

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES



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Beloved Confreres!

I am very glad to greet you on this day as we celebrate the Solemnity of Annunciation. God seeking human cooperation in his divine plans. Let the voice of Angel addressing Mary, *Hail Mary ...full of grace* resound in our ears.

Each one of us can be filled by the grace of God every moment. He is ready to give us to the brim. That is our maximum capacity. But it is true that we do not experience the fullness due to our own limitations, weaknesses and sins. The effect of grace is sometimes diluted or polluted due to the negativities. It can happen that we sometimes wilfully reject the grace due to our hard heartedness.

As far as the grace is concerned the only difference between us and our Blessed Mother Mary was that she was spared from original sin. It was not an act of partiality from God, but being in such a state was necessary for her to accomplish the particular mission given by God. We are not far from her because in baptism we too are freed from all our sins. Let us listen to the voice of God addressing us today: *Hail You..... full of grace*. If we do not hear it, if we feel that the grace is not full in us, let us look into our own self and do not blame God for that which we lack.

Being filled with the grace is a must for the effective mission. We are doing the mission of God and without the Grace of God we are not able to do it in the way God wants us to do. So let us earnestly desire for that grace, especially as we are nearing the Holy Week and the great feast of Resurrection.

Canonical Visitations

As scheduled the canonical visitations were carried out and I would like to present to you a brief report of some of the visitations. Other reports would be given at a later time.

MSFS Community Itaga

From January 13 to 15, 2012 I had the canonical visitation to the Itaga community in the Archdiocese of Tabora. St.. Antony's Parish Itaga was the second mission entrusted to the MSFS in Tanzania in the year 1991. The confreres serving in this mission Fr. Tomychan Perumanoor and Fr. Stephen Ubadesi (now transferred to Ipuli; Fr. Joby Maruthomalayil is expected to join the community in June.) are doing a wonderful job. The developments that have taken place over the past 22 years are enormous. Today the parish has got 48 substations and 130 Basic Christian communities (JNNK). The farthest out station is 132 kms from the parish. Thus Itaga is the biggest parish in the Archdiocese of Tabora and the biggest parish served by MSFS in the East Africa Province. In the year 2016, we will be completing 25 years of our service at Itaga Mission. The parish is in need of being bifurcated into two or more parishes in order for the more effective apostolate. The discussions are already initiated at the diocesan level.

Along with the pastoral works, the confreres also manage the Kindergarten at Itaga. Although not well-equipped due to financial constraints, it is still a great service to the kids from Itaga and surroundings. Constant attacks of malaria, sometimes being alone, heavy work load, long distances on mud roads etc are some of the challenges our confreres do face in this part of the mission.

In the formal meeting with the Parish leaders it was very evident that the faithful are very happy about the services of our confreres. In my personal meeting with the Archbishop His Grace Paul Ruzoka as part of the visitation, the Archbishop expressed his profound gratitude to our confreres who are working in the Archdiocese and who are now currently present in the three parishes and SFS Mission Ipuli. He was full of appreciation for the confreres who are totally integrated to the local church and committed for the mission. He also requested for more confreres to be at the service in the Archdiocese.

Fransalian Mission Ipuli

The visitation to Ipuli mission in the Archdiocese of Tabora took place from Jan 15 to 18, 2012. Initiated in the year 2000 under the visionary directives of Fr. Kurian Kollapillil, today Fransalian mission at Ipuli stands as one of the major concerns of the East Africa Province. Started as a very simple project to take care of the poor and needy boys – orphans or abandoned – the project expanded to be FOSTER (FRANSALIAN ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, EDUCATION AND RENEWAL) fostering the young ones. Today the concept of Foster comprises of SFS Children's Home, Day care center, Outreach programs, On-going education of former inmates of SFS Children's Home, Students' Sponsorship Management, SFS Pre and Primary School, Mermier Girls' home and *Simba Clay* project for the visually impaired and the newly started SFS Secondary School. SFS IPULI has a name of prestige and it has become the hub of activities. The campus has really grown green with variety of trees and plants. My sincere appreciation to our confreres Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy (the Director until recently and now transferred) Fr. Jomon Vellachalil (new Director), Fr. Stephen Ubadesi (newly joined the Ipuli community) Fr. Rajesh Antony along with Bro. Kenneth Maina. I also recognize and appreciate the great work done by Fr. Thomas Chozhithara the former director and now as the General Coordinator of Foster activities in Ipuli.

It was also for me a great joy to note the very good collaborative work with Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy in the daily running of our educational institutions at Ipuli. Through regular meeting of appraisal and planning the collaborative efforts are well monitored, enabling the best results.

The major challenges include that of sicknesses, being overburdened with works, lack of personnel, difficulty in getting qualified and committed teachers, and financial constraints. But our confreres are giving themselves totally with the firm conviction that "nothing is too much when it is for the Lord".

The immediate priority in the works include the construction of the new buildings for the SFS Children's Home, completion of the extra class rooms for primary school, digging boreholes in order to ensure enough water supply for the entire campus and the construction of labs and library for the secondary school.

MSFS Novitiate Kibaha

From February 6 to 10, 2012, I could spend my time in the novitiate combining taking some classes and conducting the canonical visitation. At present we have eight novices: six of them from Kenya one from Mozambique and one from Uganda. One of them belongs to the Mozambique mission, two are for Southern African Region and five are for East Africa Province.

Under the charismatic leadership of Fr. Antonysamy Sebastian, I found in the novitiate a happy Fransalian Community. Of course the community misses the vibrant presence of Fr. Zacharia Burrofero as he was given temporary assignment from December last year to strengthen the formation team at Fransalian Seminary Ndagani. The novices eager to serve the Lord, are growing in Salesian way of life, personal maturity and interpersonal relationships. The novices are also given enough pastoral exposure by participating in the liturgical and religious activities in the parish of Mkuza and in the archdiocesan religious programs. Fr. Sebastian also renders pastoral services in the parishes as and when required. Fr. Joseph Vettukattil also will render his teaching services in the novitiate shortly.

The community strives for self-sufficiency to a great extent through farming. However the dry spell of unfavorable climatic conditions this year has affected the farming activities this year. Recently the entire

water supply system had to be re-allocated investing lot of time, energy and money. Works of priority include building the compound wall and reinforcing the security. Adjacent to the novitiate building, we have also identified the place to prepare the cemetery for the confreres. The work of preparing the place is to be initiated soon.

NGO registration

I am happy to inform you that we have completed the process of registering an NGO under the name FOSTER AFRICA. Foster stands for: FRANSALIAN ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, EDUCATION AND RENEWAL. The office of the Foster will be in Morogoro. I thank Fr. Thomas Olickal and team who initiated the process of NGO Registration. Our sincere thanks to Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal, Fr. Sunny Mattathil and Fr. Stephen Gerald who persistently followed up the process.

REMINDERS

Local Governing Bodies - Meetings

As stipulated, the meetings of the LGBs of our institutions catering to the social, educational and health care are to be held in April-May. I request the conveners to plan in advance and organize meetings well.

Code of Ethics - formulations

As the Committee for the preparation of the contextualized Code of Ethics, is due to meet in the near future, I request you to study the given text and share your insights, observations, suggestions etc. I would appreciate very much if they should reach the office of the Provincial by the end of April 2012.

Revising the Provincial Statutes

I would like to remind that now, it is due time to meet the committee for the revision of the Provincial Statutes so that the first draft can be presented in June.

Annual retreats

As we have two sessions of annual retreat (**A.** From June 18 to 23 For the priests at Fransalian House Kola. **B.** From June 25 to 30 at LCI Scholasticate Arusha), please make sure that you arrange your programs in such way to free yourself to attend the annual retreat.

Registration of Lands

I would like to quote from the Guidelines on the Administration of temporal goods as published on February 1, 2012.

We will be initiating the registration and procurement of title deeds for all the lands that is acquired in the name of the Society. Each community is requested to make an update on the status of the land that under its custody. A report of the land, with the following details, is to be forwarded to the office of the bursar latest by the March 31, 2012.

The details needed in the report:

- 1. The name of the community,*
- 2. No(s) of plots under its custody on behalf of the society, its size, purpose of acquirement.*
- 3. Process so far undertaken to get the title deed,*
- 4. If process already began, the present stage it has reached (including the payments already made, the receipts that we have with us to prove these payments)*
- 5. The documents that are in our custody with regards to the land (like letter of offer, plot maps, proof of purchase etc).*
- 6. The place/community where these available documents are kept at present*

7. *The name of the conferrer assigned by the community to follow up the land registration process at the local level.*

I request the Administrators / Bursars of each community that has land issues, to contact Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal the Provincial Bursar as early as possible with all the relevant documents.

Holiday ministry for Scholastics in communities

If any community requires the assistance of the Scholastics during their long break of May to August, the superior of the community is to request Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil for the same. The requests are to reach latest by April 15.

Transfer and Appointment

With effect from March 2, 2012 Bro. Indudmuli Francis is transferred from Fransalian Community Bukene to MSFS Provincial House Community Morogoro. He will render part-time assistance in teaching at SFS Junior Seminary Kihonda.

Visit of Bursar General to East Africa Province

Rev. Fr. Augustine Mangatt the Bursar General will be visiting the Province from May 21 to June 15, 2012. We promise our prayers and wish him every blessing in the preparations of this trip and in the event of his official visit. We extend to him a very warm welcome.

Visit from Provincial of Nagpur Province

Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhy the Provincial Superior of the Nagpur India Province will be visiting East Africa from April 15 to 23. He will be visiting mainly the formation houses and our missions in the Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Arusha, Machakose and Meru. We promise our prayers and extend to him a very warm welcome for his maiden visit to this part of the world and wish him many enriching encounters and experiences in East Africa.

Meeting with Apostolic Nuncio

On March 22, I had the opportunity to meet the Apostolic Nuncio to Tanzania **His Grace Archbishop Francisco Montecillo Padilla**. He hails from Philippines. During his stay in Papua New Guinea he is already familiar with Fransalians working there. We extend to His Grace a warm welcome to Tanzania and wish him a very fruitful mission in Tanzania.

The inauguration of St. Francis de Sales Mission Secondary School, Ipuli, Tabora, Tanzania

March 7, 2012 was an unforgettable day for the people of Tabora and all its vicinity as the well designed and beautifully constructed new Secondary school was inaugurated by Hon. Fatma Mwassa, the Regional Commissioner of Tabora and blessed by the Vicar General Rev. Fr. Faustine Rwichungura. It was a remarkable event in the history of Ipuli. It was witnessed by the zonal and civil higher authorities and a good number of MSFS confreres, diocesan priests and sisters who were also present for the celebration. The presence of Mr. Werner Mueller the President of Salesan e.V. added great strength to the occasion. To felicitate the guests, a well arranged program was organized. The breath-taking programs staged by the students were astonishing and fabulous as all those who were present were very much appreciative of their performance. It was also a day arranged for bidding adieu to Fr. C. Samy, a man who committed himself completely for the growth of the FOSTER project. This long cherished dream of establishing a secondary school in Ipuli was made feasible through tireless works of our confrere at Ipuli as the efforts of Fr. Thomas Chozhithara, the FOSTER Program coordinator. It was very unfortunate that the Fr. Johnson Kallidukil the Provincial and our 18 member delegation from Rotary Club Karlstadt-Arnstein, Germany could not join the functions due to the logistic issues.

At this joyous juncture, the joy was doubled as the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Tabora Rev. Fr. Faustine Rwichungura laid the foundation stone for the new building for the Children's Home adjacent to the newly-constructed presbytery. *(Report from Fr. Rajesh Antony)*

Blessing and Inauguration of the Electrical Installation at Mwakata VTC, Kahama

SFS VTC Mwakata working towards the social transformation through education has added beauty to itself by the establishment of electrical section to its other six trades. The blessing and inauguration of this electrical section took place on March 10, 2012 at 10 am. It was blessed by Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil the Provincial of East Africa province, and was inaugurated by Mr. Peter Tiefentahler, the President of the Rotary Club. Mr. Thomas Sauer the Vice President of the Rotary Club unveiled the plaque. Those who witnessed this beautiful occasion include many Rotarians from the same club, Fr. Thomas Chozhithara, the local village leaders and parents of the students. It was followed by a short program of welcome, felicitation and thanksgiving. During the program the outgoing Director of the SFS VTC, Fr. Joseph Poikunnel was thanked and appreciated as well the new Director Fr. Robert Soosai Raj was welcomed.

This dream of starting the trade of Electrical installations could become a reality by the generosity and sacrifice of the Rotary Club members of Germany as well as the persistent efforts made by our confreres. The MSFS congregation especially the East Africa province owes a sincere thanks to Mr. Peter Tiefentahler & co for the generous contribution and the painstaking efforts for the entire organization. May God bless the Rotary Club and our ministry! *(Report from Fr. Robert Soosai Raj)*

Interschool cultural competitions Morogoro and Arusha

On March 17, 2012, the scholastics at Fransalian House Kola and Lumen Christi Institute Arusha under the auspices of FRANSALIAN COMMUNICATIONS organized the cultural Fest for the secondary school students of the respective places. The event was well accepted and appreciated over years in Morogoro and this year for the first time Scholastics at LCI ventured into it. Both events were organised very well and were highly competitive. The event helps the young Tanzanians to discover the beauty of their rich cultural traditions and to nurture them. It is also an opportunity for them to discover and to develop their own talents. Our hearty congratulations to our young confreres in Arusha and Morogoro and the fathers who guided them in the organization of the event.

Visit to Malawi

I would like to thank you for your valuable prayers and support during my study visit to the diocese of Karonga in Malawi. Malawi is known as the heart of Africa. The trip was very good and very inspiring. The people are very friendly and welcoming. Karonga is a 16 month old diocese the latest one in Malawi. It has now only six parishes – with many out-stations which are potential parishes. Diocese has only 14 priests including the Bishop. I could visit 4 parishes and some of the outstations. The diocese and the Karonga civil district is bordering to Tanzania (Mbeya Diocese) and Zambia. There is great potential for evangelization by pastoral work, education, social work etc. At present there are no missionary priests in the diocese. The earth quake last year had caused severe damage to many existing churches, schools, buildings etc. The Bishop Most Rev. Martin Mtumbuka and the priests are very happy to have missionaries in the diocese. The experiences were very positive. Let us earnestly pray that our Congregation may be daring to venture into this mission where the NEED is real and intense.

Jubilee committee meeting

As scheduled the committee for the preliminary preparations for the Jubilee celebrations of MSFS 175 years of Global Foundation and MSFS 25 years of presence in Africa, met on February 24, 2012. The general proposals made in the meeting were sent to you for your feedback. Still I await more critical, object evaluation of the proposals and further suggestions.

New office bearer of Apostolic Communities

Fr. Gijo Panamattathil is the new secretary of the Arusha Apostolic Community. We wish him every best in this new task.

Visitors from Germany

From March 3 to 18, 2012 we had the honor of receiving 18 Rotarians from Germany led Mr. Peter Tiefentahler the president of the Rotary club, under the auspices of the long standing bond of friendship and collaboration between the Fransalians in East Africa and the Rotarians of Karlstadt – Arnstein Germany. They visited many of our missions and were very much impressed by the services we render. As most of them were *first-timers* to Africa we appreciate their courage and good will to make this trip. We thank them for their generosity in supporting us in various ways.

60 Years of Priestly Ministry REV. FR. DEVASIA KUZHUPIL MSFS

From the year 1952 to 2012, **Rev. Fr. Devasia Kuzhupil MSFS** has proved himself to be an untiring servant of the Lord as His holy priest. The Jubilee celebration took place at Charis Bhavan, Kerala, India on March 16, 2012. All of us have shared the benefits from his missionary vision. As we are already in the jubilee year of the arrival of MSFS in Tanzania, we have the great reasons for jubilation as he was one of the pioneers in the African Mission. As the Province Family we congratulate our beloved Father and entrust all his concerns to the heavenly Father in our prayers.

News and sharing from Fr. James Panthalanickal from Belgium: Excerpts from his mail

*The Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) conducts the Master's programme at two levels - Initial Master's and Advanced Master's of one year each. **I am doing my Initial Master's in Theology and Religious Studies with Biblical Studies as my Major.** It is a Programme of one year (2011-2012) divided into two Semesters. The Programme comprises of 11 Courses of 4 credits each and a Thesis of 16 credits which make up to 60 credits. After the successful completion of the Initial Master's one is eligible to be admitted to the Advanced Master's. This Programme comprises of the same number of credits as the Initial Master's. However, the Thesis has to be larger. Moreover, one has to secure a minimum of 75% of marks, in particular for his Thesis, in order to be admitted to the PhD Programme.*

Right now I am doing the second semester of my Initial Master's. I am working on my thesis besides attending regular classes. I am learning Greek as part of my Biblical Studies. In addition, I attend a Dutch Course as there are possibilities of doing weekend pastoral ministry in the future. With all the studies, cooking and personal works, sometimes I feel a bit overwhelmed and exhausted. Continue to keep me in your prayers and good wishes.

We congratulate for the great efforts Fr. James in making and wish him every blessing and promise our prayers.

Home holidays

The following confreres will be going for home holidays and we wish them a god and relaxing time with their dear and near ones.

Fr. Tomy Kattikanayil	May 7	to May 21, 2012
Fr. James Panthalanickal	March 29	to April 16, 2012

Adhoc committee on MSFS Constitution and General Directory

Rev. Fr. Superior General has constituted an Adhoc Committee on MSFS Constitution and General Directory consisting of **Fr. Thomas Kalariparambil, Fr. Ignaci Muthu, Fr George Koottinal and Fr. A. Jerome.** **Fr. Thomas Kalariparambil** is appointed as the Convener and the Co-ordinator of this Committee.

Let us pray for:

- **Fr. Thomas Thoomkuzhy MSFS**, known as Fr.TT, of Pune Province passed away on March 6, 2012 in a Home for Senior Citizens in Switzerland. He was 71 years old. He was born on 8.7.1941 and was ordained on 15.5.1970.
- **Mrs. Rhoda Kalekye** - the maternal grandmother of Bro. Stephen Mutisya - aged 70 died on March 7, 2012.
- **Mr. Kurian Mattathil** - the father of Fr. Sunny Mattathil - passed away on March 25, 2012 as a result of massive heart attack. He was in his early 70s.

Let us pray for the departed ones and the sorrowed ones. May God grant them eternal bliss. **RIP**

My Programs

March

- 22 Meeting with the Apostolic Nuncio to Tanzania, in Dar es Salaam
- 24 - 29 Visit to Bunda (near Musoma) First Profession Cloistered Convent Mount Carmel
- 30 Spiritual Conference for Novices of Silesians of Don Bosco, Morogoro

April

- 2 Spiritual Conference MSFS Novitiate Kibaha
- 3 - 9 Holy Week and visitation to our parishes in Uganda - Agururu and Osia
- 10 Apostolic Community meeting Kenya & Uganda in Mlolongo
- 11 Meeting with the Major Superior Precious Blood Sisters, Riruta Nairobi.
- 14 Orientation for the Capitulants of Delegation Chapter Holy Cross Sisters Morogoro
- 15 Blessing of the new presbytery in Mji Mpya Dar es Salaam
- 19 – 20 Council meeting in Morogoro
- 21 To Kenya with the Provincial of Nagpur
- 25 – 30 MSAF Meeting and visits in Chad and Cameroon Missions

May

- 1 – 5 in Chad and Cameroon
- 10 - 12 Canonical visitation to SFS Junior Seminary, Morogoro
- 14 - 18 Canonical Visitation to Fransalian House Kola Morogoro
- 19 Renewal of vows Scholastics in Fransalian Study House Kola
- 23 Meeting with the Staff at LCI
- 26 Blessing of the new Parish Church in Osia, Uganda

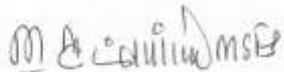
Beloved confreres,

Yet another, Easter is approaching. This may be the busiest time for us priests, planning and organizing the Holy Week services and all the connected activities. I personally appeal to each one of you to build your deep relationship with Jesus. Let us not fall into the temptation of making the Holy Week a mere commemoration of the events of the history. On the other hand, let it be another chance for us to live intensely the Paschal Mysteries in our very personal lives characterized by deep love for Jesus and readiness to make sacrifices. I believe that is our primary task. It is this that gives quality to our lives, our ministry, our relationship with our confreres, relationship with other communities etc. Let us remind ourselves of the resolutions that we have made to spend time with Jesus especially in our personal prayers.

May our Holy Founder Fr Peter Mermier and our beloved patron St. Francis de Sales be our inspirations and examples to build the deep personal relationship with Jesus, especially in personal prayer.

I wish you a grace filled celebration of the paschal Mysteries during this Easter.

United with you in the Eucharistic Lord,



Fr. Johnson Kallidukil msfs

(Provincial Superior MSFS East Africa Province)

*Consider the Lord and his strength,
Constantly seek his face,
Remember the wonders he has done,
His miracles, the judgment he spoke.* Psalm 104:4