

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

Fransalians - Province of East Africa

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Provincial Circular EAP- JK.23

May 6, 2014

Beloved Confreres,

It is the second time that I send a circular on May 6. The reason for choosing this day is that today we keep the memorial of venerable Angelina Lyaka who sacrificed her life for the sake of the Gospel values. I would like to share with you a few reflections on this occasion.

Angelina Lyaka - Maria Goreti of Tororo, Uganda

Today the Parish of Agururu along with many devotees from around are celebrating the memorial of Dada Angelina Lyaka. Angelina also known as the Maria Goreti of Tororo, Uganda gladly accepted Martyrdom in the year 1927, in order to preserve her chastity as the bride of Jesus. Her Memory is celebrated on May 6, 2014 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.

Testimony on her devotion to Christ

I would like to share with you this testimony from Fr. Willemen a Mill Hill Missionary who was her spiritual guide and pastor: Excerpt from the testimony is given in italics.

Every time I made my pastoral visit to Dabani, Angelina whose home was next to the mission was always among the first Christians to come for confessions in order to receive holy communion. It was during one of such visits about February 1927, that she came to me to share the sad story that Ndobira, a married man, had hatched a plan to force her marry him as a second wife and had actually threatened to kill her if she dared to refuse him. However Angelina told me that she had refused him to his face. She was very sad and disturbed and wanted me to help her. I praised her and told her then and there, rather to stand on her Christian Faith. She asserted of her willingness to die rather than to commit what she termed a mortal sin by marrying Ndobira.

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

When I arrived in the hospital ward, I found Angelina, she tried to sit up in bed and painfully greeted me; "Baba" (which means father / Dad, in Swahili language) she called, "He has now killed me!" I could not help to be moved to pity but at the same time to joy of this little African girl who was now giving her life, rather than to commit sin. I thanked and praised God for giving this little girl courage to preserve Chastity and to give meaning to chaste life, to the society where there is no regard for chastity at all. She must have been in great pain, but she was struggling not to show it. She received the last sacraments and was quite resigned to die. Before I left she said, "Baba, how can I pray here in this hospital? Please give me your rosary so that I can at least say the rosary till I die." The mother, who was sitting at her side, was rather revengeful, "You know all this," She said. "You must get this man punished." I tried to calm her. Angelina, however never uttered not a word of revenge.

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

The Matter that Matters

My dear Confreres! The life and conviction of Angelina must serve as true inspiration for us. She had made no public commitment to a life of chastity. Nor she had an obligation from a private vow which is known to us. Yet her baptismal commitment and her deep love for Jesus was strong enough to give her firm conviction to die rather than to commit sin. It is important to note that she made her decision in freedom. Without a chaste heart one cannot enjoy freedom. Human sexuality is evidence of a great trust bestowed by God on a man and woman. It is a sacred domain reserved for God, for it is there the miracle of creating a new human being is accomplished. God has revealed to us that sexual intimacy is to occur only within the sacramental marital union. Thus here God guarantees his loving and sanctifying presence. Any sexual act committed outside the sacrament of marriage indicates our selfishness, destroys our sensitivity to, and aptitude for true love and brings us closer to our spiritual death and enslavement by the power of darkness.

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

Let us also pray through intercession of Dada Angelina that we are also inspired and strengthened to live our life of holiness even if it demands great sacrifice from our part. Today let us join in spirit the numerous devotees and faithful, the priests and religious along with the Archbishop of Tororo who is celebrating the Holy Eucharist in her honour at her tomb in Agururu, Uganda.

Rev. Fr. Superior General enters into the Jubilee Year

On May 1, 2014 Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MFS our beloved Superior General entered into the Jubilee Year of his Priestly Ordination. Ordained in the year 1990 he has now completed 24 graceful years of sacred ministry as MSFS Priest. Let us thank God for this great gift. We are very glad that Fr. Abraham celebrated the Holy Mass opening the jubilee Year at St. Michael's Parish Chera, Meru Kenya. We wish him a grace filled year of Jubilee.

Canonical Visitation from General Administration

As scheduled, Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS our Superior General landed in Nairobi International Airport at 00.30 hrs on April 26, 2014. It was our great joy to receive him from the airport. The visitation is taking place as planned and may I remind you to pray earnestly that all the visitation and animation programs meetings - including that of Assistant Superior General, General Curia etc will go on well and that many more blessings may come up on us in our missionary endeavours in East Africa.

Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Ugandan Martyrs

Yesterday on May 5, Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil our Superior General along with some of the confreres visited and prayed at the Shrine of Ugandan Martyrs St. Charles Luangwa and his Companions. We had the opportunity of celebrate the Most Holy Eucharist at the main altar

where the leader of the Martyr group was killed for his faith. The Mass was offered for our Fransalian Family all over the world. It was a very grace filled time recalling to our mind the sentiments of our holy founder Servant of God Fr. Mermier who had a heart for Africa and he asserted it firmly, *I am so resolved, I want Missions.*

Welcome to Fr. Augustine Mangatt MSFS

Fr. Augustine Mangatt is already in East Africa for the planned meetings and to visit our missions. We extend to him a warm welcome and wish a happy stay with us.

Promotion to Priestly Ordination

The Provincial Administration has promoted Deacon Silvester Clement Sudhakar MSFS to the sacred order of priesthood. Soon he will be completing his studies in Theology. During the last week of May he will make the retreat at Dumila animated by Fr. Tomy Kattikanayil MSFS. God willing, he will be ordained priest on June 14, 2014 in his home diocese by the Local Ordinary His Lordship Rt. Rev. Susaimanickam. As we thank God for the gift of this candidate let us also pray for him that he will receive this grace of the sacrament of priestly ordination in the most worthy manner and live it to the fullest.

25 Years in the Mission Land

Fr. Sunny Mattathil MSFS arrived in Tanzania on January 1, 1989. He has now completed 25 glorious years of missionary presence in this mission land. He came as a seminarian and did his Theological studies at St. Paul Seminary Kipalapala, Tabora and was ordained priest in 1993. Thereafter he worked all these years in Tanzania. Our hearty congratulations and we wish him many more years of fruitful ministry in Africa.

Fr. Mathew Chavely MSFS arrived in Tanzania on April 25, 1989. 12 years later in 2001, on the same day (April 25) Fr. Chavely arrived in Uganda as one of the pioneers! He has completed 25 years of fruitful ministry in Africa. All these years he worked as frontier missionary both in Tanzania and in Uganda. Our hearty congratulations and we wish him many more years of fruitful ministry in Africa.

New Mission Superior : Chad-Cameroon

With effect from April 15, 2014 Rev. Fr. Manoj Xavier Arackal MSFS, is the Mission Superior of the Chad-Cameroon Mission of the MSFS. We express our hearty congratulations to him and wish him every blessing in leading the young, dynamic and challenging missions of Chad and Cameroon. We also express our most sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Joshy Nellimalamattam MSFS who hitherto led mission in Chad Cameroon with deep sense of dedication and determination in spite of the many challenges and difficulties that were on the way.

North East New Provincial Administration

The North East India Province in the recently celebrated Provincial Congress has been blessed with the following confreres in the Provincial Administration.

- Fr. Emmanuel Uppamthadathil - Ad-monitor cum Secretary for Education
- Fr. Athnas Kerketta - Secretary for Mission
- Fr. Benoy Veliyathu- Secretary for Formation
- Fr. Reji Kizhakethalackel - Secretary for Social and Innovative Ministries.
- Fr. Joseph Kannamangalath - Provincial Bursar

Our Hearty Congratulations to them and to every member of the NE Province. We Wish Rev. Fr. George Panthanmackal MSFS the Provincial and the new team every blessing they are in need of in leading and guiding the multifaceted and dynamic Province of North East India.

Fr. Mario D'Souza MSFS - Episcopal Vicar

Fr. Mario D'Souza MSFS of Pune Province was appointed as the Episcopal Vicar of the Amaravaty Diocese, India. Our hearty congratulations to Fr. Mario and we wish him a fruitful ministry in this office.

Apostolic Communities and new Office bearers

The Provincial Council has ratified the election of the following office bearers:

Kenya Uganda Apostolic Community:

- Convenor and Chairman - Fr. Sunny Vettickal MSFS
- Secretary - Fr. David Susai MSFS

Tabora Kahama Apostolic Community:

- Convenor and Chairman - Fr. Reji Pendanath MSFS
- Secretary Fr. Antony George MSFS

Morogoro Apostolic Community:

- Convenor and Chairman - Fr. Sebastian Nirappel MSFS
- Secretary - Fr. Sebastian Williams MSFS

Dar es Salaam Apostolic Community:

- Convenor and Chairman - Fr. Sunny Mattathil MSFS
- Secretary Fr. Sebastian Antonysamy MSFS

Our sincere congratulations to them and we wish them all the blessings in leading and guiding the religious life and activities in our apostolic communities.

Annual retreat: 2014

As announced earlier this year our annual retreat will be based on the Call of the General Chapter -2013.

We have retreats in three sessions at LCI, Arusha.

- A. July 23 evening – 28 evening for Priest confreres
- B. Aug 2 evening to 7 evening for Priest confreres
- C. Aug 10 evening to 15 evening for Scholastics

Due to organizational reasons a few scholastics as directed by their Rectors may attend the retreat with the priests and a few priests may attend the retreat with the scholastics.

I request now all the Fathers, depending on your preference to enrol yourself for the retreat before May 23, 2013.

Residence for the Sisters in Bukene, Tabora

In a warm ceremony held in Bukene, the foundation stone for the residence for the Sisters was blessed and laid by Rev. Fr. Kuldip Kujur MSFS. I thank Fr Kuldip for obliging to our request. My sincere thanks to the confreres at Bukene along with the Sisters for initiating the construction. Let us pray that the works may be completed fast and well.

Works/ Projects completed and in progress

By the grace of God and through the strenuous efforts of our confreres and through the generosity of many people who love and care for us, we were able to initiate many developmental works. Some of them were already announced in the previous circulars. However there are still many more that deserve our attention. They include but not limited to:

- ✓ Construction of Additional Facilities at SFS School Katani - work in progress
- ✓ Construction of Shops in campus in Katani - work in progress
- ✓ Renovation of the Church and Presbytery in Dumila being completed
- ✓ Renovation of the Church in Lububu - completed
- ✓ Renovation of Church in Itaga - being completed
- ✓ Construction of Common Kitchen for all Foster Projects Ipui - now progressing
- ✓ Construction of SFS Children's' Home - now in final stages
- ✓ Construction of the Phase III of the School building in Mkuza - being completed
- ✓ Construction of Dining hall and kitchen at Mkuza School - being completed
- ✓ Construction of security wall around the Presbytery Dumila - completed
- ✓ Construction of Additional facilities in Hostel Bukene - completed.
- ✓ Extension and Renovation of the Presbytery in Osia, Uganda - work in progress
- ✓ Roofing of the new Church building in Mkuza - completed
- ✓ Construction of Parish office facilities in Mji Mpya Parish - completed
- ✓ Construction of Office and store facilities at SFS Parish Ngurdotto - completed
- ✓ Construction of the Sisters Residence in Kagongwa - being completed
- ✓ Construction of Additional Dormitory in SFS technical Mwakata - initiated
- ✓ Compound walls and security measures in the novitiate - being completed.
- ✓ Partial Compound wall in Ndagani Seminary - in progress
- ✓ Construction of Hostel for the girls in Chera - in progress
- ✓ Construction of the Teachers' Quarters SFS Seminary Kihonda - completed
- ✓ Setting up Green House in Fransalian House Kola - Completed
- ✓ Installing 30,000 Ltr capacity rain water storage facility in Lububu completed
- ✓ Construction of the compound wall in SFS Bhavan Angamaly - completed
- ✓ Installation of Solar power for priest-house and church Ngurdotto - completed
- ✓ Construction of the LABs in SFS Secondary Ipuli - completed
- ✓ Construction of Teachers' quarters in Fransalian School Morogoro- completed
- ✓ Construction of Auditorium Fransalian School Morogoro - being completed
- ✓ Compound wall for the new plot of Fransalian School Morogoro - completed

In addition to these, the construction of many village-chapels many parishes is initiated and is progressing.

I must acknowledge that all these works were done as initiatives from the confreres and communities. Some of them may look insignificant and simple from an external perspective. But there is the investment of time, energy and other resources from our confreres. My sincere appreciation to you my dear confreres for your initiatives, for the deep sense of belongingness to the Fransalian Family and the dedication with which you do these works. Our sincere thanks to all our benefactors, friends and faithful in our parishes, parents of the children of our educational institutions etc who expressed their concern and solidarity with us. May God bless their generosity.

Mermier Optical Centre

As we are not able to cope with the new regulations from the health ministry in Tanzania regarding the requirements of the Optical services, we were forced to suspend the services of Mermier Optical Centre. After studying the pros and cons of the new scenario and taking into consideration the valuable suggestions from Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil the Director of the centre, the Provincial Administration has made the decision to close the centre officially with immediate effect. The centre was in active service for the last nine years and has served good number of people including many confreres. We express our sincere thanks to Fr. Sebastian who tried his best to keep the centre running in spite of the various challenges. We also thank Mr. Thomas Sauer and the Rotarians of Karlstadt and Arnstein who originally initiated the project.

One Day Seminar on Labour Law

On April 26, 2014 a seminar on Tanzanian labour law was conducted at Fransalian House, Kola. The targeted participants of the seminar were school managers, administrators, head teachers, community superiors, administrators. The seminar gave the participants a quick view of the existing labour laws and other issues of employment relations of the United Republic of Tanzania. Input sessions of the seminar covered topics of labour standards, employment contracts, dispute resolution and best practices in employment relations. There were 42 participants from various religious congregations including the MSFS confreres. The resource persons for the seminar were Mr. Mwangata Makawa Senior Mediator, Commission for Mediation Arbitration (CMA), Pwani Region and Mr. Simon Swai – Labour officer, Morogoro Municipality. I thank the Province Education Forum for taking the initiative for this seminar. I also thank Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal for the meticulous organization of the Seminar.

Fr. Stephen Gerald MSFS greets us.

I am very glad to present to you extracts from the letter from Fr. Stephen Gerald - now in Austria. Let us continue to pray for him that he will have fruitful and fulfilling ministry in Austria.

Dear Fr. Provincial and the conferrers, Greetings of peace and joy from Fr. Gerald!

By the Grace of God after I completed my basic German course in India, I reached safe in Austria on October 24, 2013. Fr. Josef Giefing received me at Vienna airport. Now I am still equipping myself with the sufficient knowledge of the German Language and the pastoral situation of Austria. Now during the weekends I help in two parishes under the jurisdiction of Fr. Giefing, and on the week days I am in Vienna the capital of Austria doing my German course and staying with the Redemptorists. Here also I offer my help in the Parish. As the diocese makes the transfers in September, I Think I will be given specific assignments.

Always people say that when anybody goes to a new land, in the beginning it is difficult. But I say, by the grace of God in my case it was not so because Fr. Giefing and the parishioners took care of me in the beginning stage and they do still. And from the Diocese also the Bishop and

others are so caring and helpful. The Bishop personally thanks the Provincial and the entire Province for giving this personnel assistance to his diocese.

I too at this juncture acknowledge all the help, encouragement and above all prayer support given to me by the Provincial and all confreres. Let us continue to pray for one another.

Phone No: +43 676 593 1595 Email: jeraldin29@rediffmail.com

Fr. Stephen Gerald MSFS

Vocation Promotion

Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy MSFS is appointed to assist in Vocation Promotion in Kenya. Our sincere thanks to Fr. Samy for this act of generosity and commitment in spite of the various works in parish and school.

Province Forum Meetings with the General Curia

Kindly be reminded about the Forum Meetings as announced earlier. These Forum meetings are held together with the General Secretaries of each Forum with input sessions.

- ❖ May 19 MON Stewardship Forum meeting with the General Bursar in LCI Arusha
- ❖ June 2 MON Formation Forum meeting with the General Secretary in Morogoro
- ❖ June 3 TUE Mission Forum meeting with the General Secretary in Morogoro
- ❖ June 5 THU Education Forum meeting with the General Secretary in Morogoro
- ❖ June 6 FRI Social Forum meeting with the General Secretary in Morogoro

I earnestly request your active participation with due preparations in these meetings. There may not be another official invitation sent for the same meetings. These joint-meetings take place only once in six years and let us make the best out of it for our more effective ministry.

Centenary of Itaga Parish, Tabora, Tanzania

On Friday June 13, 2014, St. Antony's Parish in Itaga will be celebrating 100 years of its existence. As intense preparations are going on for this great event, I request your prayers and also invite you to join the celebrations. Let us remember those who implanted the seeds of Christian faith in Itaga - including our confreres who were and who are part of the history and life of Itaga mission.

New Address:

Let us thank God that Fr. Thomas Olickal is well again and has resumed the ministry in US. His new address:

Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS
1950 W Irvington Pl-Tucson,
Arizona 85746.
U S A.

Prayers requested

For the departed ones

- Fr. Abraham Chirayil MSFS of Vizag Province passed away on April 18, 2014 at the age of 85 in Vizag.
- Fr Joseph Karuppannan MSFS of Nagpur Province passed away on April 29, 2014 at the age of 89 in Nagpur.

- Mrs Mary the maternal aunty of Fr. Sebastian Palakudy MSFS, passed away on April 7, 2014 at the age of 68.
- Mrs Annamma Joseph Poweth the maternal aunty of Fr Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS, passed away on April 16, 2014 at the age of 94.

For the sick and suffering:

- Fr. Philip Mangatt MSFS of Southern African Region, is diagnosed to have cancer.

Concluding words:

My dear Confreres,

Drawing inspirations from Angelina Lyaka - who loved in freedom and who died for the love of Jesus let us make our hearts filled with love for Jesus. Let us LIVE JESUS so that we become more loving and lovable.

As our East African Mission is experiencing the event of visitations and various meetings, let us continue to entrust the entire program to the loving and caring hands of God. May God bless our plans, journeys, meetings and celebrations. Let there be true love in all that we do. May the Servant of God Fr. Peter Mermier intercede for us.

United with you in the Eucharistic Lord,



Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS (Provincial Superior MSFS East Africa Province)

*The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.*

Zephaniah 3:17