

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES



Fransalians - Province of East Africa

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October 1, 2014

Beloved Confreres,

Feast of St. Theresa of Child Jesus

On this day, the Mother Church celebrates the Feast of St. Theresa of Child Jesus, the patroness of the Mission. In her quest for sanctity, she believed that it was not necessary to accomplish heroic acts, or great deeds, in order to attain holiness and to express her love of God. She wrote:

Love proves itself by deeds, so how am I to show my love? Great deeds are forbidden me. The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word, and the doing of the least actions for love.

This little way of Therese is the foundation of her spirituality.

My dear friends! This spirituality is very relevant for us. Little deeds for a better world. The goodness that we experience in this world is the totality of the goodness in the heart of every human being. That is the totality of the goodness God has deposited in human hearts. When each of us gives expression to this goodness in communities, in our families, in our Province, or Congregation all these units will become tangible, powerful and visible manifestations of God's love.

A compassionate glance, a consoling word, a listening heart, a helping hand and a generous attitude! These are nothing but the manifestations of the presence of the God of love in and thorough human lives. Every moment of interaction with the other is a golden opportunity for us to exercise these holy acts. What does it cost us? Nothing but our little ego!

When you meet someone, no matter friend or stranger, it is a chance for me to be an agent of God. In every warm handshake or gentle hug or any other gesture of genuine greetings we should communicate to the other that I am God's love for you.

The life of St. Theresa was just 24 years here on earth. But the depth of love she manifested in her little ways, can never be wiped off from the face of the earth. To live this, we do not need degrees and higher studies, we need not go for seminars and training sessions... But we can just will it and do it.

Through these little acts of love, *let us be Little Flowers.* These little flowers will make the beautiful bouquet of our communities and our province and congregational family.

Our Holy Founder Servant of God Fr. Peter Mary Mermier

We have just celebrated the Founders' Day. What a great missionary legacy he has left for us. Together with many other things, his methodology of preaching and his determination in the implementation of the plans are challenging and inspiring for us today. For instance:

In the year 1821 in the Parish of Le Chatelard, in the Archdiocese of Chambéry, when Fr.

Mermier and team fervently invited the faithful for the mission they gave the cold shoulder and remained indifferent. There was an air of unwelcome apathy.

It was the choice for the team now to "shake off the dust" (Mt.10:14) or "to pray without ceasing and never to get tired of doing what is right" (Gal. 6:9).

They set out, in imitation of Jesus, to the foot of the mountains to fast and pray that the people may be convinced of the need to come for the Missions. When people enquired about them, they got the reply: *They have gone to pray & fast for your conversion.*

Intercession with penance and mortifications had proved powerful and efficacious. The team was called back, and the mission in the Parish resumed with much deep fervour and enthusiasm!

As missionaries at times we come across situations of total indifference from the people; at times there are individuals, groups or negative forces working against our plans. In such situations the attitude of Fr. Mermier should give us hope and courage to move forward. All the negative and unpleasant experiences in life are opportunities for us given by God, in his eternal plan so that we are challenged. In our moments of being challenged we depend more on God. When we depend more on God we become stronger and our level of confidence will go high.

My dear confreres, challenges in the field of our works are bound to come, no matter in what apostolate we are engaged in and with what kind of people we are working. Perhaps those who would not give us any trouble in work are angels and saints! But they do not need our service either!

October - Month of Holy Rosary

Holy Mother Church exhorts us to pray the Most Holy Rosary daily. Millions and millions have throughout the history experienced the power of this spiritual weapon. St. Francis de Sales stated, *The greatest method of praying, is to pray the Rosary.* As the Church dedicates this month very specially for the Devotion of the Holy Rosary let us unite ourselves with the Christians all over the world in fighting the evil forces by praying the Rosary. *One day, through the Rosary and the Scapular, Our Lady will save the world,* said, Saint Dominic. Let us firmly believe that our world can be free from evil. An evil-free world is nothing but human beings without evil in their hearts. Let us start with our own hearts.

MSFS EA Provincial Congress - 2014

With deep sentiments of gratitude to the Almighty God and to you my beloved Confreres, I write these lines. The Seventh Ordinary Provincial Congress of the Province of East Africa was held from September 22 to 26, 2014 at Fransalian House, Morogoro, Tanzania. The theme of the Congress was: **MSFSness in being and doing at the service of the Mission of Christ in Africa.** The celebration of the Provincial Congress was our *Magnificat* to the Lord. It was really a great time of grace, enabling us to appraise the past, to amend the present and to assert the future, living the MSFSness in its fullness, as we approach the fourth decade of our presence in the continent of Africa. We have resolved to make every effort to ensure the quality of our very being in order to be able to live MSFSness in our being and to radiate MSFSness in our ministry.

With the closing of the seventh Ordinary Provincial Congress we have entered into another phase of the missionary journey of East African Fransalian family. We have now taken up on ourselves the obligation to live what we have resolved. May God of goodness and love enable us to live what we have resolved!

Our Sincere thanks:

Our Authorities

Our beloved Superior General **Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS** was accompanying us from the very moment of the planning of this Provincial Congress. His inspiring and challenging message was vibrant throughout our sessions. It challenged us to examine realistically the quality of our MSFSness. **Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes MSFS** the General Councillor in-charge of the Missions was the Delegate of the Superior General as well as the animator for the Provincial Congress. His recollection talk, messages, input sessions, timely interventions and sharing of rich experiences helped us to sink into the real spirit of collective discernment. **His Lordship Most Rev. Telesphore Mkunde** the Bishop of Morogoro Diocese officiated the Concluding Eucharistic celebration. Representing the local church he thanked the Fransalians for their missionary presence and contributions. His message was a call to serve the people of God with greater sense of attachment to the Lord and commitment to the mission.

We also thank the Provincials and many confreres who in their various capacities sent us prayerful, good wishes and messages and blessed our family gathering. As a Fransalian Family we thank each one of them.

The outgoing Provincial Curia

Once again I thank the members of the previous Provincial Curia: Fr. Thekkekara Jacob, Fr. Kochuparampil Pius, Fr. Mattathil Sunny and Fr. Prakashbhavan Santhosh the Provincial Councillors and Fr. Kallarackal Sheejan the Provincial Bursar. We had a very good and harmonious team work ever since I assumed the office. I received their whole hearted cooperation in our meetings as well as in our working together in order to take the MSFS Mission into further heights. The differences which we had at times, however never affected negatively in the working together focusing on the values for which we stood.

The Steering committee and the office bearers

My sincere appreciation and thanks to the steering committee headed by Fr. Nirappel Sebastian for the meticulous planning and organization of the event. I also thank all the other committees and those who were given the special assignments during the Congress, such as Scrutators, Tellers, Secretaries, Committees for the Final Statements and Action Plan. We could see the unified and harmonious efforts from everyone and from every department. It is all nothing but the goodness of each one of you strengthened through the prayers of many people. May you all be blessed in abundance for your generosity and dedicated service!

Our intercessors

More than ever we have sought the prayerful intercessions from all our dear ones, other members of the Congregation, other congregations, retreat centres and prayer groups. Hence nothing could prevent us from being united and focussed. I firmly believe that it was the power of prayer that we experienced all through the sessions of the Congress keeping all of us in good spirit, relaxed and cheerful. The power of prayers spared us from all negativities and unpleasantness. On behalf of the MSFS in East Africa, we thank all who were praying for us. May they be blessed by the Lord abundantly.

Our Young Brothers

As a Province family we thank in a very special way our Young Brothers at Fransalian House Kola who did everything possible for the smooth and efficient organization of the Congress. They did a great service with a remarkable sense of responsibility and

devotion to duty. It was a matter of joy to see our young ones growing in true Fransalian Family Spirit. May the Holy Spirit accompany you in every step of your formation and life!

And finally my beloved Confrere

The greatest blessings of the Provincial Congress was the presence of each one of you. I express my heartfelt gratitude to you my beloved confreres who were the LIFE of the Congress, who made it so lively, graceful and enriching through your positive presence. Indeed the Almighty has done great things for us. Your graceful and loving presence, positive attitude towards issues and events, spirit of patience and endurance, timely, reflective, challenging and thought-provoking interventions etc were the manifestations as well as the reasons for the grace that we received in and through the Provincial Congress. As a community, we have gathered in prayer and exercised this act of discernment. Let us now commit ourselves to the resolutions that we have made. May God be praised!

The new Provincial Curia

The Provincial Assembly gathered in Morogoro elected the following members to the Provincial Curia.

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| ❖ Fr. Kochuparampil Thomas MSFS | Provincial Councillor in-charge of Formation & Admonitor |
| ❖ Fr. Vettickal Sunny MSFS | Provincial Councillor in-charge of Education |
| ❖ Fr. Chinnappan Arockiasamy MSFS | Provincial Councillor in-charge of Mission |
| ❖ Fr. Chozhithara Thomas MSFS | Provincial Councillor in-charge of Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries |
| ❖ Fr. Soosai Raj Robert MSFS | Provincial Bursar |

We thank God for the gift of these confreres who are ready to serve this mission by being part of the Provincial Administration. We thank them for accepting this task of service and wish them all the blessings in the service of the Mission in East Africa. Hearty Congrats to each of them and hearty Congrats to all of you my dear confreres for electing them.

"The Jubilee Box" for the year 2037

The year 2037 - 2038 will be the year of the Golden Jubilee of the MSFS in Africa and bi-centenary of the foundation of our Congregation. We have conceived the idea of a Jubilee Box - 2037. A special box was prepared, in which the samples of all the items that were prepared for the Jubilee last year, were deposited along with our messages and good wishes for the Confreres who would be celebrating the 50 Years of MSFS presence in Africa.

On September 26, 2014, during the concluding Eucharistic celebration of the Provincial Congress the box was officially and solemnly closed by His Lordship Most Rev. Telesphore Mkude and Fr. Chavelly Mathew MSFS the oldest member of the EA Province present in the Provincial Congress. The Bishop of Morogoro also placed his message in the box. The box will be finally sealed on December 25, 2014. Hence dear confreres those of you could not place the message during the Congress, you may write it and reach to the Provincial House before December 25. Our friends and well-wishers too are welcome to share their messages - their vision for MSFS in EA in 2037.

Diaconate Ordination

On September 27, 2014 four of our scholastics were ordained deacons by His Lordship Most Rev. Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro, during the Holy Eucharistic celebration at Jordan University College, Morogoro. Our new Deacons are:

- ❖ **Dn. Auppaden Siljo Cherian MSFS**
- ❖ **Dn. Kayanja Joseph Mary MSFS**
- ❖ **Dn. Mwebia Japhet Kirimi MSFS**
- ❖ **Dn. Ouma Charles Ondiek MSFS**

We congratulate them for this grace of being ordained Deacons for the service in the Church and for the glory of God. We also thank their parents, dear and near ones, their formators for their sacrifices, accompaniment and their prayerful blessings in the life and call of our new Deacons. We wish them all the best in the final stages of their initial formation. We also thank the dear and near ones of our newly ordained who took the trouble of travelling long distances from Uganda and Kenya to join us on this happy occasion.

Transfers and Appointments

Fr. Silvester Clement Sudhakar MSFS is appointed to the MSFS Community at Itaga and designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest in St. Antony's Parish Itaga, in the Archdiocese of Tabora with effect from October 15, 2014.

Fr. Antonysamy Robert MSFS is relieved from all the responsibilities at Itaga. He is appointed to the MSFS Community at Mwakata, Kahama. He will hold responsibilities as the Manager of SFS School Kagongwa and the Administrator of SFS VTC Mwakata. This takes effect from October 20, 2014.

Fr. Palakudy Sebastian MSFS is appointed to the MSFS Community Ngurdotto. He is also designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest in St. Francis de Sales Parish Ngurdotto and St. Stephen the Martyr Parish Maji ya Chai, in the Archdiocese of Arusha with effect from Oct 1, 2014.

Fr. Chozhithara Thomas MSFS is appointed to the MSFS Community Osia-Agururu with effect from Oct 1, 2014. He is entrusted with the responsibility of establishing the FOSTER Projects in Iyolwa Mission. Meanwhile he will also render pastoral assistance in our parishes of Agururu and Osia as and when required.

Welcome to East Africa: Fr. Muthusamy Antonysamy MSFS

Fr. Muthusamy Antonysamy MSFS of Pune Province arrived in Tanzania on September 7, 2014. He will be rendering his services in East Africa for a few years. For the time being he is in the MSFS Community Mwakata learning the language and getting used to the life in the missions in Africa. We extend a warm welcome to Fr. Antonysamy to East Africa. May God bless you and your ministry in Africa!

Hearty Congratulations: Fr. Chozhithara Thomas MSFS

Along with the Doctoral Studies at Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich - Germany Fr. Thomas secured MSc in Psychology from Martin Luther University Shillong, India. All the doctoral study requirements are fulfilled except for the defence of the thesis. We also thank him for his functions as the Co-coordinator of Foster-Tabora and for initiating the Foundation of *Maisha Pamoja* during his stay in Germany. He is now back to East Africa and is assigned the task to establish the new FOSTER mission at Iyolwa in the Archdiocese of Tororo, Uganda. We extend a warm welcome to Fr. Thomas!

Fr. Pathiyil Johnson MSFS

Fr. Pathiyil Johnson has arrived in Rome on September 22, 2014. He is greeting all of us. His new number is: +39 3383559657.

Our Sincere thanks to Fr. Chettupuzhakaran Varghese MSFS, the Superior of the MSFS Community in Rome and all the confreres in Rome for their timely assistance in securing admission and other facilities for Fr. Johnson. We wish Fr. Johnson a very fruitful time of learning and gaining more and more experiences in order to anoint our mission in Africa with the fragrant balm of Salesian Spirituality.

Fr. Augustine Stephen Gerald MSFS

After the completion of the language course and various pastoral exposure and animation sessions, Fr. Augustine Stephen Gerald is given new assignment in the Diocese of Eisenstaedt, Austria as the Assistant Vicar. We wish Fr. Gerald all the blessings in this new ministry.

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On-going formation CPE at LCI

We have two sessions on Clinical Pastoral Education offered by Rev. Dr. Charles Gravenstine at LCI, Arusha. The two sessions are from November 03 - 08 (Arrival on Nov 3 before 18.00 hrs) and November 10 - 15 (Arrival on Nov 10 before 18.00 hrs).

It is a golden opportunity for us for a deeper understanding of our own selves, to analyse the quality of our relationship and pastoral and guidance skills. I request all the communities to arrange your programs in such a way that we can make use of this opportunity for the ongoing formation. All those who did not participate in the previous sessions are expected to participate in one of these sessions. **Kindly make your registration with Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel (mtkunnel@gmail.com) before October 15, 2014.**

Prayers Requested

For the Sick and Suffering:

- **Mr. Antony**, the beloved father of Fr. Joseph Poikunnel, is suffering from cancer in its advanced stages, affecting the liver and other internal organs.
- **Fr. Prakashsbhavan Santhosh** who is suffering from kidney related illnesses.

For the departed ones:

- ✚ **Fr. François Mercier MSFS** of Franco-Swiss Province died on September 9, 2014 at the age of 86.
- ✚ **Fr. Varkey Joseph Koovackal MSFS** of Vizag Province died on September 23, 2014 at the age of 84.

- ✚ **Mr Varkichan Kochuparambil**, the maternal uncle of Fr. Vettickal Sunny, died August 20, 2014 at the age of 70 due to a massive heart attack.
- ✚ **Mr. Stephen Kuzhupil** the beloved elder brother of Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil, died on September 10, 2014 due to acute Pneumonia. He died at the age of 66.
- ✚ **Mr. Cyriac (Justin) Kuzhupil** the nephew of Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil, died at the age of 30. On September 21, he accidentally got drowned while taking bath in a river. He was the son of late Mr. Stephen Kuzhupil who died just ten days before.
- ✚ **Mrs. Annamma** the beloved Mother of Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil MSFS, died on September 28, 2014 at the age of 86.

Home Holidays

Fr. Prakashsbhavan Santhosh has left for India on September 28, 2014 for anticipated home holidays due to the immediate medical attention he needed. We wish him a good time of relaxation and treatment.

Change of Citizenship

I would like to inform you that yesterday (30.09.2014) I have received the certificate of Naturalization from the Minister of Home Affairs, Tanzania. Hence with effect from September 30, 2014, I am a citizen of United Republic of Tanzania. I thank you my dear confreres for your encouragements and prayers.

Pilgrimage Itaga Parish

On August 8, 2014 we began the holy pilgrimage (*hija takatifu*) of Kategile, Itaga parish. The inaugural mass was presided over by very Rev Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, the Provincial of East Africa Province. Fr provincial gave a good homily on the first day of the novena to our lady of assumption. A good number of people participated very devotedly in the prayers during the nine days of novena. The Holy Mass offered with different intentions each day. Fr Robert was the main celebrant for seven days. On the last day, that is, on Aug 17, 2014 Rev. Fr. Patrick Mseko the Rector of Itaga seminary together with Fr Tomychan and Fr Robert presided over the Mass. Fr Patrick gave a touching homily on the importance of Mother Mary in our life. During the novena many people made their confession and many people who needed spiritual assistance were given the same. There were more than 800 faithful who participated devotedly in the Holy Mass followed by procession which lasted more than two hours. After the liturgical celebrations, there was a common meal shared by all.

Reported by Fr. Antonysamy Robert MSFS

Holy Pilgrimage and Parish Feast in Lububu

The holy pilgrimage (*hija takatifu*) to the Salvation Hill and the Parish Feast of Our Lady of Grace Parish, Lububu was celebrated on September 13 and 14 respectively. The celebration was well organized and arranged by the parish community under the guidance of the priests, sisters and parish council. There were more than 2500 pilgrims who participated in the procession from the parish church to the Salvation Hill and the Holy Eucharistic celebration on the day of *hija takatifu* on 13th September. Over 1500 faithful took part in the parish feast on 14th. Various sacraments (73 baptisms, 73 first communions and 51 confirmations) were conferred on those who have been specially prepared for them. Many priests who participated in the *Hija* prayed over the faithful

for various intentions. The presence of pilgrims from in and out of Lububu parish especially over 200 pilgrims who came walking more than 20kms from the Bukene Parish as a new way of pilgrimage gave a great witness to all the pilgrims on the day of *hija takatifu*. The presence of Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the Provincial of East Africa Province, Rev. Fr. Athanas Kienze, the parish priest of the Cathedral Parish, Mr. Sulemani Zedi, the Member of Parliament and various church and government leaders gave extra joy to the celebrations. The meaningful and spiritual celebrations conducted on these days could become a great witness to the Christians and the non-Christians for their faith formation.

Reported by Fr. Vellachalil Jomon MSFS

Blessing of the New Home for SFS Children's Home

We the Fransalians witnessed an unforgettable day in the history of FOSTER. On September 16, 2014, Tuesday at 05.30 pm we extended a warm welcome to His Grace Most Rev. Paul Ruzoka the Archbishop of Tabora, Very Rev. Fr. Johnson Michael Kallidukil MSFS the Provincial of Fransalians East Africa, and Mr & Mrs. Engler from Switzerland. His Grace blessed and opened the newly constructed structure for the Children's Home, the Jubilee gift of Fransalians to the children of Tanzania. During the holy mass His grace exhorted the children to grow in devotion and discipline following the Fransalian dictum: "The heart of education is the education of the heart." There followed a short programme of cultural entertainment by the children. Fr. Provincial gave a thought provoking message especially asking the children to shine in their studies and God-given talents. He also thanked Fr. Reji the Director, the MSFS Community and Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy and all our Friends and benefactors of FOSTER. The program was well organized under the direction of Fr. Reji and Community.

Reported by Fr. Paulsamy MSFS

Visit from Belgian Ambassador to SFS Ipuli, Tabora

On September 30, 2014 as we the Foster Community of Tabora were celebrating our beloved Founder's Day, God blessed us with the significant visit of His Excellency Mr. Koenraad Adam the Ambassador of Belgium in Tanzania. He was accompanied by Mr. Suleiman Kumchaya the respectable District Commissioner of Tabora. His Excellency was welcomed and received by the Manager of SFS Mission School Rev. Fr. Reji Joseph MSFS, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy, teachers and the students. His Excellency acclaimed the valuable service being rendered by Fransalians especially in the field of quality education and social developments. He exhorted the students to learn to live a value based life. At the end Fr. Reji Joseph the manager thanked His Excellency and District Commissioner for their encouraging visit and words of appreciation.

Reported by Candidate James Makuli

My Tentative Program

October 2014

- 5 Mass in Dumila/ Village
- 11 Spiritual Conference - Scholastics, Kola
- 12 Mass in Dumila/ Village
- 16-17 Council meeting in Katani, Kenya

18-21 Chera, Ndagani
23 Spiritual Services to SABS, Nairobi
25-26 Osia-Agururu Tororo, Uganda
28 Travel to India from Nairobi

November 2014

9-15 Seminar for the Major Superiors in New Delhi
16 MSFS Novitiate Vizag, AP
22 MSFS Novitiate Makkiad, Kerala
24-30 Meeting of PIF-PEA- MSAF in Bangalore

December 2014

4 Back to Nairobi
7-15 Seminar for the Formators at LCI

My beloved Confreres,

Just after the Provincial Congress, the word that still resounds in our minds and hearts is MSFSness. MSFSness is the totality of being human and being Fransalian. It consists in relating to the other from heart to heart. MSFSness in Being and in Doing is nothing but becoming Jesus in my own self and being Jesus for the other, after the life and example of St. Francis de Sales and Fr. Peter Mermier.

With these concluding thoughts, I wish all of us my dear Confreres, new and brighter pages in our book of consecrated life. May the blessed Mother pray for us! May the powerful intercession of our holy Founder Fr. Peter Mermier help us to move forward!

Yours in the Eucharistic Lord,



Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS

So do not fear, for I am with you;
Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10