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BARAKA

ZA FRANSALIANS

Half yearly news bulletin of MSFS in East Africa



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C O N T E N T S

Lumen Christi Institute	2
Editorial	4
Message from the Provincial	5
Congregational Meeting TMM	6
Dada Angelina Lyaka.....	8
On SFS Junior Seminary	10
News in Snaps Mlolongo	16
News in Snaps Chera	17
LCI Graduation.....	18
Diaconate	19
Positive Experiences in EA.....	20
Our New Priest	24
Sharing from a Mother.....	25
Beginning of Christianity in Africa	27
Empowerment of men	30
MSFS in Itaga - Appraisal	31
Blessing of convent Bukene.....	33
Invitation to join the MSFS.....	34
Act of generosity to the mission	35

From the Editor



Dear Readers of Baraka,

I am indeed very happy to reach you through this ninth edition of our Province Newsletter. We are in the second half of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy. We are called to seek the mercy of God and to receive his blessings. Our God is the most merciful God and most loving. As the most merciful, He forgives our sins and as the most loving, He Blesses us every day. Most of the time we consider only our problems and sufferings in life than the blessings we received. We are ready to spend the whole day only thinking about our problems and fail to recognize the blessings of God and be grateful to Him.



Once a four-year-old boy John went to the ice cream parlor and bought one of his favorite ice cream, and went on eating it on the way. In the opposite direction some boys were coming and they noticed John with the ice-cream. They were envious of him and they did not like John enjoy the ice-cream. No sooner they approached John, they hit him badly and they made sure that the ice-cream fell down in the mud.

The boy was very sad that his ice-cream had fallen down and he kept on crying. A woman seeing this incident from a distance, came to him and tried to console him. She told him not to worry about the fallen ice-cream and went on to say that he would be happy if he listened to her advice and followed it. Nodding his head, the boy agreed.

She then looked at the boy and said “ Forget for a moment that you should eat your ice-cream, and try to play with the fallen ice-cream. You can play by jumping on the ice-cream”. John began playing with the ice-cream by jumping on it. He was engrossed in it that he forgot that he had bought it for eating. This experience gave him the greatest pleasure. The cool ice-cream in touch with his feet, brought more pleasure than were he to eat it.

Let us leave our worries and problems behind and learn to count the numerous blessings of God in our lives. May you continue to experience the mercy of God and receive His blessings.

I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those contributed for this Edition of Baraka and for their support. I wish all those who would read this newsletter God’s blessings.

Seeking your Prayers and Blessings,

Fr. Clement Sudhakar MSFS

Message from the Provincial

Our esteemed readers of Baraka!

Before you read this message, I kindly request you to look at the child on the front cover page. Let us call her Neema. Obviously she is from a poor village background. The climatic condition is dry. The tropical sun is directly above her head. She wears no sun glasses or applies no sun cream. But behind the shades of the sun, there are rays of true joy gleaming through her eyes. There is joy on her face, in her heart. She has surely a welcoming attitude. She tells us: "There is a joy in me that the world cannot give."



Dear friends, Neema is not exposed to this world of WiFi connectivity and hai, hai relationships. She does not possess things what many other kids of her age possess, in the affluent societies. Today her world is limited to her home, her village, her school and the village church - a thatched shed where they come together to pray on Sundays. She may not have used a mobile any time, she has no face book friends, she never wore a Sunday Clad and she never gets monthly pocket money. Yet these limitations never put a limit to her joys and hopes.

The reason: God lives in her. Jesus said: "I am leaving you with a gift - peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give (Ref. Jn.14:27). God gives this precious gift to his beloved ones. It does not depend on what we possess or what our positions are. This true joy and peace depends on how much we are in God and how much of God is in us.

"For my people have abandoned me - the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all! " (Ref. Jer. 2: 13).

Every human being who abandons God - the true source of joy and seeks happiness in the things of the world is like the one who gathers water in the cracked cisterns. The world can offer us unlimited possibilities but only God can offer us unlimited joy. When God is the source of our joy it is unlimited for God has no limits.

May true joy fill your hearts!

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS
johnsonmsfs@gmail.com

Triennial Mandatory Meeting (TMM) 2016

Congregational Meeting held in Africa



The Triennial Mandatory Meeting (TMM) 2016 of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis di Sales was held at Lumen Christi Institute (LCI) Arusha, Tanzania from May 14 - 18, 2016 and the theme for this grace-filled event is 'Missionary Response to Human Cry for Mercy and Compassion'. Prior to this meeting there were the meetings of MSAF and LCI Staff. Fr. Dave Sullivan of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) inspired the participants through his keynote address that as Missionaries we are called to be like the Good Samaritan in the Gospel.

At the very outset of the meeting, our Superior General Rev Fr Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS wholeheartedly invited the members of TMM and introduced the

member with the goal of the TMM that is the Mid-Term Evaluation of the governance and animation in the Congregation after the 19th Ordinary General Chapter 2013 and also to assess realistically the processes and outcome of implementing the Orientation, Directives, and Decisions during the last three years (February 2013 – May 2016). The evaluation also aimed to ascertain whether the implementation of Directives is on track and if it will achieve its planned results by 2019.

The participants of the TMM were the seven members of the General Curia and all the Major Superiors in our Congregation (representing TEN Provinces and ONE Vice Province). All of them were united in prayer, reflections and deliberations as

one Salesian family. It was also a moment of being together and reliving Jesus our Lord and Master in the spirit of St Francis de Sales and Fr Peter Mermier. Every participant presented the realistic picture of the province with its major achievements and challenges. TMM Evaluation was based primarily on the four essential THRUSTS of MSFS life highlighted by General Chapter 2013. They are: Thrust on Mission, thrust on Local Community Life, Thrust on MSFS ness, and Thrust on Salesian Spirituality.

The TMM came to its conclusion with the promptings of the Holy Spirit that every Administrative Unit, Secretariat, and General Administration of the Congregation presenting their accomplishments in five

areas during the past three years with a three-point program (to do list) with a commitment for the next three years.

The five day Triennial Mandatory Meeting was certainly a memorable and grace-filled event for the entire MSFS family as the members resolved in one voice to live and relive the Foundational Charism of our Congregation and the Fransalian Legacy. Live Jesus and Long Live MSFS in serving the humanity in the Spirit of St Francis de Sales and Fr Peter Mermier under the Holy Patronage of our Beloved Mother of Compassion.

Report by Fr. Jayaseelan MSFS (General Councilor)



The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong - Mahatma Gandhi

Dada Angelina Lyaka

Maria Goreti of Tororo, Uganda

The Bride of Christ, Angelina Lyaka Memorial Day was celebrated on May 7, 2016 at Agururu Catholic Church, Tororo Archdiocese, Uganda with good participation of the parishioners and hundreds of pilgrims from near by deaneries of Tororo Archdiocese and Jinja diocese. This year more than thousand people participated in the Memorial Day Mass which was officiated by His Lordship Bishop Charles Wamika of the Jinja Diocese who came with the youth choir of the Diocese of Jinja conducted the Liturgy and singing. More than 80 Youths came in the previous day on May 6 and joined for the completion of the Novena and the parish Choir of the Agururu led the Liturgy of the closing day of Novena to Angelina Lyaka. The Jinja Youth choir with their melodious singing and band gave a good impression to the pilgrims as well as all the participants. They were very much appreciated for their devout way of Singing and dancing.



Dada (Sister) Angelina Lyaka 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 in the month of May, every year in the parish of Agururu. Her grave is in the vicinity of the parish church of Agururu. 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.

The Angelina day cum parish day was preceded by 9 days of Novena at her tomb. Every day evening at 5.00 pm hundreds of devotees gathered together for the Holy Rosary and Holy Mass and Novena Prayers by one of the invited priests from the neighboring parishes of msfs as well as diocesan priests and concelebrated by the parish priest. Novena was led by the parish priest with special intensions for the people of God. Every day we received many prayer intentions and people were offering the mass for their special intensions. One each family was sponsoring each days of novena.

On May 7 morning The Solemn Eucharistic Celebration of the mass started with a procession from the parish church to near the Angelina's tomb where stage was built. Together with His Lordship the Emeritus Archbishop Denis Kiwanuka and a few diocesan priests from Tororo Archdiocese and Jinja Diocese and our confreres took part in the Holy Mass. A good number of religious from far and near and some of the Political Leaders also were present and the King of

Adhola Mr. Moses Stephen Owor His Royal Highness the Kwar Adhola also was present among the dignitaries. The women guild of the parish in their yellow Gomases prepared a very enchanting offertory procession with many gifts and offertory to the altar which was received by the Bishop and Blessed them, and the Poor sisters of St. Francis made cakes and brought it for the day's celebration.

After the Mass there were entertainments led by Women Guild, Parish Youths, and Angelina Youth Club members put up traditional dances and skit. The Angelina Lyaka's Short History was read and the souvenir of the Angelina's life history and Different testimonies of people who received favors through her intercession also was published and released by his Lordship and gave the first copy to His Royal Highness the Kwar Adhola. There was also a friendly meal prepared by the parishioners for all the guests and pilgrims. The programme came to and end by 4.00 pm. And all departed at leisure. We thank the almighty God for the success of the days programme and for the good participation of the pilgrims. May God help us that one day she may be honored to the altar as Blessed.

*By Fr. Sunny Mattathil MSFS
Parish Priest*

Two Decades of Education and Formation at St. Francis de Sales Junior Seminary, Morogoro: Now it is time to do some Soul Searching.

The Profile

St. Francis de Sales (SFS) Junior Seminary at Kihonda, Morogoro, Tanzania is a secondary school cum Catholic Junior Seminary where young men pursue their secondary school education while receiving seminary formation. In academic year 2016, enrollment at the seminary is 284.

Established in 1993, the first batch of students graduated from the SFS Junior Seminary in 1997. Over the past two decades, more than one thousand young men have received a quality secondary school education, life skills' formation and spiritual guidance from the seminary. Many of these graduates are now employed with accredited professional companies both in Tanzania and internationally. Others serve as Catholic priests in the congregation of the *Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales*, in other religious congregations and in Catholic dioceses in Tanzania.

The Challenges

The simple, but demanding challenge before us is to fulfill the advice of our dear Founder, Fr. Peter Mary Mermier; viz - "Don't run a boarding-school if you can't be available to them all 24 hours." Yet, still we run a boarding when we are not available to them 24/7 due to the limited supply of personnel.

These young boys need constant accompaniment as they grow into mature persons, as they begin to make sense of the meaning and purpose of their lives, and as they discern their vocation. Yet, we have

a very limited number of priests as seminary staff who are competent and trained for religious formation, counseling and youth animation. Perhaps, in the near future, it may not be possible to have enough priests available in our province to appoint them on the staff in the Junior Seminary.



Fr. Sheejan Kallarakkal MSFS
(Rector)

In such a scenario, alternative solutions must be sought. We make up for the shortage of priests by recruiting committed lay people and request religious collaborators from other congregations to assist us.

This solution has its challenges. We need people who think along with us, who would share our vision and mission with which we built the seminary back in 1993. That is to provide a quality secondary school education, help young people to develop life skills, and help those with a vocation to the priesthood to grow and live that vocation within the congregation of the *Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales*.

The job descriptions of a teacher or hostel-warden in the seminary might look somewhat similar to that of a secondary school teacher or hostel-warden in a traditional government or public school. Their role in the seminary, however, involves something more. In a secondary



school, primarily it is all about academic delivery, discipline and order. In the seminary, however, we need people who share our way of thinking with regard to religious values, who support promoting vocations to Catholic priesthood, and who would mentor a young boy to make the right choices in life. They should be willing to support those with a genuine vocation to the priesthood, to help them not to abandon that interest amidst worldly attractions and peer pressure.

For all this we need skilled personnel. How to find the right person? Shall we recruit a fresh graduate who is looking for a job? For sure there are many of them. When we take them, they start with all enthusiasm, but sooner or later, they find a better offer and leave us. To retain them, we would need to be able to offer them an attractive salary package and other incentives. Unfortunately, we are not financially able to do that, to outbid the competition in the society. Or shall we take a recently retired man or women to help us? We have tried this option. But at times, they come to join us because they need a job and a salary to survive. Our intentions of forming the young men to better their lives, helping

them to discern their vocations and lead them through accompaniment are not their concern. This kind of recruiting only increases an additional job for the management as the management has to see whether these employed teachers and wardens are doing their job.

Another challenge is finances. Man, for sure, does not live by bread alone, but we need funds to run the seminary. Having a higher fee structure as in other private schools would allow us to offer our personnel higher wages. It would allow us to build and improve student and staff facilities, and to budget for the emergencies and unforeseen eventualities. The problem, however, is, that if we raise our fees, how many of the families wishing to enroll their children in the seminary would be able to afford our increased tuition fees? I suspect enrollment at our school would decrease and we would cater only to a very few boys who come from higher middle class families. The vast majority of our boys who come from peasant and lower middle class families, would have to seek enrollment elsewhere. The big questions are: how to balance quality and quantity? Lower school fees and high quality teaching staff? Should



we be just breaking even as far as finances are concerned? Or should we be having a better balance sheet at year-end that will allow us to make improvements in our facilities? These are the questions that evade clear-cut answers.

Everyone admires the best performing school. Both the parents and prospective students keenly observe the national position of the seminary in the annual national examinations. The challenge, however, is whether we should be compassionate to the intellectually poor or should we aim at better results in the national examinations? Experience has shown us that the boys who are assisted financially, do not always perform well academically. If they don't perform well in their studies, should we throw them out? Where would they go? Who would give them another chance? If we dismiss them, will they end up in the streets? Members of gangs are waiting with evil purposes?

Similarly, what about the boy that shows genuine signs of a vocation to the

priesthood in terms of his living, spirituality and authenticity, but who falls far below the benchmark academically to be promoted to the next level? Should we dismiss him? Or should we accommodate him, overlooking his poor academic performance and allow him to advance? To answer these questions we have to answer a more fundamental question: what type of priests do we want in the *MSFS* congregation? Do we need only those intellectually gifted? Or do we also need priests who are Good Shepherds, who can give their parishioners true spiritual food?

It is interesting to reflect on the answers to these questions. There are many things, like answers to these questions, which priests do not learn in their theology or philosophy classes. These are among other things learned in the battlefield; these are Church dogmas learned through difficult real life situations. Let the Good Lord help His priests.

Some Soul Searching Questions

In the overall picture, two decades may not seem like very long in the life of an institution like St. Francis de Sales Junior Seminary. However, it is long enough to do some serious soul searching to see this institution's footprint in the field of education and formation apostolate of the *Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales - Province of East Africa*.

By the Grace of God, we have made progress in our missionary apostolate through this institution. A good number of young men have received a quality education, life skills formation and many are now ordained to the priesthood. These are significant things for which we are ever thankful to the Lord.

Yet, I believe we need to do an in-depth analysis of this institution and our plan to move forward into the future. We need to ask; Why, have so many after completing their ordinary level education at the

SFS Junior seminary, left us to join other congregations or dioceses? Why is the number of those young men who have become priests in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales so much fewer than those who have become priests in other congregations and dioceses in East Africa?

Did these young boys find the charisma of the *Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales* less attractive? Or is it so because the collective and individual witnessing of the MSFS was not so inspiring for these young men? Or has it been that the missionaries, being predominantly of Asian origin, have failed to integrate well enough into the African cultural fabric enabling the young boys to feel at home with the missionaries? Was it for these reasons that they left us or are there other reasons that have triggered such a trend? We need to find the answers to these questions to solve the puzzle as to why the



MSFS are ordaining fewer young African men to the priesthood. We still do not have the answers, but we continue the search.

The Way Forward

The Formation-Education Team at SFS Junior Seminary strives to achieve its best given the financial and other constraints of the Seminary. Our intent is to improve academic performance, disciple and facilities for students and staff at the school. Although the challenges of staff retention, a culture of indifference, low motivation, and other similar concerns remain, we hope to improve the school environment, physical infrastructure, students' learning and academic performance.

Infrastructure developments are in the planning stage. We schedule regular maintenance of our facilities so that we do not face huge unexpected expenses for repairs. Facilities that are two decades old need refurbishing or replacement. Facilities that were once state of the art have become outdated.

Planning is in place for building additional classrooms, toilets facilities and a computer lab. We need to invest in library books and multi-media facilities for teaching and learning.

A fundraising campaign is in progress for these new and additional facilities. It is heartening and consoling to know that we are not alone in making things better. There are a good number of people to support us. We thank God for these wonderful people and support groups. These groups include: Mr. Stephen Zimmerman and his team at Living Waters International, USA; Fr. John Judie and his team at Father John Judie ministries, USA; and Mr. Werner Muller and his team at Salesan International, Switzerland. We sincerely thank them for being what they are to us, for their support and solidarity. By God's Providence and in

the course of time we are confident that we will have these new facilities in place.

Warm-Welcome to our New Members

When the harvest is plentiful, the Lord sends additional laborers. We are blessed to have additional personnel added to the seminary staff in 2016. We express a Hearty Welcome to all of them. We sincerely thank them for their willingness to come and join us at the SFS Junior Seminary.

Fr. Sebastian Mani Annaikandathil, MSFS

Last year, as providential and unplanned as it was, we met Fr. Sebastian A. Annaikandathil (we call him Fr. Sebi) over breakfast in Kerala, India, and discussed the possibility of his joining us at the SFS Junior Seminary.



Fr. Sebastian Annaikandathil MSFS

Fr. Sebi expressed his willingness and the paper work for an inter-provincial collaboration was worked out enabling him to join us here at the seminary on 22 May 2016. Fr. Sebi has been a Missionary in the Mozambique Delegation of the MSFS. He is a seasoned Fransalian, a teacher and an administrator, and is now assigned as the Master of Discipline at SFS Junior Seminary. Hearty Welcome Fr. Sebi!

A week with the boys at the seminary and he made this observation.

“Our students are experts and specialists in music, dance and singing. They are good artisans. But along with these good things, I also find among them the sufferings of modern society. Things such as dishonesty, stealing, trying to gain without doing hard work, a desire



Sr. Anjali Pattath FCC, Sr. Linda Thachil FCC and Sr. Tresa Jancy FCC

for easy money, an unpardonable type of indifferentism and slowness. They are hearing for the first time “Cleanliness is next to Godliness”! The stimulant needed is to make them thirsty for knowledge, and to find ways to implant in them the **thirst for knowledge**. We are determined to invest in them all that the Lord grants us.”

Franciscan Clarist Sisters from St. Paul Province, New Delhi, India

Franciscan Clarist Sisters (FCC) from the St. Paul Province, New Delhi, India joined us as the seminary staff on the 16th of June 2016. We express our sincere gratitude and extend a hearty welcome to Sr. Linda, Sr. Anjali, and Sr. Jancy who will join the existing team of formation and education at SFS Junior Seminary. We appreciate their missionary spirit, their readiness to explore the unknown, and their willingness to take up the challenges and difficulties of a Missionary Life. God bless them. Hearty Welcome Sisters!

Conclusion

When things are not as colorful as we wish them to be, the words of our dear Pope Francis (on 29th May 2016 speaking to the Deacons), gives us new hope and confidence. The pope said “Don’t be Stingy with your Time”. He has exalted us to be generous with our time even at the most inconvenient moments. In his homily, the Pontiff reflected on three elements that makes one a faithful servant, namely, availability, meekness, and having a ‘healthy heart.’ Availability demands from us not to be a slave to one’s own agenda, but to be ready for the unexpected, be available to our brothers and sisters and being open to God’s constant surprises. Meekness demands from us a heart like that of Jesus himself, being kind, patient and ever welcoming with love and unflagging sympathy. A healthy heart is one, which is healed by God, which knows forgiveness, which is neither closed nor hardened. The Pope encourages us to pray daily, to be healed by the Lord, to offer our work, our little inconveniences, weariness and our hopes in an authentic prayer that brings our life to the Lord and the Lord to our life.

News in Snaps

St. Joseph's Catholic Parish Mlolongo, Kenya

St. Joseph's Parish Mlolongo celebrated the Parish Feast on May 1, 2016 honouring the patron St. Joseph. The day was very memorable with procession starting from a BCC along the Nairobi road to the Church, followed by the Holy Eucharistic celebration. The mass was followed programs of entertainment and appreciation of the various services rendered . There was Agape meals and refreshments for all. Congratulations and blessings to our fathers and all the parishioners.



The newly constructed Mermier Hostel for the Girls at Chera Mission Kenya



*Our sincere thanks to all our mission friends and benefactors.
Hearty Congratulations to Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy and Fr. Susai David for the
initiative and the strenuous efforts to construct the Hostel*

***“As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes
the whole world in which we live.” - St. John Paul II***

The Graduation Ceremony 2016 in Lumen Christi Institute, Arusha, Tanzania



On May 14, 2016, Lumen Christi Institute witnessed the graduation ceremony of its students; the participants of the formators' course and the third year Philosophy students. Prior to the graduation ceremony, there was a solemn Eucharistic celebration that was presided over by His Lordship Prosper Limo, the Auxiliary Bishop of Arusha. The day was made colourful by the presence of a number of dignitaries from across the world including the members of the MSFS General Curia, all MSFS provincials, the MSAF members (Mission Superiors' Africa Forum) and officials from De Sales University. Among these honoured dignitaries was Father Bernard O'Connor, the President of De Sales University. All the guests and dignitaries participated both in the Mass and in the Graduation Ceremony.

After the Mass, everyone proceeded to the hall where the graduation ceremony took place. The ceremony had two parts. The first

part of the celebration was the graduation of the participants of the formators' course. It began with a general overview of the entire course," Diploma in Religious Formation and Spirituality. The overview was given by Father Matthew Kozhuppakalam. He praised the participants of the course for their cooperation with LCI staff and urged them to reflect through their lives where ever they will be, the good values that they had learned from LCI. The participants in turn thanked the entire LCI community for its hospitality towards them and particularly they thanked the staff-members for their commitment in equipping them with all that they require as future formators and as good shepherds and leaders, they unanimously expressed their gratitude and appreciation to LCI for the wonderful and enriching experience they had in LCI during the past one year through a melodious song composed by the group.

The second part of the celebration was the Graduation of the Third Year Philosophy students. It began with a brief overview of the Three Year Philosophy Course by the Dean of Studies, Father Thomas Kochalumchuvatil MSFS. Then the President of De Sales University Father Bernard O'Connor OSFS in his talk presented the brief history of the affiliation of LCI to the University and highlighted the aims of the affiliation. One of the aims is the fostering of the friendship and cooperation between the MSFS and the OSFS. After his speech, the students were formally declared as Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and the certificates were awarded. They expressed their gratitude and admiration to the entire

LCI community for all that they had been to them during their three-year formation in LCI.

Another event that made that day a particularly significant one was the launching of the first ever published book in the history of LCI, entitled “*African Spirituality, Facts and Symbols*”. The book was released by Father Abraham Vettuvellil, the Superior General, who stressed its importance as a window into the depths of African Spirituality, its richness and unique values. The celebrations concluded by presentation of a lively and energetic “Ngoma” (traditional dance) by the LCI Brothers.

Diaconate Ordination



Our Scholastics (from left) **Karottukampadathil Jobin MSFS**; **Mathembo Stephen Mutisya MSFS**; **Njue Thomas Njeru MSFS** and **Danda Aristedes Timothy MSFS** were ordained Deacons on January 3, 2016 by His Lordship Telesphore Mkude the Bishop of Morogoro. The ordination took place at St. Francis de Sales Parish Dumila, Tanzania.

Congratulations and prayerful good wishes!

East Africa Province true missionary face of our congregation

Fr. Thomas Moongamackal MSFS

I am ever grateful to God for all the blessings He has very generously and magnanimously showered on me and the innumerable opportunities and possibilities he has offered me to observe and enjoy the wonders of his creation; in terms of love, pleasant experiences, encountering innumerable people of various races, colours and creed living and beautifying God's creation, spread over in the different countries and continents of the world. It had been one of my long cherished desires to come to Africa and experience personally the culture, faith and mentality of the African people. With paternal love and generosity God granted me my wish. Since 3 years I am

Fr. Thomas Moongamakcal visited us in East Africa recently. He made a marathon visit to five countries in Africa in 30 days.

already working in the Anglophone Diocese of Buea, Cameroon as the parish priest of SS Peter and Paul University Parish and as the chaplain of the University of Buea, in Cameroon. Cameroon is a small country in the African continent. Living and working in this small piece of beautiful, green, fruitful and vibrant country will not give you a taste of the entire continent. As if to quench my thirst for going around the world and meeting people, the good Lord granted me recently again another opportunity to visit and enjoy the love, collegiality and hospitality of our beloved MSFS confreres working in the Eastern and Southern part of this great African



Fr. Thomas at the MSFS Novitiate Kibaha

Continent.

God works in His own ways through His instruments. This time God worked through the instrumentality of many MSFS confreres. It was through the direct involvement and invitation of Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, the provincial of East African province who facilitated and enabled my visits in the East African province, spread through the countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

I flew on 30th of March at 10.25 from Duala to Nairobi by Kenyan Airlines and landed at 18.35 in Nairobi. Rev. Fr. Johnson, was waiting for me at the airport, along with Fr. Jose Eriyanickal the superior of the Fransalian community Mlolongo. We proceeded together to our Fransalian community in Mlolongo and spent the night there and also to meet the confreres Fr. Sunny Vettickal and Sijo Pendanath. Early in the morning next day we proceeded to Cheera, the first station of the East African Province in Kenya, about 200 kms away from Mlolongo. It is laudable and praiseworthy the vision and labour of the pioneer MSFS Confreres in East Africa which came into fruition in the form of school, parish, minor seminary etc. We were very much taken care by Fr. Stephen and Fr. David. I had the pleasure of visiting an Ostrich farm and even tasting fried ostrich meat. The schools and hostels run by our fathers in Mlolongo and Katani are of the best quality.

On 2nd of April morning I had the chance to participate in the ceremony of the Opening of the New East Africa Province of the Adoration Sisters (SABS) in Nairobi. The same evening, I had the pleasure of travelling to Uganda by bus in the pleasant company of Fr. Johnson, who explained and narrated on the way so many important cultural, sociological and historical aspects of the country. The trip took more than the usual duration, about 12 hrs. Then at

the border, sitting behind a motorcycle taxi usually called *Boda Boda* (derivation from Border to Border) and crossing over to Ugandan territory, getting the visa to Uganda etc were very new to me - even adventurous! ; something which I would never have managed alone, without the help of an experienced man like Fr. Johnson.

In the early morning on Sunday, at the border we were picked up by Rev. Joby Maruthomalayil and proceeded to his parish Osia in Tororo. I was very happy to participate in the Divine Mercy Feast conducted in his parish. The Archbishop of Tororo was the main celebrant and the feast was very well organized and arranged - an applause to the parish priest Fr. Joby the parish priest and Fr. Charles Ouma the assistant parish priest - who meticulously prepared all the details of the ceremony. Along with other offerings in kind, the bishop was given even 12 goats and many chickens (I could not count) which were brought by the people. I was surprised to see the generosity and active participation of the faithful in the liturgy, may be a culture inculcated in the mentality of the people by our confreres. I had the pleasure to stay also with Fr. Sunny Mattathil in Agururu. I was impressed by his concerns to develop the parish especially by raising the parish as a pilgrim centre in honour of Dada Angelina Lyaka who was martyred and was buried in Agururu.

I was very much impressed by the energy, enthusiasm and missionary zeal of Fr. Thomas Chozhithara, who is fully engaged in the renovation of the church, building of a modern school and hostels for both boys and girls. As the days were limited, I had to proceed to Tanzania, starting point of the East African Province. Fr. Thomas took me to the airport Entebbe. I flew to Kilimanjaro and landed there at about 21.15. Fr. Mathew Chavely (my old friend since minor seminary) and Fr. Gijo Panamattathil

Another very healthy and important gift of God among the confreres which I could observe was the sense of self-respect and independence which each person felt about himself and with and within the community. This leads to mutual respect and recognition.



Fr. Thomas with Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil the healer

were waiting for me. They took me to the Lumen Christi Institute Arusha. After a good rest the next day was blessed by the visit of the Archbishop who came to officiate the Holy Mass at the conclusion of the couples gathering at LCI. Fr. Gijo took me around the city and showed me the famous Art Gallery after which we had a very relaxing, nourishing and pleasant dinner in the company of all of our confreres.

Next day I started my long, but adventurous trip from one end of Tanzania to the other, guided and lead by one of my former students in S.F.S. Seminary Ettumanoor, Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel, covering the distance of about 2,500 kms through the missions and centres in Mwakata, Lububu, Bukene, Itaga and Ipuli and brought me to Morogoro. I am profoundly grateful to Fr.

Mathew for taking the trouble of taking me around almost the entire country driving the car all by himself, without causing any discomfort or damage neither to the person nor to the property. The days I spent in the provincial's house in Morogoro was more relaxing and rejuvenating in the pleasant company of Fr. Johnson, Fr. Robert and Fr. Kuzhupil Sebastian who is totally engaged in the healing ministry of the Lord at the Mermier Holistic Healing Centre. Adjacent to the Provincial House is the SFS Junior Seminary where I witnessed the struggles of our confreres to impart quality education and formation to hundreds of young Tanzanians. I was happy to see many women religious missionaries of different congregations associated with the educational, social and pastoral works of the province. The St. Francis de Sales church in Mkuza, initiated

by Fr. Mathew Chavely and now continued by Fr. Pius Kochuparampil in is a pearl of beauty pleasant and edifying both for the eyes and the heart. On 14th April, Fr. Johnson took me to the SFS community in Das Es Salam. We had a short time with Fr. Jacob Thekkekara and Fr. Japhet Kirimi, saw the beautiful parish church and the modern school being built, had lunch with them and then Fr. Johnson took me to the airport in Dar Es Salam. Since I was proceeding my trips to Mozambique and South Africa I gave a tight hug to Fr. Johnson and then we had to say adieu to each other.

My observations

I am really proud to be a member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. After spending almost 2 weeks with the confreres in the East African Province, I am still happier; to assert and attest that our life as religious can be very enriching, nourishing and rewarding. This sense of happiness and fulfilment comes not from the money we may collect from different countries or agencies, or from the success of the projects we initiate, instead it comes from the source of all happiness and wealth i.e. Jesus Christ who has called us to serve him. This feeling comes only if we cherish an intimate relationship with our master, through prayer- common and personal, participation in the Holy Eucharist, common meals, common recreation etc. I could see all these elements working very harmoniously in the lives and activities of our East African confreres. The hospitality which I enjoyed in all our houses was very warm and hearty, so that I could feel myself at home with all our confreres at the outset.

I also had the opportunity to meet the minor seminarians, Novices in Kibaha, students of both Philosophy and Theology and the brothers who are doing the regency. They all grow in an atmosphere of freedom and

not fear. I was impressed by their happiness and enthusiasm in working for the Lord and I am sure that our congregation has a great future in Africa.

Another very healthy and important gift of God among the confreres which I could observe was the sense of self-respect and independence which each person felt about himself and with and within the community. This leads to mutual respect and recognition. Programs and projects were chalked out and started by the initiative of the community, without begging and waiting for the financial aid from the provincial administration, found sources and channelled them properly and completed them for the glory of God and for the name of the congregation - a policy outlined and encouraged by the provincial administration. I could see good and well maintained vehicles and houses in all our missions; enough land to start any kind of institutions. The pioneer missionaries gave priority in acquiring enough land to consolidate the parishes. This is a wise and healthy attitude which could be imitated by other provinces too.

I was very happy and impressed by the happiness, sense of responsibility, collegiality, and respect the confreres cherished and showed to each other, showing no disparity of age, experience or position. "Oh how good and delightful to live as brothers all united...." I may not be able to make such visits in my private capacity in the future. Still, if God permits, I would be glad to visit all our confreres again in the East African Province. *Asanteni sana.....Mungu awabaraiki ! Adieu friends!*

Fr. Thomas Moongamakcal MSFS

thomasmoonga@googlemail.com

Our New Priest: Fr. Siljo Cherian Auppadan MSFS



Rev. Fr. Siljo Cherian Auppadan MSFS was born on November 12, 1986 in the Christian family of Mr. and Mrs. A.V. Cheriyan and Lissy Cherian, Kerala, India and was baptized in the same year. He is the second born child in the family. He has an elder sister. Fr. Siljo Cherian received First Holy Communion and confirmation in 1996 at St. Joseph Church, Mambra, Ernakulum-Angamaly diocese.

He studied at Government Lower Primary School in Mambra from 1992 to 1996. Later he studied at St.Thomas Upper Primary School Karukutty, from 1996 to 1999. He completed his High School Studies at Star Jesus High School Karukutty from 1999 to 2002.

Fr. Siljo Cherian started his religious formation in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales at Prakash Bhavan, Mannarkhad from 2002 to 2005. He began his novitiate on 10th June 2006 at Sannidhi Noviciate House, Mysore and on June 11th 2007 he made his First Religious Profession. He did his philosophical studies from 2007 to 2010 at Suvidya College, Bangalore, which is affiliated to De Sales University, USA. After his philosophical studies Fr Siljo Cherian came to Tanzania for his regency at SFS VTC Mwakata, Kahama, from 2010 to 2011.

He did his theological studies from 2011-2015 at Jordan University College, Morogoro which is a constituent of St Augustine University of Tanzania,. He made his Final Profession on July 10, 2014 and was ordained deacon on September 27, 2014 by his Lordship Most Rev. Telesphore Mkuze, the Bishop of Morogoro. He was ordained priest by His Lordship Rt. Rev. Jose Puthanveetil, the Auxiliary Bishop of Diocese of Ernakulum-Angamaly, on April 2, 2016 at St Joseph Church, Mambra, Kerala.

We congratulate Fr. Siljo on being ordained a priest and appreciate for his determination in, and dedication to, the call to the religious life and priesthood. For the Fransalians in East Africa he is a precious gift of God. Our sincere appreciation and thanks go to His Lordship Rt. Rev. Jose Puthanveetil, the Auxiliary Bishop of Diocese of Ernakulum-Angamaly for ordaining Fr. Siljo a priest of God. We also thank the Parish Priest of his home-parish and the parish team for all the arrangements.

As a Congregation we also express our sincere thanks to the parents of Fr. Siljo and to his only sister, for their generosity in offering their only son for the service of the Lord and His People in East Africa. We also thank Fr. Siljo's teachers, formators, professors and spiritual guides who constantly supported him in his journey of vocation and formation. The kind service they have rendered is not merely a personal service given to Fr. Siljo but to each one of us and to everyone who will be served by Fr. Siljo.

For me Priesthood is a means to give wholeheartedly to God and to the people. Through priesthood, I want to encounter Jesus more closely and help people to encounter Jesus through my way of life and ministry. Fr. Siljo Auppadan MSFS

Experience of God's Mercy and Blessings

Sharing from a Mother!

We have a powerful and merciful God. He knows we have all fallen short of His glory. But His mercy is incredible. That is why Christians need to be aware always of His love and His mercy. A day shouldn't go by without us praising God. We may be barely able to comprehend His mercy, but we know that it is there.

This is my incredible journey to my God of love and mercy. As a child, the eldest of five children, I always had to be a mother to my siblings. I missed the love of my parents as we were in the boarding and our parents were in the Gulf. This led me to make choices I am not proud of today. I got married against my parent's wishes. Yet God watched over me. *Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good. Psalm 25:6-7*

I was expecting my first child. The bridge I had to cross and go to work had collapsed. God kept me safe even though I had to jump into boats, climb into buses throughout my pregnancy. I was blessed with a beautiful baby boy on the first Sunday of Advent. I thank God for the gift of my son. *The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. Psalms 145:9*

Three years later I was expecting my second baby. In my eighth month of pregnancy I skidded and caught onto the door handle to keep myself from falling. Still I landed in the hospital with a torn ligament in my groin and was bound with 5kg weights hanging on both sides of my thighs so that the tear could heal. God was merciful to me and kept me and my baby safe. After a month I delivered a healthy baby girl on Palm Sunday. Praise God for the gift of my daughter. *He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of*



his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. 2 Timothy 1:9

The years went by. My children grew up. Because of a marriage crisis I went into a deep depression. The doctor kept on increasing my medicine doses. I could not go to work for weeks. I could not function properly at work or at home. Fear gripped me. I had mouth ulcers. I would not get out of the house and refused to talk to people. I had no use of my life anymore. I was a burden to myself and to my family. I had

thoughts of suicide. It was at this point I watched a retreat programme on television. And the preacher preached about the love and mercy of God in spite of all the sins we had committed narrating his own life experience of sin and being delivered by Jesus. I began taking down notes. I began learning the Scriptures. I started practising in daily life what I had learnt spiritually. Slowly but surely God in his great mercy brought me out of depression.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3

Today I lead a joyous life thanking God for all the blessings He has bestowed on me. My children have grown up and are doing well. I have dedicated my life to God and to helping others come out of their depressions, lovingly telling them that our merciful God is just waiting to welcome them with open arms no matter what their sin.

Here is a message for you. No matter what your situation is, God wants to help you. He's crazy about you. He wants you to experience His love, His joy, His peace. He wants you to have life in abundance. He knows we cannot do anything with our own strength. All He asks is that we turn to him and repent for our sins and with His grace sin no more.

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:18

Count all the occasions you have been blessed with and have received mercy in your life . Extend the same hand of mercy to your family, your neighbourhood and all the people you encounter.

All Praise To Our God Most High. God Bless You All!

By a Mother

Dear reader of Baraka, as you have finished reading this testimony, please remember your own mother and say a small prayer for her. She has made several sacrifices for you even without your knowing it. No matter she is dead or alive, she is blessing you her dear child.

(Mother) She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children arise and call her blessed;
her husband also, and he praises her:

“Many women do noble things,
but you surpass them all.”

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

Honor her for all that her hands have done,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Proverbs 31:27-31

The Beginnings of Christianity in East Africa (Part 6)

Fr. Thomas Chozhithara MSFS



Missionary Developments in Uganda

Of the three East African countries the history of Christianity in Uganda went through the most turbulence and conflicts, and many martyrs sacrificed their life for their faith in Jesus Christ. Thus Uganda was the first east African country which could give to the Christian world an exemplary witness of Christian faith through the 1964 canonized Ugandan Martyrs. Historians show that the propagation of Faith, whether it is Christianity or Islam was very much interconnected with trade and colonialism. The missionaries and colonists used the routes which were marked out by the slave traders before, and mainly Islam

took roots among the people who lived around these slave routes. The biggest slave market was Zanzibar, where all the slaves from the inlands were brought. *The most important slave route led from Bagamoyo to Unianembe (now it is called Tabora). From there one branch led westward to Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika and another to the north-west, to Karagwe and till Buganda in Uganda*¹.

a. The Kingdom of Buganda: Torn Between Four Religions

Buganda is a region on the west and northwest of Lake Victoria, a region which

¹ Carl J Hellberg, *Missions on a Colonial Frontier West of Lake Victoria*, Upsala, 1965, 40.

already in the 18th c. showed signs of great political and social development. The centre of the power was the Kabaka, who was described by C.P Gale as the only king and only god of the Bugandans. Mutesa I (d.1884) became the Kabaka of Buganda in 1856 and he was the son of Kabaka Suna, a powerful figure in the history of Buganda. Kabaka Mutesa went followed four religions during his period of rule: he was born and lived as man of the African Traditional Religion (ATR), he embraced Islam from Zanzibar, Protestantism from England and Catholicism from France. It is widely observed that Mutesa I's switching on from one faith to another had more to do with his alliance to different political powers due to security reasons, than his convictions of faith in a particular religion.

b. Islam in Buganda

Islam reached Buganda through the Arab traders. The first Muslim to reach in Buganda was a merchant, Ahmed bin Ibrahim, in 1844². He came from Zanzibar via Kagera. He was given a cordial welcome by the Kabaka. Slowly the Kabaka and his subjects began to be attracted to the Islam, known as the "religion of the Book". The Kabaka called his servants regularly to religious instruction. It is observed that there were two reasons why Kabaka Mutesa I. followed Islam, firstly, he was attracted by the power and pomp of the Sultan of Zanzibar and secondly he wanted to have security for his kingdom. But the situation went adverse when the Kabaka found that more and more of his people were declaring allegiance to this new religion and its leaders. He feared that his influence on the people would become weaker. This complex grew within

² Ref. Carl J Hellberg, *Missions on a Colonial Frontier West of Lake Victoria*, Upsala, 1965, 45.

him, so looked for an opportunity to cast aside the new religion. This was the time the famous British missionary Henry Morton Stanley visited the palace of the Kabaka in 1875. Stanley convinced the Kabaka that the Christianity of England was stronger than the Islam of Zanzibar. *The King called his chiefs together and challenged them to choose either Christianity or Islam. Reading Kabaka's mood they chose Christianity*³. The change of alliance to a new faith of the Kabaka provoked some of the staunch Muslim subjects challenge him on the issue. The Kabaka reacted violently burning to death seventy chiefs and more than a thousand Muslims were killed in the whole of Buganda. It also had a political reason. In 1874 Egypt had sent Gordon Pasha, claiming the origins of Nile, and Kabaka had thought that the Muslims of Zanzibar and of his Kingdom might collude with their Muslim brothers and sisters in Egypt in case a conflict took place.

b. Christianity in Buganda

Sensing the conducive atmosphere for evangelization in Buganda Stanley sent a letter to London's Daily Telegraph in November 1875 urging England to send missionaries to Buganda. The Church Missionary Society (CMS) was the first to respond to him sending two missionaries in 1877. Alexander Mackay was the most outstanding missionary of the CMS. Mutesa agreed to Bible lessons and in return asked them to make gun powder. But faster than the Kabaka himself, his servants accepted Christian teaching. After two years came the White Fathers from Tanganyika representing the Catholics. *When the White Fathers reached the court of the Mutesa, Mackay immediately gave Mutesa a lesson*

³ Mark R. shaw, *The Kingdom of God in Africa: a short history of African Christianity*, Eugene (Oregon), 1996, 198.

on the Reformation to warn him against the false and idolatrous Christianity, which in Mackay's view, the Catholics represented.⁴ Simon Lourdel represented the Catholics. According to Groves, his missionary methods were as blunt as Mackay's. He presented the king with guns and denounced Mackay as a heretic.

Mackay and Lourdel debated issues of faith publically and it confused the Bugandans, who could not easily comprehend the difference between the two different denominations of Christianity. *According to Adrian Hastings, it would not be very long before the young Baganda could be heard discussing the merits and demerits of Henry VIII or of praying to Mary.*⁵

The White Fathers were instructed by its Founder Cardinal Lavigerie in 1879, not to baptise any convert except in the case of them dying, before their completion of four years of catechumenate. But before the arrival of these instructions to Lourdel and his companion Livinhac, they had already baptised some young men who showed extraordinary interest in the Catholic faith. In 1882 they baptised eight more men,

4 W.B.Anderson, 22.

5 Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa* 145-1950, Oxford, 1994,374.

including Joseph Mukasa Balikuddembe, Andrew Kagawa, Luke Banabakintu and Mathias Kalemba. However, for some unknown reasons the White Fathers suddenly took themselves away from the scene from November 1882 to July 1885. But during this period Catholicism was vastly spread in Buganda through the newly baptised lay men who gathered others in prayer groups in the villages. Kabaka Mutesa I. asked the Catholic and Protestant missionaries to baptise him, but the both groups refused on the grounds of polygamy. As a consequence, or because he was urgently in need of healing (as he was ailing), he turned his back on religious instruction and returned to traditional practices. With him went all the important men of his court. Mutesa died in 1884 as a follower of traditional religions.

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Year of Formation : Gathering of all the MSFS Scholastics in East Africa

As part of the Congregational year of formation, we are organizing a gathering of all the MSFS Scholastics in EA. This would include those in Theology, Philosophy and Regency. The program would consist of Seminars, Input sessions Symposium and Annual retreat. The themes dealt with will include: Formation for Mission and MSFSness; Understanding the Treaties on the Love of God for our daily life; Personal Growth & Holistic Integration; Inner Journey & spiritual growth; Formation in the international communities etc.

The venue will be **LCI Arusha** and the dates will be from **August 7 to 22, 2016**. Let us keep this unique project in our prayers as we expect to have 60 scholastics for this event.

THE EMPOWERMENT OF MEN ???

Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS



A spontaneous question may arise in the minds of the readers: why the empowerment of men? Usually we hear more about the empowerment of women. The question, though surprising, is indeed a true one. Tremendous amount of empowerment of men is needed!

The degradation of men takes place in all the fields of society. For example, the male productivity. In the last few decades the sperm count has reduced to less than 50%, and every year the percentage is still going down. Since the reduction is taking place in millions of men, hardly anyone notices the change. Many of the social roles which were the monopoly of men are no more theirs. To become a primary school teacher or a secretary has become the monopoly of women and it has become alien to men of this century. The number of politicians and religious leaders are ever on the increase among women.

By seeing the bad habits of men some women decide not to get married and lead solitary lives or somehow get a child and lead a life of a single parent. If you are a pastor or a religious you would be annoyed with me, but when I narrate the truth it hurts us all. Being a holistic healer, every day I am facing this problem. But as the saying goes "who shall bell the cat?" I have two options. Either to keep quite or put this question in front of someone.

The Sacred Scripture says that God created the human beings in his own image and likeness, male and female (Gen 1:27). Both

of them have a role to play. The women perform their role somehow automatically. They do so because of their very biological function as a mother. The hormonal changes take place in her while she reaches teenage, at pregnancy, child-delivery and at child care. When some men fail in their duty due to heavy schedule of life or by acquiring some bad habits like smoking, drinking, going after unlawful relationships, some women become strong for the sake of the kids. Some women hearing false news of their men behave indifferently towards the husbands. The modern society sends confusing and wrong messages about homosexuality, feminism etc. This situation also adversely affects men

Everyone is aware of the problems which men face but hardly any one stands for the Empowerment of men. It is the need of the time. We have to stand for them or the consequences will be grave for the society as a whole. Unless



we work very positively the so called "men figures" will be mere Biblical figures in the books. A Malayalam proverb says: "one who has to sit in his proper chair has to sit, or else a dog will sit in it". It is important that as women come up in society and exercise their role, the legitimate role of the male has to be safeguarded. Otherwise imbalance in society will cause serious damage to the well-being of humanity. Man has to be empowered from childhood, till old age. At each stage man has specific role to perform. Without men exercising their legitimate and natural role, religion, family and the society will suffer. It is better to be late than never in the empowerment of men

25 years of the presence of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales in Itaga Parish, Archdiocese of Tabora

Mr. Marco Kimbulu
(Parish Secretary)

25 years have rolled! It looks for me, as if just yesterday the Missionaries St. Francis de Sales came to Itaga. God has done wonderful things through these missionaries of ours in our Parish as well as in other parts of Tanzania. My words are not enough to describe the works the MSFS Fathers have done in our Parish. It was in 1990 that for the first time, I came in contact with the MSFS in Itaga, Tabora.



Mr. Marco Kimbulu

On January 13, 1991 the parish was entrusted to the MSFS. Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS and Fr. Chacko Koodathinal MSFS were appointed as the parish priest and assistant respectively. The late Archbishop Most Rev. Mario Mgulunde handed over the key of the parish Church to the parish Priest Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS. In April Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS joined the community and he was teaching at Itaga Seminary and helped in our parish. From then on, we have seen a flow of priests in our parish. The time of MSFS in Itaga will surely be a glorious history of Itaga in future. We will for sure cherish the great memories of our missionaries in our Parish.

Achievements

- MSFS has been able to implant the Congregation in Africa. We can see now steady number of good vocations for the MSFS emerging from the continent of Africa.
- By joint venture MSFS and parish members managed to arrange and celebrate the 100 years of the parish. The day was one of great blessings: June 13, 2014.
- Eighteen churches have been constructed in different villages, since MSFS came to Itaga.
- The number of out stations increased from 36 to 54.
- Development in small Christian Community as a domestic Church but of its very nature it has to reach out to other families. This method found to be the most effective means of making the Gospel message truly relevant to African culture and traditions.
- Currently the parish is having 138



small Christian communities.

- Seminars have been conducted at the parish centre and even at the other centers of the parish. This has been done by grouping people for instance the catechists, the members of the parish council including the pious groups like, Legio Maria, Wawata, Viwawa, Choir just to mention a few.
- Some of the catechists were sponsored to attend courses in different institutions.
- A great achievement for the MSFS in Itaga is the birth of St. Francis de Sales Parish Kashishi which was one of the out stations of Itaga.
- The Fransalians and parish members began by celebration of the Jubilee year by opening on June 13, 2015 at Itaga.
- On June 15, 2016 Feast of our patron St. Antony of Padua was celebrated and 215 faithful received the sacrament of confirmation. The mass was solemnized by His Grace Most Rev. Paul Ruzoka, the Archbishop of Tabora.

Fr. John Mungoni, a Diocesan Priest was announced to be the parish priest of Itaga. For the moment he will be

working with MSFS and later the MSFS will be working at Kashishi the new parish to be.

His Grace Paul Ruzoka, the Archbishop of Tabora expressed sincere thanks for their presence and ministry in his Diocese. This was expressed before Fr. Reji Pendanath who represented the Provincial Superior of East Africa Province, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil.

Gratitude

There is always, always and always to be thankful for. We are thankful for all the members of MSFS Congregation who had been ministering at Itaga Parish. Very specially we remember all the former parish priests, viz. Rev. Frs. Sebastian Kuzhupil, Pius Kochuparampil, Sunny Mattathil, Sebastian Palakudy, Tomychan Perumanoor and the present day Parish Priest Fr. Innocent Vincent Ngowi MSFS.

True to the saying of their Patron St. Francis de Sales "*Bloom where you are planted*", the missionaries bloomed in Itaga and made us to realize our worth as Christians and taught us to live our lives for others.

God bless Fransalians!

The Blessing of the Sisters' Residence in Bukene Mission

"The Lord, your God will bless you for this in all your works and undertakings". (Deut.15:10)

The community of Bukene once again experienced the abundant blessings of the Lord on March 12, 2016, as the Archbishop of Tabora His Grace Paul Ruzoka blessed the Residence for the sisters built at St. Francis



Archbishop blessing the convent

de Sales Primary School Bukene. Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, the Provincial of East African Province opened the newly built house. His Grace Archbishop Paul Ruzoka also officiated at the Holy Mass. The occasion was enriched by the presence of many Priests, Religious and Laity from Bukene Parish. There was a small cultural programme performed by the children from SFS Primary School. The cultural

programme was followed by agape.

Residence for the Sisters was a long cherished dream of Fransalian Community at Bukene. The Franciscan Clarist Sisters from Idukki Province are collaborating with MSFS in Bukene Mission especially in the



FCC Sisters who gathered for the function

apostolate of education. They did not have a community house for almost three years and they were rendering their service staying in the children's hostel. The construction of the Residence began in April 2014 with the generous support from Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz MSFS, Peter Claver Sisters and MSFS Province of East Africa. May God bless all our benefactors! We are so happy to have a dream accomplished.

Sr. Stella Rose FCC

Hearty Congratulations to our confreres

Fr. Jomat Kollapallil,

Fr. Santhosh Paul

Fr. Sebastian Nirappel

who tirelessly worked for the realization of this project

Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (Fransalians)



Our Patron
St. Francis de Sales



Our Patroness
Mother of Compassion



Our Founder
Servant of God Fr. Peter Mermier

Do you like to join our Congregation?

Qualifications required to be a Fransalian Missionary Priest:

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

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“The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

Do you wish to join hand with us?

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

“God blesses abundantly a cheerful giver”

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“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

— Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa



Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. .

“St. Francis de Sales”

