fr. Boniface Ojaka of OSB, Fr. Peter from Sacred Heart Parish, Fr. Paul Okoth of Namwaya Parish, Fr. Thomas Chozhithara of Iyolwa Parish, and Fr. Simon of Busia Parish. The three-day intensive retreat was animated by Fr. Paul Okoth and his team from Namwaya Parish, with Choir singers from Achilet Parish. The day's celebrations started with a wonderful procession including the choir from Achilet Parish, women's guild, Angelina Lyaka Youth dancers, the main celebrant, and the concelebrants, from the church vestry to the pavilion. In a joyous Holy Mass led by the Vicar General, God's message of prayer, forgiveness, and mercy (Luke 6: 27-38) which was the year's theme clearly came out in the readings and the homily.

The first reading from 2 Maccabees 6: 18-21, 24-31; second reading from Acts 7: 55-60; and Gospel from Mt. 10:16ff all demonstrated how a principled and faithful Christian should stand firm in the face of adversity, trials, and even torture to resist temptation and falling prey to evil ways. The Homily drove home the very essence of the day's celebration: the universal call to holiness. Citing the example of Pope John Paul II who canonised more saints during his papacy than the number of saints canonised by all popes preceding



him, the preacher exalted the congregation to "remember dear Christians, where you live and work, that is where you practise your religion" by listening to the Word and partaking worthily of the sacraments in daily life activities. He further cited personal sin (such as greed and avarice which do not require a second person when committing them) and social sin (in which a whole society or large section of it goes astray in thinking and acting) as two main factors that often distract Christians from following the universal call to holiness. The congregation was urged to resist personal sin and more courageously put a fight against social sin so as to de-immunise the society against the negative consequences of such acts as associating wealth with stealing, corruption, and undermining the effect of individual acts on the society by such statements as "Am I the only One who has stolen?" The Vicar General concluded the beautiful Homily by calling on all the faithful present to emulate the lives of the saints, especially Angelina Lyaka.

After Holy Communion, the Prayer for the Glorification of Angelina Lyaka was said, led by the Parish Priest who later introduced all the priests; followed by reading of a brief history of Angelina Lyaka written by Fr. Jacob Willemen (Mill Hill Missionary). The history was preceded by melodious singing of the Angelina Lyaka Anthem by the Angelina Lyaka Youth. A chilling wave of respect and honour for God's favours

through Angelina Lyaka was felt when Nurse Lillian gave a testimony of how medical practitioners had declared that her fallopian tubes were blocked, but through the intercession of Angelina Lyaka she was able to conceive and bear Mungufeni (meaning God-given) Nathaniel.

In a moving speech by Honourable Minister Sarah Achieng Opindi, she called on the congregation to stand courageously against immorality, child marriage, and teenage pregnancy, but instead promote the education of the girl child so as to become important persons in society. She warned young girls against seducing men into heinous act, and asked them to concentrate on their studies first. The minister further urged the victims of immoral advances from men to report to the responsible authorities for assistance. She also advised the congregation to stop from following false religions that do not emphasise moral values in their teachings.

Following the minister's speech, the Kwar Adhola was flowered by the women's guild amidst a cultural dance to deliver his living testimony. He testified that he was the oldest witness of Angelina Lyaka's favours because Fr. Jacob Willemen had him type so many manuscripts that were written about favours by several people, especially barren ladies who have produced children through the intercession of Angelina Lyaka. He reported that several of the manuscripts had babies named Angelina because Fr. Willemen had asked the women to name their babies so in case they believed the favours were through her intercession. The Kwar Adhola expressed deep faith and hope that at God's chosen time Angelina would receive the Honours of the Altars, and that more people would obtain favours through her. He exhorted the congregation to take Angelina's life as a model on which to embrace peace, unity, and morality in Tororo Archdiocese and beyond.

The parish priest of Busia Parish, in his turn, challenged the congregation to emulate the life of Angelina Lyaka and to pray for her canonisation. Msgr. Hippolytus, a born of Busia, revealed, upon invitation by the Busia Parish Priest, that he initiated research into the cause for the devotion to Angelina Lyaka at the time he was parish priest of Agururu Parish. He called upon the faithful to be fervent in prayer and pursue in unity the canonisation of Angelina Lyaka. He asked the congregation to report any miracles with scientific proof that are believed to be favours through Angelina Lyaka, through the right channels to the office of the Archbishop. He pledged his support to the committees charged responsible for the glorification of the golden lady.

Reiterating that he would report to the Archbishop the true picture of what he had experienced during the celebrations, the Vicar General gave the final blessing and the congregation for the agape meal. A day that saw concerted effort from all committee members came to pass with a success story that will linger in the minds of all the pilgrims present in attendance. The challenges faced during the organisation provided the responsible committees with the stepping stones for the next years' preparations.

Great thanks indeed to the managements and staffs of East FM that advertised the occasion free of charge, and Radio Maria Mbale that covered the event live. Let us continue to pray the novena to Angelina Lyaka so that she will be glorified to the Honours of the Altars in the church and that we may continue to enjoy God's favours through her intercession. The Lord is good! All the time. And all the time! The Lord is good and that is His nature, Wao!!!!

*By Dennis Zami Atibuni, PhD  
Secretary Adhoc Committee.*

# St. Francis de Sales College Iyolwa Uganda

An exceptional Fransalian Project in the East African Mission

## Introduction

The idea of St. Francis de Sales College in Iyolwa Mission in the Archdiocese of Tororo, Uganda which was conceived and executed by the Fransalians in Iyolwa Mission with the support of other confreres. This foundation stone for this noble institution was laid on 15th September 2015 and the first phase of the construction is completed. On 24th April it was commissioned by the Hon. John C. Muyingo, the Minister of Higher Education in Uganda and blessed by His Grace Emmanuel Obbo, the Archbishop of Obbo, in the presence of Very Rev. Fr. Johnson Michael MSFS (Provincial), His Highness Kwar Adhola (the King of the Adhola people), MPs, government leaders, more than 40 priests and religious; political stalwarts, parents and students. In his official speech, the minister declared that "this institution is the first class educational facility in eastern Uganda". He thanked the Fransalians for this great contribution to Uganda. The Archbishop congratulated



*Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS*

the missionaries of St. Francis de Sales and requested the people of the area to make use of this great facility to the maximum.

His Highness the Kwar Adhola (King of Adhola People) on the other hand thanked the missionaries for bringing light to Iyolwa and called upon his people to embrace the school as their own more so he pledged full support for the school. Rev. Fr. Dr. Johnson Michael MSFS, the Provincial Superior of the MSFS in East Africa thanked everyone for making this great dream of St. Francis de Sales College true.



## THE NATURE OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES COLLEGE

St. Francis de Sales College is a Higher Secondary School for boys and girls; with day and boarding sections. In fact this is first secondary school in Iyolwa Sub County. At present more than 85% of our students are boarding students. In order to concentrate more on the quality formation of the children, we hope to make it a complete boarding school in the near future. The School started with two sections, viz. S.1 and S.2, with 217 students, 14 teaching staff and 24 non teaching staff and 4 administrative staff.

*Students Enrolment 2017*

S.1	174	BOARDING			DAY		
S.2	43	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
G/ TOTAL	217	81	96	177	19	21	40



Servant of God Fr. Peter Mary Mermier who said "Education of the heart is the heart of education".

We believe from our experience that education of the heart, leads to total transformation. This education, we call it quality education, character formation and intellectual development; in other words integral human development. This is the objective of St. Francis de Sales College. These concepts are clearly expressed in the Latin dictum "*Totum Denuo Fingere*" - Total renewal of everything.

### b. THE VISION

"To heighten broad development and admiration of the national identity, ethic, personal integrity, decency of human rights, cultural and moral values, customs and traditions, and readiness to perform both mental and manual work and thus to transform the lives of the citizens to create a better world of peace and serenity."



### KEY PRINCIPLES

#### a. THE MOTTO

As any other Fransalian educational institution, the motto of St. Francis de Sales College is "*Education for Transformation*". The root of this motto is a quotation from the beloved founder of our congregation,

#### c. THE MISSION

"To emphasize on the integrated growth of the pupils namely, physical, psychological and intellectual and enable them to discover their personal and social rights, and live for truth, justice, religious harmony and peaceful co-existence of people of all walks of life."

#### **d. THE OBJECTIVES**

*To form persons aiming at:*

- **Physically fit...**

*Healthy mind in a healthy body*

- **Morally upright...**

*Character education and value education*

- **Emotionally balanced...**

*Personality development and inner growth*

- **Intellectually informed...**

*Excellence, competence and maturity*

- **Culturally integrated...**

*Being Ugandan and having a sense of national integration*

- **Socially aware...**

*Awareness of social and political conditions of Uganda and Africa; working for social justice; involvement in the liberation of the poor and oppressed*



#### **e. KEY ORIENTATIONS**

- SFS College offers faith-based education instructing and encouraging the students to give God the first and best place in life. Loving God with all our hearts, mind and

soul enable one to appreciate and value the other students and their achievements.

• SFS College focuses on the integral development of every student with sound health of mind and body, moral uprightness, good character, self esteem with love and respect for fellow beings and nature.

• SFS College concentrates on academic excellence by providing a conducive learning environment to develop oneself intellectually and spiritually by being a temple of knowledge.

• SFS College generates in every student a profound love for Nature, plants and animals. All these are created by God for the good of every one.

#### **AVAILABLE FACILITIES**

St. Francis de Sales College has a Computer Lab with 25 computers, three science laboratory rooms (one is complete), A Library stocked with good books and Four Class rooms which are all occupied. There Eight offices which are used by the HM, two Deputy HMs, Director of Studies, Bursar, Secretary, Director/Asst. Director and Counselor. There is a full- fledged Sick Bay with a resident nurse. There is also a canteen, and dining hall which is also used for prayers and Holy Mass.



There is separate boarding section for boys and girls for a capacity of 400 students. St. Francis de Sales College has a farm with 15 cows/bulls, 30 sheep/goats, 30 chickens/Turkies and guinifowls.



The school has also a bio toilet system with recycles the human wastes to produce manure. There is natural water purifying unit that offers 800 Ltrs of safe drinking water to the school every day. To add facilities for the next academic year, we have already started the construction of five additional class rooms with an office, broadening of the dining hall and construction of a separate natural purifying unit with the help of German Engineers.

### CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In our school, we embrace agriculture activities and sports to make our learners more active even after class activities. Social groups operating in the school



include; Legion of Mar, YCS, Debating Club, Wild Life. We have four sports houses in the school and they and they have been distinguished by colour include, FC. Bayern Munich (Red), Cranes (Yellow), Barcelona (Blue), Real Madrid (Green). Besides the normal daily curriculam the school offers a special English programme every Saturday which involves additional staff members from other countries.

### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES COLLEGE IS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ISBAT UNIVERSITY KAMPALA

Our ICT (Information and Computer Technology Department) is totally supported by ISBAT University. The trained staff of ISBAT takes classes for ICT. We are also exploring the possibilities to open this department for adult education purpose.

SFS College is also used by Busitema University to offer teaching practices to their Bachelor Students in Education. At present there are three Student-Teachers at the campus.

### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES COLLEGE IS A GREEN SCHOOL

St. Francis de Sales College responding to the call of Pope Francis works hard towards environmental conservation to protect mother earth- "our common home".

- 40% of the power supply is generated from solar panels.



- The school has a Bio toilet system which makes the earth fertile with recycled human wastes.
- The school has a natural water purifying system to provide our children and staff safe drinking water.
- The school harvests about 70,000 Liters of Rain water.
- The school has planted more than 1000 trees. Every student and every member of the staff has a tree in the campus.
- The school produces 30% our food from its organic gardens

The school celebrates June 5th (International Environmental Day) for dedicating to mother earth by learning more about the importance of Environmental Conservation. This year (2017) Mr. Felix Owor , the Sub County Chief will be the chief speaker of the day.

### **OUR COMMITMENT TOWARDS SOCIALLY VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

St. Francis de Sales College is committed to provide vulnerable children a dignified future. The school caters for the needs of about 30 socially marginalized children at present. Most of them are orphans. Besides this, through the FOSTER programme

we support around 70 children who are attending the primary school in Iyolwa. To Empower these less fortunate ones we follow a principle of inclusion and integration. It means that we do not intend to build an orphanage or a separate house for them. They should grow together with other children without experiencing any kind of discrimination.

### **Conclusion**

St. Francis de Sales College has made its great beginning. It is wonderful to see and admire this great beginning with colourful buildings, blooming children, talented teachers and a waking campus. The community takes pride in it and tries to participate in its growth. As the school caters for adolescent children who are font of too much action with great interest in trying out new things, longing for appreciation and attention with a passion for knowing more and experiencing a rapid internal and exterior growth, need to be supervised, guided, encouraged, counselled and controlled sometimes. This process involves a lot of challenges and calls for deep commitment from the part of school administration and staff. Only united and careful steps can bring out sweet fruits. We need to work hard with the help of the almighty!

*By Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS*

# My Impressions of St. Francis De Sales Mission Iyolwa.

My dear Fathers and Brothers,

Greetings from the Iyolwa Mission of St. Francis De Sales. This is Bro. Leo Cheruvil, a Patrician Brother, from India who joined your mission in Tororo to help out esp. in the field of education in St. Francis De Sales College. I am thankful to every one of you in general and Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the current Provincial and his confreres in the council for accepting me as an associate member of your Congregation.

I like to mention, here, that my younger brother, C.M. George, was in the batch of candidates with Mathew Chavelil when Fr. Alexander Kottam, was the Director, in Ettumanoor, Kerala. He had to discontinue along with a few others, later. Interestingly I am with you as an associate member for a few years, God willing.

I arrived at the Entebbe airport on 31st January and was received by Frs. Sunny, Joby and Siljo. By the fact that everything went off very well, from the time the process



*Bro. Leo F.S.P*

started to get me here, up to the day I got my work permit in hand, there is no doubt in my mind that God played a major role in its planning and execution.

This is the 1st time I am in a real mission field esp. in a remote village in East Africa and in a location familiarly known as Iyolwa in Tororo, Uganda. I am thoroughly enjoying my life and work here and trying my best to contribute my mite to the improvement of the mission. I know God has a plan for every one of us and that he makes use of even lowly people like me to accomplish his mission, in a place.



I very much admire and appreciate the enthusiasm, energy and the willingness of the priests here, Frs. Thomas, Sunny, Joby, Mutisia and Siljo, to travel that extra mile to take care of the people under their charge. Surely God will reward you for your selfless dedicated services.

The newly added facility viz. The St. Francis De Sales College and the improvements to the Parish Church building (to accommodate more faithful) have caused a huge drain on the finance - a lot more that needs to be done, still, to make them complete. That calls for whole hearted support and help from all quarters without which the developments will stall and finally stop. We travelled so far with faith and trust in God and surely miracles will continue to happen.

May God be generous to all the benefactors, friends and well-wishers of the missions.

I thank Fr. Thomas Chozhithara and Fr. Siljo Cherian for taking care of me so well. Fr. Thomas needs to be complimented specially for getting the Society registered with the Govt. and I am proud to be the first beneficiary to get a work permit through the Society. He took all the efforts to see that there were no hurdles along the way in obtaining the necessary permit. Thanks Fr. Tom.

"There are numerous strings in your lute, let me add my own among them"- Rabindranath Tagore.

*Sincerely Yours*

*Bro. Leo F.S.P*

*Bro. Leo is a Patrician Brother  
working as an associate member  
of MSFS East Africa Province*

## **Another House of God in the making.....**

*The present church*



*The new church under construction*



**St. Francis de Sales Catholic Mission Katani** is one of the out stations of St. Joseph Parish Mlolongo which was developed by the MSFS in Machakos Diocese, Kenya. In Katani the construction of the new church is in progress. Requesting your prayers that the work would be completed soon with the blessings of God through the cooperation of all the faithful and through the generosity of many people of good will.

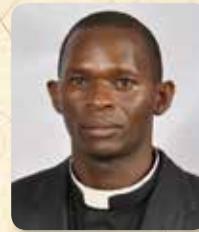


# World Environment Day

*Being connected to the nature  
we become connected to God!*

The World Environment Day is a global celebration of nature, a day to reconnect with the places that matter to all of us. The United Nations Organization being fully aware of the fact that the protection and improvement of environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of people and economic development throughout the world, designated 5th June as the World Environment Day. The celebration of this day began in 1974 with intention of providing the entire humanity with opportunity to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct in preserving the environment, our common home.

The theme for 2017, 'connecting people to nature' urges us to get outdoors and into nature to appreciate its beauty and to think about how we are part of the nature. Man is both creature and molder of his environment which gives him physical sustenance and affords him the opportunity for physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth. In the long and tortuous evolution of the human race on this planet, a stage has been reached when man has acquired the power to transform his environment in countless ways and on an unprecedented scale.



**Dn. Jonathan Muema MSFS**

To make Environment Day meaningful, human beings have to understand the environment as their common home. When we speak of the environment, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society in which we live. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are

part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and within social systems. Therefore,

protection of the environment is in fact an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it. There is an interaction between ecosystems and between the various spheres of social interaction, demonstrating that whole is greater than the part.



There are various ways of celebrating Environment Day. One of these ways is cleaning up the surrounding of one's locality. A vivid example is a day set apart every month for cleaning up the cities as introduced by Tanzanian President Hon. Dr. John Pombe Maghufuli. It has become a habit for everyone who is living in Tanzania to participate in this exercise of cleaning.

By removing unfriendly materials from the environment such as waste plastic papers, plastic bottles and other litters contributes towards protecting our environment. This exercise of cleaning the cities should become a global exercise so as to increase environmental human sustenance.

Another way of honoring the environment day is through conducting festival for growing generation. The festival may include poem that celebrate the diversity of life on earth; workshops, art installations, planting of trees and many others. The festival should aim at inspiring an ecologically responsible lifestyle. At the same time, people learn to appreciate local conservation initiatives and ecological programs that make mother earth a better place. Some of these programs may include performance, dancing, singing, writing, lecturing on nature, and nature meditation. These events may be created on Environment Day and shared through photo album.

In our context as Fransalians, we celebrate Environment Day in a special manner. Some of the communities they plant trees. For

instance, the Novitiate community at Kibaha planted 140 mango trees to mark the day. Other communities clean up the environment by removing the unfriendly materials in one's community. These are some of small

*In our Novitiate Community,  
each member planted 10 mango trees  
making a total of 140 plants.*

*Each plant is entrusted to personally to the  
members. As they would be leaving the novitiate  
they would hand it over to the coming batch.*

undertakings of the Environment Day but of significance in protecting the nature. Everyone is called to be an agent of nature safety by ensuring peaceful relationship with nature.

Let these beautiful words echo in the ears of every human being that God has written a precious book, whose letters are the multitudes of created things present in the universe. Nature is a constant source of wonder and awe. For instance, there is divine manifestation in the blaze of the sun and the fall of the night. We express ourselves in expressing the world and decipher the sacredness of the world. Therefore, the ultimate destiny of the universe is in the fullness of God. Being connected to the nature we become connected to God!



*Environmental friendly and eco -promotion activities - with sustainable and renewable energy concepts, were some of the priorities for the Fransalians in the East Africa in the recent times. On June 5 this year on the International Environment day, some special programs were organized in some of our centres in order to create awareness and to promote environmental care.*

# Kudos To The Fransalians!!!..

## An exceptional Fransalian Project in the East African Mission

It's all about my recent trip to Lumen Christi Institute (LCI) of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, in Tanzania. My voyage continues, as the nostalgic memories are being played out over and over again in the quietest chambers. Although I went there to offer some psychological courses, probably I have learned more in LCI than any other 3 weeks of my life.

### **LCI - where Light of Christ is present true to its name**

First of all it was a unique experience of great hospitality of the MSFS which is difficult to explain, if you haven't been there. I want to say that LCI is a rising star with its campus full of symbols of hope and prosperity. The staff, there are a hand full of Fransalians, from India, who are joyful witnesses of the Gospel, with integrity, passion and skill, being men for others all the time. I have heard that Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales are called to be builders of communities and sower of God's word. During my three weeks stay with them, I saw that a Christ centered community life is central to everything they did at LCI. There you will surely touch love and care in all its forms. I was moved by their attitude of deep



*Sr. Celine Jose UMI, Bangalore*

involvement in their mission of imparting an integral formation, to the students in the campus, both for the formators as well as the students of philosophy. The life witness of the staff members brings laurels to LCI.

### **Tanzanians : People of love and dignity**

The people of the country show a charismatic friendship that inspires all those who have the opportunity to experience it. In my interactions with the students of formators course, I learnt that Tanzanians are proud of their disciplined upbringing which values the ability to keep control of their temper and emotions from public expression. It's a mistake to consider them uncivilized and barbaric, for they treat people with love and dignity, and are rich in many other ways. Its



right to say that all Africans are musicians in the broadest sense for their singing is truly sublime. The liturgical music and singing was so uplifting.

### **Massai life style - a different style**

Every culture has its own wisdom. I felt very excited to be introduced to a proud nomadic warier tribe called Maasai who count their wealth in cattle and children. They have a harmonious co existence with their wildlife neighbors. The MSFS's rapport with them was obvious as a Maasai family happily welcomed us in to their home, the five of us, two from India and two from Germany, with Fr. Mathew Thomas Thazhathukunnel, our mission guide. We had to almost crawl to get in to the house. It's very interesting to see their unusual houses made with readily available materials and indigenous technology which is very impermanent in nature, designed for people on the move. They looked very colorful in their red, black, blue, checkered and striped cloth, together with handmade bead jewelry worn by both men and women pertaining to their age and social status.

### **Pristine Ngorongoro crater: Abode of wild life harmony**

A day out to Ngorongoro in the great East African rift valley in northern Tanzania's conservation area, which includes wondrous crater, will ever remain a life time memory. And the crater safari really offers unforgettable wildlife viewing opportunities within a vast and varied ecosystem. What a breathtaking and spectacular landscapes! It's a home to



*Sr. Celine Jose UMI was in LCI in May 2017 as a resource person for formators' program. Currently she is...*

the den set concentration of wild animals in their natural environment. The rangy wildebeests (gnu), well rounded friendly Zebras , lordly lions, buffalos, wild boars, skulking hyenas, magnificent tuskers, vast cast of smaller mammals and birds are a real feast to the soul. I felt immersed in a nature I have never encountered, breathing the wild yet deep inside feeling at home. My heartfelt gratitude and million thanks to Fr. Mathew Thomas for the commendable sense of hospitality, and initiative to arrange such an unforgettable day.

### **A word to LCI and to MSFS East Africa**

I can't thank you enough for the way you attended to every detail to ensure we had a great time! You are indeed true missionaries at heart with unparalleled dedication and simplicity of life, who would always go an extra mile to make someone feel worth. The saying of St. Francis de Sales, that nothing is so strong as gentleness...yes...I did experience the Fransalian gentleness, in you gentle men, in all what you did and

said to make me and all the other visitors in the campus feel like part of your family. You make LCI promote the Gospel value of hospitality, in today's world of closed borders and increased hostility to strangers. I thank also Fr. Johnson Kallidukil the Provincial & the editors of Baraka as I am given this opportunity to share it with you all.

Kudos to the Fransalians at LCI, to all the Fransalian Fathers and Brothers in East Africa. May God Bless your mission!

# Baton to the next hands.....

There is nothing permanent in this world, except changes! Nothing remains constant except change itself. Everything changes except the One who authored all things and designed all the changes. The Ultimate - the God who does not change. The Ultimate has neither the past nor the future. He is just there always! Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). For in him we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:28).

Looking into our lives we can realize that except the future everything is history, even what I have written just now! Moment after moment we sink into the history. There is nothing that we can do to prevent this reality from taking place. Then the logical question is: Where is the present? There seems to be hardly anything that we can call "present". The present is just a fraction of a moment - that is just in our hands... one fraction after another. What I do in this fraction, which is in my hand - in my power - at the very present moment, is what decides what kind of a history, I am going to leave behind. Can I do something in this fraction of a second / moment before that too becomes part of my past?

No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man. Heraclitus. Those of us who have done the Ancient Philosophy may remember this statement from Heraclitus. The life that IS - is already a WAS - before, I place a full stop at the end of this sentence. There are no identical moments in our lives. Every moment is different from one another. But some moments of the past we remember more than the other. It all depends how we handled those moments, before they just slipped into the history.

Six years ago, on July 15, 2011 when I



**Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS**

assumed the office as the Provincial Superior of the MSFS East Africa Province, one thing I was sure that one day another similar July 15 would come, when I can hand over the office to someone who is to assume the same office. And behold it is here. God willing, on July 15, 2017 Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS will assume the office as our new Major Superior. It is a blessing for us that in his person we have a new shepherd.

By the grace of God I have been carrying this baton of this office of servant leadership for the past six years. All that I need to say can be said in a short sentence: It was time of grace. As the Fransalian family of East Africa, we have journeyed together a long way. In 1987 we were just four priests (our pioneers) In 2011 we were 45 finally professed members. Today we are 68 finally professed of whom 56 are priests. God willing we have five more priestly ordinations in a few weeks. It is our journey together. This growth is manifested in all the aspects of our lives. Every one of us was an essential part of this journey.

It is my sacred duty to recall to mind, the wonderful ways in which God in his eternal plan sends persons who are instrumental in making us and the mission entrusted to us in the way it is today. Each of you has played certain definite role in my life - in the context of my life and mission as MSFS in East Africa.

I feel deeply connected to many in an invisible and inseparable cord of spiritual and emotional link. If God has planned these moments in our life, he has made preparations for it, involving so many persons and situations in the past. My beloved confreres and friends, this very moment in your life – moment of holding this BARAKA-11 in your hands would not have been in your lives if not for hundreds and thousands of people who have blessed you and me in their own manner. My sincere thanks to all dear confreres and friends who blessed our mission.

The Past cannot change! But we can change the past of our future ! This is possible provided we are ready to mark every moment at our hand - mark it with the indelible seal of genuine love! Then we will have a past of good memories. No matter what has taken place in our life, we can firmly believe that there is the mark of genuine love in every moment. This genuine love is nothing but the presence of God. When every moment of our life is marked by the graceful presence of God, there is nothing in our lives that would make us sad or desperate. There are failures in our life, but we are never defeated. There were painful moments in our lives, but we are not bitter about them. There were people who may have apparently hated and opposed us, but they are never our enemies. There are times we are blocked but we are never stuck, for the Lord is with us. With St. Paul we too can confidently say: We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We do not know what to do, but we do not give up. We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed. (2 Cor 4:8-9).

This stand is possible when every moment of our life is marked by genuine love. Let us imprint every moment with seal of love...

then there is nothing that can go wrong in our lives. In the eyes of the world you may be a failure, you may become a laughing stock to those around you, you may not have the eloquence to make others convinced, yet if there is the anointing of love for every moment that is with you, you are already in the golden book of God.

I cannot say with conviction that I have anointed every moment with genuine love. But one thing I can assure that my every moment I felt anointed by God though the instrumentality of you, my beloved confreres together with you my friends and well wishers and others who loved and cared. Even in those situations that seemed to be apparently hard and challenging, I see the holy hands of God at work. When God manages the operation, nothing goes wrong.

## The Past we can't change! But we can change the past of our future !

Yes, God goes with us in our journey as missionaries. Let us continue to trust him. If not for the blessings of God, his accompaniments and guidance, we would not have been where we are today. It is God who guides our destiny.

As I come to the end of my term of office as the provincial superior of the MSFS in the East African province, I would like to say with all my heart THANK YOU. I thank you for what has been, what is and what will be.

### *Remember:*

*Changes continue to take place....  
That is not in my power*

*Anoint every moment with love ....  
That is in my power.*

*May God bless each one of us.*

*Asanteni sana!  
Kwa heri!*

*Fr. Johnson*

# NOWHERE AT HOME EVERYWHERE

**Memoirs of my three years stay and study in the Indian subcontinent**

*Halo every one !!!*

*I am Bro. Fabian MSFS from Kenya.*

Travelling and learning new things had been my greatest desire from childhood. And unlike any other traveler, I wanted to be an active and effective traveler exploring new things different from the things at home. I wanted to meet new friends, at the same time not losing old ones. But the desire was stuffed up by the clouds of the unknown. I did not know the places I wanted to visit and the friends I wanted to meet, and the new things I wanted to see and learn. But still I had faith. Not hope, but faith strong enough to make my desire real. And behold, it is real!

Upon the completion of my Philosophy formation, in May 2013 at LCI, Arusha, Tanzania, I was informed by my superiors that I was to go to India for B.A studies at St Francis De Sales College, Electronic City, Bangalore. At that juncture, I felt as if I were in the dream land again. It seemed not to be real for me because I had never thought of going to India in my life time. Luckily I was not to go alone. I was to be accompanied



**Bro. Fabian Wasonga MSFS**

with my bosom friend and brother, Godwin Nuwamanya.

My journey to India from Nairobi will remain a history for it was my first time to go outside of Africa as well as to board the flight. At the Bangalore airport I was picked up by Fr. Maria Selvam MSFS from Suvidya College. On my way from the airport, I could peep through the window and admire the beautiful buildings along the highway with fascinating architectural designs. The well constructed roads captured my attention. These made me look back where I came from. Things were completely different. On the other hand, I was surprised by the presence of dogs and cows wandering freely in the street!!!. The incessant noise from the hooting vehicles driven by rough drivers made me uneasy. And I remember Fr. Maria saying; "Don't worry this is Bangalore. The only solution is to get used to it" After two hours drive, we reached Huskur Gate – Electronic City and there we were at SFS Hostel, popularly known as Boys home. It was lunch time and we received a casual welcome from Bro. Kantharaj, who was by then, the regent. After a short introduction, we headed to the refectory straight away, where we had the first Indian meals. **Soon we realized that there are mainly two types**



## **of dishes in India: Either pungent or very pungent!**

In the morning of the following day, we had a short meeting with Fr. Timson who was the director of the hostel as well as the vice principal of SFS college. He gave us a fatherly welcome accompanied by his handsome smile which seemed to radiate some hope. He drove us to the college to finish up the admission process as well as to settle the residential permit.

Since I was curious to know more about Bangalore, I came to learn that Bangalore is also known as Bengaluru (Kannada language). It is the capital of Karnataka state in the southern part of India. It was once known to be the garden city of India and pensioner's paradise. Bengaluru is a densely populated city. This is because it is a state where one could meet people from various nationalities of the world. And this makes it beautiful. It is one of the metropolitan cities known for its numerous industries, aerospace, telecommunication, defense organization and growing multi-national companies. I was indeed privileged to pursue my studies in this city.

The beginning days were really tough and challenging in many ways. Life in the hostel

was not easy and smooth as such. The food habits were strange for us. As time went by, the college life became enjoyable. And by the end of third semester, second year, I had managed to win numerous friends. Some of them were my college mates and some outsiders. Mr. Robens Chathamkottu cannot be excluded in this regard. These people played a wonderful role in my life. As many might have experienced, life in a foreign country can be difficult. There are new food staffs, unexpected customs, new languages, different ways of dressing and much more. Something that helps a great deal in such a situation is a friend who helps you make the adjustment by introducing you to a number of things. I had many friends and families who really assisted me. They will live to be appreciated and recalled by me. Meeting and befriending them had a positive impact in my life, especially in changing my attitude towards life in India. **It came to dawn on me that just as there is no good day or bad day, all days are the same, so do people. There is no good or bad person, the only bad thing is attitude which ought to be changed in order to live a worthy and a happy life. So I changed mine and savoured its fruits.**

The period I cherished most in India was the holiday seasons (typical of students!). This



period gave me numerous opportunities to travel to various parts of India ranging from South to North East India. I came to learn lots of things and gained rich information regarding the religion and culture of the people, lifestyle and technological development of the place. I was privileged to visit beautiful Kerala also known by its sobriquet as God's own country. I was captivated by its green nature and the presence of water bodies in most places. In Kerala mostly we stayed in the families of confreres especially those working in East Africa. We also spend good number of days with Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS at SFS Bhavan Angamaly the Mission House of East Africa Province. One of the inspiring things from Kerala was the family prayers in the evening.

Tamil Nadu was just exceptional. It is dry but I learnt that it is the chief producer of farm products in southern India. North East is another incredible part of India I could not imagine of. It is composed of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura. These made it to be popularly known as the Seven Sister States. The states are heavily forested and experiences plentiful rainfall. There are beautiful wildlife sanctuaries, Tea Estates and mighty rivers like Brahmaputra. I got the opportunity to visit some states there in, such as Assam, Nagaland and Meghalaya. I learnt that Assam state is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Asama' which means 'uneven,' owing to its Geology which is a mixture of rivers, valleys and hills. The state of Meghalaya has broken the record of having the highest rainfall as compared to the other states of the country. The wettest place in the world, Cherrapunji is located in Meghalaya.

My experiences in India made me rich. I realized that India is far much ahead of us ranging from the rich cultural heritage, technological development, social amenities,

scientific knowledge and other things. I was indeed impressed by their networking system, in terms of roads telecommunication and internet. The presence of well constructed roads from village to village, even the roads leading to the gardens and streams made me think outside the box. I came to learn that unlike at home, and in many African countries, internet for Indians is a necessity for life. And without it life is at a standstill. So far, India is incomparable with many African countries. In my opinion, India has 'stolen' the race in this regard. Along with negative things, there are lots of positive and good things I could speak of about India if I were not limited in my writing. Therefore, I would like to take this chance to convey my heartfelt gratitude to the people of good will.

With deep sense of gratitude to God, I would like to thank in a big way Rev. Fr. George Panthammackel MSFS, the Provincial Superior of North East Province and Rev. Fr. Johnson Michael MSFS , the Provincial Superior of East African province for the love, care and concern they showed us during our stay in India. Indeed they contributed largely to the richness of our life. Thanks to Rev. Fr. Babychan, the Regional Superior of Southern African region for journeying with us throughout our stay in India without ceasing. I thank all my confreres especially from East African province who did add joy to us whenever they could come to meet us and take us a round. I also gratefully remember the confreres and students in Boys Home, SFS College and Suvidya.

Lastly, I have to acknowledge the fact that I went to India poor, but I came back enriched, for I have gained a lot and have something to share. This is in connection to the expression; '**Nowhere at home, everywhere at home!**'

***Home is  
what you make.***

*Nine months in the womb of LCI*

## My Experience At Lumen Christi Institute

*Lumen Christi, Light of Christ, Mwanga wa Kristo*, and so it is with Lumen Christi Institute, Maji ya Chai, Arusha, Tanzania. The entire atmosphere of the Institute is a response to the motto 'Formation for Transformation.' Who would ever meet Christ and remain as one is? St. Paul encountered the light of Christ and the horrible persecutor of the Church was transformed into a great preacher to the Gentiles. I spent nine months at LCI for Course for Formators and community animators. Every program conducted on each single day whether in the community, classroom, inside or outside was so unique and has left remarkable imprint in my life. All in all, having lived 13 years of consecrated life I remain grateful that I had a chance to meet God personally during my stay at LCI.



*Sr. Silvia Rwiza SAL*

While I was informed that the Course was meant to prepare me to be a formator, God had further plan for my soul, 'to prepare my soul while on earth to meet my heavenly Spouse.' He first made me realize that I am far away from true love of God and yet He did not leave me there. Like a child who learns eating by sucking milk from the mother's breasts, in the same way He made



me drink from the abundance of His heart everyday through meditations of Scriptures, celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Community prayers and the silent moments in personal prayers. Where else can the soul find comfort than in His bosom? What a deep secret joy? What a thrill to drink from the never drying fountain? The experience of being quenched from the heart of God made me face unpleasant situations with a smile in my heart. Not only that, I even longed for such experiences so that I show my little love for Him and seek to give Him glory in every small event.

"They will all be taught by God," (Jn 6:45). Learning takes place whenever the mind is open and the heart is ready to make adjustments. I wish to pinpoint few things which may appear to be insignificant. However because of these so called insignificant things, I humbly and sincerely salute my Professors and all the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales in Africa for:

- The spirituality and the prayerful spirit pervading the campus of LCI
- Love of the Word of God revealed in breaking the Word at every Eucharistic celebration
- Genuine love for the mission and

evangelization (LCI staff members are not only intellectual professors but they are true pastors too.)

- Sincere love and deep respect for the people of Africa
- Readiness to embrace customs and practices of the place
- Deep sense of commitment and very high degree of the spirit of sacrifice
- Simplicity of life manifested by Servant Leadership style
- Genuine sense of stewardship in the management of the temporal affairs
- Community spirit and team work
- Brotherly and Sisterly love shared

"Bloom where you are planted." (SFS). May God grant the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales growth and many more heavenly angels to assist the Congregation. Let them be planted all over the world and bloom so that God's people may find shelter for their souls.

I sincerely thank God and thank my religious superiors for giving me the opportunity to participate in the nine months program at LCI. It was a time of grace!!!

May God bless Lumen Christi Institute and all the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales very specially in Africa.



*Sr. Silvia was a student at LCI for the Formators Course during the year 2016-2017.*

# THE JOY OF COMING TOGETHER

*The family feast of St. Joseph Catholic Parish Mlolongo*

It was indeed a day of jubilation for the St. Joseph Parish Family as we gathered together at the parish Church premises to celebrate the feast of our Patron Saint St. Joseph. Yes, on 30th May, 2017, the people of Mlolongo witnessed the strength and unity of Catholics in Mlolongo and neighbouring villages as we came together to praise and Thank God through the intercession of our Patron St. Joseph.

The feast which is on the 1st of May, was celebrated in anticipation on Sunday the 30th of April, to facilitate the participation of all the members of the family. This year although the time given for preparations was very short, due to the fact that we were busy with parish elections, the feast was well organized, due to the cooperation of all the Centres, small Christian Communities and various groups.

The highlights of the feast day were the long and colourful procession which started from the Foot Bridge almost two kilometres from the Church. The procession started with an opening prayer by Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, Provincial, East Africa Province. With the leaders from CMA taking care of the security and discipline, Youth carrying the Statues of Mother Mary and St. Joseph, the Choir with their melodious songs in praise of St. Joseph and Mother Mary, CWA leading recitation



**Mr. Robert Oloo**  
Parish Chairman  
*St. Joseph Parish Mlolongo, Kenya*

of Rosary, our PMC children with their liturgical dances, and the well-disciplined Police Band gave great witness value to the procession.

The centre point of the days celebration was the Most Holy Eucharist which was very solemnly celebrated, with Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS as main celebrant and concelebrated by many priests from Fransalian Family, dioceses of Nairobi and Machakos, other Congregations, and even from Tanzania. The Eucharistic Celebration was a unique experience with an enriching homily from the main celebrant, insisting on

the necessity of prayer, gratitude to God, and the spirit of unity and sharing. The Joy and Happiness and God experience of the Eucharistic celebration was enhanced by the melodious songs from our Choir and the





very devotional music from the Police band and liturgical dance from the PMC children, youth and CWA.

The holy Mass was followed by Entertainment and Giving of gifts to all the invited guests and to people who serve the church in different capacities. There was also distribution of food stuffs, cloth and stationeries, to the less fortunate members of the parish family, well organized by the Vincent De Paul and development committee of the parish.

After having spiritually nourished, we moved on to the physical nourishment. All the participants were given lunch to their satisfaction, well organized by our able ladies from CWA who exhibited real motherliness

in taking care of all the members including children, youth and older people.

In conclusion, I want to thank the Almighty God blessing us with this beautiful experience of coming together and helping us to manifest our spirit of sharing and unity. My Gratitude next goes to our Priest In Charge Fr. Jose and His Co-Priest Fr. Clement for their able guidance, constructive challenges and wise pieces of advice given, which contributed greatly to the success of the day. My immense gratitude also to all the Religious Sisters, leaders of Parish, Centres, Groups and Small Christian Communities. May God continue to bless us and help us to continue with the same spirit of faithfulness to God and the spirit of sharing and cooperation.



*St. Joseph, Pray for us.*

## Even a journey of thousand miles starts with a single step.....



Mother of Mercy Primary School in MSFS Mission of Our Lady of Compassion in Mji Mpya Parish, Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam.

It is a BIG stride trusting the guidance and providence of God. The school is already in function. Let us earnestly wish and pray that this project will be completed in the stipulated time.

Congratulations and prayerful good wishes to our confreres, religious sisters and the faithful of Mother of Compassion Parish Mji Mpya, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

# The Beginnings of Christianity in East Africa

(Part 8)

## Religious Wars in Buganda (1888-1892)

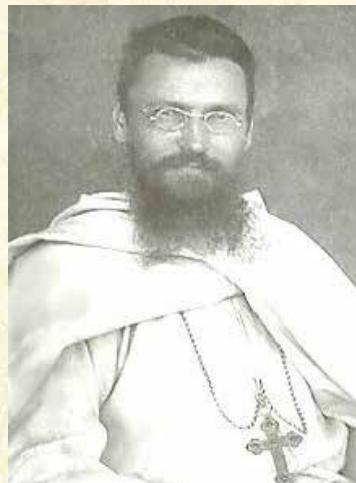
It was not hard for the foreigners (colonizers, missionaries or business people) to enter the territory of Uganda because the Ugandans were not hostile. The Ugandans are blessed with a welcoming disposition of what Archbishop Desmond Tutu has identified as Ubuntu or Obuntu Bulamu. "We Africans speak about a concept difficult to render in English. We speak of ubuntu or botho. (...) It has to do with what it means to be truly human, it refers to gentleness, to compassion, to hospitality, to openness to others, to vulnerability, to be available for others and to know that you are bound up with them in the bundle of life, for a person is only a person through other persons." Because of this cordial behaviour of the Buganda people, the three foreign religions (Catholicism, Anglicanism and Islam) could easily set their feet in Uganda. However unlike in other east African countries, Uganda had also to witness wars between the followers of the above mentioned religions immediately after the brutal massacre of the martyrs in the hands of Kabaka Mwanga II.

For Buganda the late 1880s and early 1890s saw three things happen. They included: the disintegration of the royal loyalty, the European imperialism, and the loss of political independence on the part of the Kingdom of Buganda. The years 1885-



Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS

1889 witnessed war and battles between Christians and Muslims. Meanwhile it should, here, be taken note of that in 1884 Chancellor Otto von Bismarck of Germany called for the notorious Berlin Conference. It is at this conference that European nations divided the African continent among themselves. Colonialism, as a system by which Europeans subjugated African peoples was formally inaugurated at the Berlin Conference. In 1890 after Christians in Buganda had vanquished the Muslim faction, Buganda was now in the hands of Christians. But the tragic heritage of the Reformation in Europe, which has been described in Africa, as a scandal, began to play its role. The Anglican missionaries being English by nationality and the Catholic ones being French by nationality occasioned an animosity.



### a. Emergence of "Bapere"

By 1887 Mwanga had begun to rely on the younger generation of Baganda leaders--

and this meant relying on many who were attracted to the new religions. He made two regiments in the court under two Christian commanders; the Protestant group was led by Apolo Kagwa and the Catholic group was led by Honorat Nyonyintono. Both groups had around thousand men with them. The Muslim party counted around eight hundred men, but they were more dangerous as they had possessed a lot of weapons from the Arabs. Backed by official favor, the leaders of the three religious groups, began to bring in large quantities of arms and to organize themselves into militarized "regiments"—the first time that Buganda had something resembling a standing army. These soldiers were nicknamed bapere and gained a great deal of notoriety for their high-handed attitudes, for rape and plunder. "It is one of the ironies of the Christian history of Uganda that the witness of the martyrs (strong in faith but weak and powerless politically and militarily) should have convinced the survivors that the future of Christianity depended on securing military and political power. Moreover these regiments attracted young men, fortune seekers and adventurers, who saw membership as the new avenue to progress, and who at first had little conception of Islam or Christianity."

#### **b. Muslim War**

Mwanga at first backed the Bapere as a way of countering the older generation of chiefs. But by 1888 he began to get scared that they were becoming too powerful. All of sudden, unexpectedly in September 1888, Mwanga took the support of the traditional chiefs to wipe away the increasingly unruly minorities from his land. The plan failed and the bapere provoked a coup, and in April 1888 Mwanga was overthrown by the united forces of the new religions. Mwanga fled and sought refuge with the White Fathers at Bukumbi, to the south of the lake. Mwanga was replaced by Mutesa's eldest son, Kiwewa. But things became worse for

the Christians, a few weeks later, when the Muslims opened fire against a Christian gathering and many missionaries were imprisoned and others were deported. They circumcised Kalema, and called him 'sheikh'; was made Kabaka. The Christians moved out of the city and gathered themselves in Ankole. The mission centres were plundered and churches were destroyed. The Islamic rule lasted two years. During this period the Christians collected arms and courage for a war with the Muslims, and the penitent Kabaka Mwanga approached the White Fathers for catechetical training. In 1890 Apolo Kagwa and Honorat Nyonyintono led the victorious Christian armies in Mengo, which reinstalled the Mwanga as the Kabaka once again.

#### **c. War between Catholics and Protestants**

Another turning point took place in the history of religions in Buganda between 1888 and 1892. The Christians and Protestants became two warring groups, which began to fight for political power. Both the groups were heavily armed and began to shoot at each other. More than religious war, it had many other implications. It was a war between the Bangereza and Bafranza, the "English" and the "French". Both the groups wanted to be the religion of Buganda, Catholics with the help of the Kabaka and Protestants with the help of England. After a long period of fatal fighting, most of the important leaders of both the groups died either on the battle field or because of age and sickness.

In 1892 a severe war took place in Mengo. Captain F.D. Lugard from England supported the Protestant group with more than 400 guns for self protection. The catholic group considered it as sign of declaring a new war. On Sunday 25 January 1892, the Catholic group stormed down from the hill of Mengo to confront their opponents; Lugard fired them with his machine gun and secured a victory of the Protestants. The



Catholics with their Kabaka withdrew to Buddu County, the Muslims also were given three small counties. Both Christian groups were not happy with the situation and they complained to the British government, which asked the consul-general in Zanzibar to make an enquiry in order to reach a peaceful settlement. The treaty was ratified in 1894 and the Catholics felt better as they were given three more counties. But that was not the end of the conflicts.

In 1893 measures were taken by the British government to establish a British Protectorate out of Buganda. A treaty to that effect was ratified the following year. From that time on the protectorate carried a transliterated name from Buganda to Uganda Protectorate. Thus the Kingdom of Buganda lost its political independence by becoming a subject of the British Empire. A humiliated Kabaka joined again with the Muslims. He was captured and deported to the Seychelles, where he died in 1903. His one year old son Daudi Chwa was proclaimed Kabaka, and as his mother was a protestant, he was brought up protestant.

The Ugandan Agreement of 1900 ended the whole trouble. According to this agreement, the number of counties were raised to 20; 11 were given to the Protestants, 8 were given to the Catholics and 1 to the Muslims. The office of the Katikkiro (Prime Minister) was given to the Protestants and the Chief Justice came from the Catholic side. This arrangements lasted till independence but Ugandan politics had lot to do with religions

till 1985, when President Museveni came to power.

#### *d. Emergence of a Strong Missionary Church*

In 1893 Bishop Hirth was the Bishop in charge of western Uganda and north western Tanganyika. He was loyal to Rome which said "a mission that can produce martyrs can produce priests". He ordered Father Streicher to open a seminary for training indigenous priests. But it was a very difficult task. He sent young people to Jerusalem for priestly formation. Fr. Streicher became Bishop of western Uganda in 1897 and he saw that his efforts bore fruit. In 1913 the first two priests were ordained. 1924 there were 17 priests in s Buganda. By the 1930s the white fathers were already handing over parishes systematically to the newly-trained African priests in Masaka diocese. The crowning of Bishop Streicher's work was the consecration of Bishop Kiwanuka for the diocese of Masaka in 1939. Not only was Kiwanuka the first African catholic bishop in modern times, but his consecration was in advance of the Anglican church which had had African clergy since 1896, almost 20 years before the Catholics, but up to this time no African bishop.

Unlike other two east African countries, Ugandan Church went through a hard time of turbulence and wars, which took the lives of many. There was strong resistance from the Muslims, Protestants and the followers of traditional religions. Unstable political conditions and wars could strengthen the faith of the people and they witnessed their faith even when they had to sacrifice their life for it. These exemplary life and death of the Ugandan Martyrs influenced not only the people of Uganda, but also the whole region. Today the Ugandan Church has grown out from a missionary church to a fast growing indigenous Church having 20 dioceses spread in 4 archdioceses, contributing remarkably to social development.

# Looking forward to the Major Events

## July to December 2017

Jul 2	Official opening of the St. Francis de Sales Parish in Kashishi, Tabora, Tanzania	Aug 12	Priestly Ordination Dn. Ssekalembe Gerald Mabiriizi MSFS, Cathedral Kampala, Uganda
Jul 9	The new batch of Novices to be initiated to the Canonical Novitiate in Kibaha, Tanzania	Sep 15	Mother of Compassion
Jul 10	First Profession, Kibaha, Tanzania	Sep 16	Hija / Pilgrimage in Lububu, Tabora, Tanzania
Jul 15	Installation of the new Provincial Rev. Fr. Mathew-Thazhathukunnel MSFS, in Morogoro, Tanzania	Sep 22-26	Provincial Congress MSFS EA at LCI Arusha, Tanzania
Jul 16-22	The Retreat for the Confreres in Dodoma, Tanzania	Sep 30	Founder's Day - Servant of God Fr. Peter Mermier
Jul 20	Priestly Ordination Dn. Jonathan Muema MSFS Machakose - Katoloni, Kenya	Oct 7	Hija / Pilgrimage in Kashishi, Tabora, Tanzania
Jul 22	Priestly Ordination Dn Amal Neerolickal MSFS, Muvattupuzha, India	Oct 9	Independence day Uganda
Jul 29	Priestly Ordination Dn. Lawrence Sebowa MSFS, Cathedral Lugazi Uganda	Oct 14	Nyerere Day Tanzania
Aug 5	Priestly Ordination Dn. Ibrahim Musajja MSFS, Cathedral Masaka, Uganda	Oct 24	MSFS Foundation Day
Aug 8	General Elections in Kenya	Nov 19	First World Day of the Poor
		Dec 9	Independence day Tanzania
		Dec 12	Independence day Kenya
		Dec 18	Memory of Fr. James Nedungatt MSFS
		Dec 21	Memory of Fr. Paul Samy MSFS
		Dec 25	Christmas
		Dec 31	Year end-Day of thanks giving

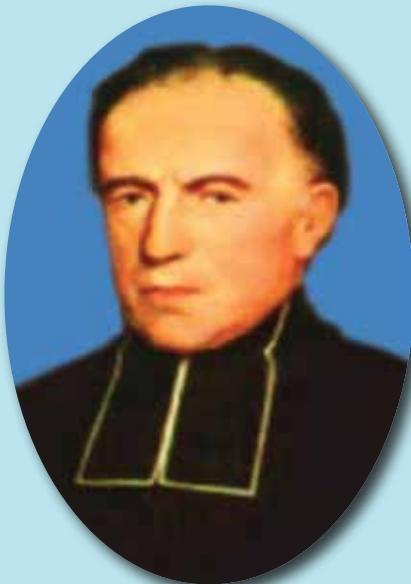


## PRAYER OF DEVOTION IN HONOR OF SERVANT OF GOD FR. PETER MARY MERMIER

God of Love, You care for us and You guide us in numerous ways. We thank You for inflaming the heart of Fr. Peter Mermier with an intense love for You and a zeal for the salvation of souls. You blessed him with a total trust in You and in humble surrender to Your holy Will.

It was your will that he should found the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, and with Mother Claudine Echernier, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, to spread your mercy and compassion, to all by witnessing to Your love and through their prophetic ministries. His life of holiness was his supreme act of glory to You.

Loving Father, while he was on earth, You blessed many through him, especially in the renewal of Christian faith and family through the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. Your raised him to the saintly state of Servant of God. Thereby You testify that he is Your highly favoured son for whom You refuse nothing. So we pray



that through his holy intercession, You bless us now with favour we request and pray for ... (silence)

We make this prayer through Christ Your Son who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever  
... AMEN



*450th Birth Anniversary of St. Francis de Sales*

St. Francis de Sales was born on August 21, 1567  
and this year on August 21, 2017 will be the  
450th anniversary of his birth.