

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

Fransalians - Province of East Africa

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August 28 : the Birthday of our Founder

Yesterday - August 28, 2016 was 226th the birthday of our holy founder Servant of God Fr. Peter Mary Mermier. I really wonder how many of us thought about it yesterday. Even I did not think about it until last evening when someone reminded me about it. Well, it is not constitutional or canonical requirement to remember the birthday of our Founder or Patron. But it can indicate to us how well or ill we are connected to them. In the religious circles, often we hear the cry "go back to the roots" ie., to be connected to the origin and to understand the original charism and vision of the Congregation. In the Year of Consecrated Life, addressing the young religious, Pope Francis exhorted us to learn the history of our religious congregations. He said: *he who ignores the roots - the history - has no future*. My dear confreres we need to be connected to the roots of our religious family. At one time or other all of us entered as formees and later as members in our congregation. If want to take the congregation in the right direction we also need to know the path it has trodden in the past - beginning with the person of our Holy Founder. May I share with you a few more thoughts in this regard using the imagery of umbilical cord.

Our umbilical cords

As our lives were formed in the womb of our mothers, we were connected to the body of the mother through the umbilical cord. It served as the channel to nourish our bodies and sustain our lives till we were born as little babies. Once the birth takes place, the umbilical cord is cut, but the mother-child relationship continues. The umbilical cord takes a new form. The mother feeds the child from her breasts. The family bond becomes the new umbilical cord for the child. The father earns to feed the family; the siblings or other relatives take care of the child. Thus from the womb of the mother, the child feels at home in the womb of the family. From the womb to the world was a big shift. But the child gets used to the new environments and grows up.

As the years pass and as the child is introduced to the educational system, there is again shift or variation in the umbilical cord. The new atmosphere in the school, hostel etc serves at least partially as the new womb for the child. As the child gets used to the school atmosphere there will come a time when one feels at home more in the school with the peer group than at one's own home with one's family members. This process continues as one grows up further and gets into different institutions and professions.

However for us religious, this symbol of umbilical cord has greater significance. When we shift ourselves from the environment of our hitherto life - be it at home or in the educational institutions - to the life of the seminary formation there is a drastic shift taking place. Initially one feel home sick. But as the time passes one needs to establish genuine and deep relationship with the religious family. The religious family becomes the new womb and we establish the relationship with this family with the new MSFS umbilical cord which consists in the spirit of the Rule of life, good traditions in the congregation, spiritual nutrients from the Salesian spirituality etc. All these give us the true MSFSness.

Wi-Fi Umbilical Cords!

Wi-Fi implies - connected, but not bound. It can happen that one is connected to the religious family in a very superficial manner, without a genuine relationship with the community or the congregation. One *downloads* what one needs. The religious community is there to meet the needs of the individual. But once when the needs are met one can easily slip away. There is nothing to unplug or untie for the relationship to the community is not strong. For them the umbilical cord is usually outside the community. They enjoy comforts from the community without commitments to the community. When not provided they would miss the things from the community, but they would never miss the members of the community. This scenario is very detrimental to the religious life. Are we more connected to our families and the circle of our friends than to our own religious families? From where do we draw our strength and inspirations?

Invitation to look for the Spiritual navel

The one who is really bound to the MSFS family will have the indelible mark of the navel in one's life. This spiritual navel is the *MSFSness* - being manifested in the way of life, behaviour and attitudes. My dear confreres, true *MSFSness* is not possible without being truly connected to the religious family. Is my cord really connected to the family?

In the womb the foetus is mainly a recipient and the mother is the giver. But as adult, in the spiritual womb of my religious family, it is not only that the family nourishes me but I must also contribute to the well being of the family. Sometimes as religious we live with a sense of entitlement without caring for our own obligations towards the congregation.

Let us remember: One who does not care about the roots, has no chance of a good harvest.

Our Founder Fr. Peter Mermier, our parents, our siblings, our teachers and mentors our formators and our superiors, our elders and our pioneers - all these form part of our roots. In different ways, at different levels and in different times we have drawn inspirations and strength from them. Let us be grateful to them and be firmly connected to our religious family with the strong umbilical cord of the sense of belongingness to the congregation.

Promoted for the Priestly Ordinations

The following scholastics are promoted for the Priestly Ordination.

Deacon Aristidis Danda MSFS

Deacon Jobin Karottukampadathil MSFS

Deacon Stephen Mutisya MSFS

Deacon Thomas Njue MSFS

As we congratulate them let us accompany them with our valuable prayers.

Dates of Priestly Ordinations

Three of our Deacons are given the dates of their Priestly Ordinations. God willing they will be ordained priests as follows:

- Deacon Thomas Njue MSFS October 22, 2016 (Embu Diocese , Kenya)
- Deacon Stephen Mutisya MSFS October 27, 2016 (Machakos Diocese Kenya)
- Deacon Jobin Karottukampadathil MSFS December 28, 2016 (Pala Diocese, India)
- The Priestly Ordination of Deacon Aristidis Danda MSFS is likely to be in the first week of December. We still await the final word from the Local Ordinary of Njombe Diocese, Tanzania.

First Profession at Fransalianum Kibaha, Tanzania

On July 10, 2016, we had the first profession of 14 of our Novices (EA 8; SA-NE 2; MZ-NG 1; CC-SW 3). The ceremony was held during the Solemn Eucharistic celebration held at St. Francis de Sales Parish Mkuza. Congratulations and prayerful good wishes to the newly professed members of our Fransalian family. We wish them every blessing in their further stages of formation. Our congratulations and sincere thanks to the formators too for their selfless dedication.

Final Profession at LCI

The following scholastics made their final vows on August 23, 2016 at Lumen Christi Institute, Arusha, Tanzania.

Bro. Amal Neerolickal MSFS
Bro. Gerald Mabiriizi MSFS
Bro. Ibrahim Musajja MSFS
Bro. Jonathan Muema MSFS
Bro. Lawrence Sebowa MSFS

Our sincere congratulations to them and wish them a very enriching time of journeying with the entire congregation till the end of their days.

Scholastics' Gathering at LCI

Being the year of *MSFS Formation for the mission of mercy and compassion*, in EA we have organized a gathering of all the MSFS Scholastics in East Africa. It was a unique time when 61 MSFS Scholastics from 7 countries and four MSAF Units in Africa came together from August 7 to 24, 2016. It was the first ever gathering of this kind in the Province of East Africa. The program consisted of seminars and retreat. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes MSFS gave three days seminar on *Formation for Mission and MSFSness*; Fr. Devasia Manalel MSFS was the resource person for the next three days for the topic on *Treatise on the Love of God Insights for daily life*; Fr. Charles Alphonse OFM Cap (from Rome) gave sessions on *Personal growth, finding the inner child and Brain Gym*. This consisted of many practical sessions. There were also sessions from Sr. Appolina Paul FCSM (from Tanzania) - *On the expectations of the religious and laity from the seminarians*. Sr. Feliciana Njagi CPS (from Kenya) shared: *Insights on the Challenges and Opportunities on the Formation in international context*. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS gave spiritual conference on *the need to develop a sense of belongingness to the congregation being aware of one's obligations*. There were also inspiring messages from the Superior General and the General Councillor in charge of formation.

At the end of the first part of the program ie the seminars, there was the simple but graceful celebration of the 40th Ordination Anniversary of Fr. Mathew Kozhuppakalam MSFS. From August 18, the brothers had their retreat guided by Fr. Mathew Kozhuppakalam MSFS. The culmination of the program was the final profession of five of our scholastics.

As we thank the Almighty God for the gift of numerous vocations to our religious family, let us continue to work as noble agents who promote and nurture good and worthy vocations to our congregation and to the service of God and his Church as a whole. My sincere thanks to the Director and the Staff of Lumen Christi Institute who hosted this gathering, making all the necessary arrangements. Our thanks to all the guides who shared their time and resources with our brothers. Finally I also thank our brothers who actively and cooperatively took part in every program. May God bless our congregation with many more good and worthy vocations.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Our confreres **Fr. Sebastian Nirappel** and **Fr. Jomon Vellachalil** made the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and attended the renewal course for the priests from July 16 to August 6, 2016. We thank all those people of good will who made this possible for us. May they be richly rewarded.

Delegation Superior : Mozambique

Fr. Petrus Kullu is appointed as the Delegation Superior of Mozambique Mission for the second term. Besides, the Provincial Council has appointed Fr. Ranjit Tirkey, the Delegation Bursar, Frs. Georgekutty Arackaparampil Ranjit Tirkey and Henry Nedumkallel as Delegation Advisors. We wish Fr. Petrus and the team all the blessing in leading the MSFS Mission in Mozambique

Baraka 9

Our news magazine, **Baraka** Issue no.9 is already out of the press. Hearty congratulations to Fr. Clement Sudhakar, the chief editor and to the contributors. Baraka 10 is due to be printed in December this year. This issue should cover the major events of our mission here from June to December 2016. You are kindly requested to give materials at the earliest. Please contact: clementsudha@gmail.com; editorbaraka@gmail.com.

The Baraka 9 is available in web.

Please go to <http://www.msfs-eastafrika.com/images/baraka/baraka9.pdf>

New Intake in Ndagani Aspirancy formation

God has blessed us with 23 new candidates (1 Tanzania; 3 Kenya; 19 Uganda) who have joined us for the initial formation at our Fransalian Seminary Ndagani, Kenya. We extend a warm welcome to them and wish Fr. Stephen Ubadesi MSFS and the formation team a graceful time in initiating them to the Fransalian way of life. Our congratulations and thanks also to all the Vocation Promoters.

The Church Blessing in Mkuza, Dar es Salaam

The newly constructed parish church in St. Francis de Sales Parish in Mkuza was blessed on August 13, 2016. His Eminence Polycarp Cardinal Pengo the Archbishop of Dar es Salaam together with His Lordship Bishop Salutaris Melchior Libena the Bishop of Ifakara Diocese, blessed the Church and consecrated the altar. Holy relics of St. Francis de Sales was deposited in the altar. The ceremony of blessing and the Eucharistic celebration was attended by over 3000 faithful. The very spacious and elegant structure of the new Church is the blessing of God, revealed in the good will and generosity of many. Our Sincere congratulations to Fr. Pius Kochuparampil the present parish priest and Fr. Sebastian Williams the assistant parish priest and all their predecessors all the faithful who tirelessly contributed for this new church . We also remember with gratitude all our benefactors and organizations who contributed generously for this cause.

The Church Blessing in Dakawa, Dumila - Dakawa now *Parokia Teule*

On August 27, 2016 the church building of Dakawa Centre in the Parish of Dumila, Morogoro was blessed by His Lordship Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro. It was a great feast for all the faithful. On the same day the sacrament of confirmation was administered to 157 faithful, young and old. To the joy and surprise of every one Bishop announced Dakawa to be *Parokia Teule* (Station designated to be a parish in the near future). The patroness of the mission is St. Josephine Bakhita. Our Sincere congratulations to Fr. Joseph Poikunnel MSFS present parish priest and Fr. Kuldeep Kujur MSFS the assistant parish priest and all their predecessors and all the faithful who tirelessly contributed for this church and to the state of becoming a designated parish. We also

remember with gratitude all our benefactors and organizations who contributed generously for this cause.

Confreres on Home Holidays

Fr. Joby Maruthomalayil MSFS	from July 4, 2016 to September 4, 2016
Fr. Santhosh Prakashbhavan MSFS	from August 20, 2016 to October 20, 2016
Fr. Japhet Kirimi MSFS	from July 15, 2016 to August 15, 2016
Fr. Sebastian Williams MSFS	from August 20, 2016 to November 10, 2016

We wish our confreres a good time of relaxation and rest with their dear and near ones.

Opening of the Mission in Swaziland

MSFS in Africa has set foot in Swaziland the tenth country of our presence. The Southern African Region / North East India Province has taken this bold step and two confreres are there already learning the language. The official opening of the Mission in the parish of St Philip's in Swaziland is on September 25, 2016. As an expression of our solidarity and unity with the MSAF, Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS and Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil MSFS - our two pioneers in Africa will be attending the function. They will also visit some other missions in South Africa and Namibia. Now they are in the process of getting the visa. Let us pray that everything will go well.

News Snippets

- The Diaconate Ordination of this year is planned to be on October 15, at JUCO Morogoro.
- Fr. David Susai MSFS has successfully completed well the first course of the German Language at MMB Pune. He has now three more. Congrats and good wishes.
- Fr. Francis Kallikattu left for Philippines on July 28, 2016 in order to participate in the renewal program at EAPI Philippines.
- As DSFS Sisters have discontinued their services in our SFS Integrated Primary School Katani from this academic year, we thank them for their kind services. There is now FCC Sisters (Ernakulum Province) who render their services at our School. We extend to them a warm welcome and wish them all the blessings.
- Hija Takatifu (Holy Pilgrimage) in Lububu will be on September 17, 2016 and the Hija Takatifu in Kashishi will be on October 7, 2016. I welcome all the confreres to make these pilgrimages as far as possible and to bring along the faithful from the places of our ministry.
- Fr. Stephen Gerald together with his Parish Priest Fr. Mag. Roman Schwarz and some parishioners are with us in EA for a short visit and exposure to the mission. We accord to them a warm welcome and wish them a very pleasant time in Africa.
- We have a new candidate from India in the person of Joseph Puthenkudy. He has completed his Degree in Business Administration. He will be for some time in our community in Ipuli for the initial formation. We extend a warm welcome to him.
- Fr. Rajesh Jayaseelan MSFS, who was serving at LCI from Feb 2015 is gone for higher studies to Portugal. We thank Fr. Rajesh for his kind services and wish him all the blessing.
- Fr. Kurian Kollapallil MSFS will be going for a pilgrimage to Rome from August 28, together with some his parishioners in USA to participate in the Canonization ceremony of Bl. Mother Theresa. We wish them a safe journey and request their prayers for our missions.

- We extend a warm welcome to Bro. Clement Leonard MSFS from Nagpur Province, who has joined LCI for the Philosophy formation. All the best and blessings of God dear Bro. Clement.
- Fr. Zachariah Burofero MSFS is doing now pastoral ministry in Archdiocese of Agrigento, in Sicily in South Italy. His contact number is +39 3511759113.
- Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS is now doing pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Wuerzburg, Germany.
- Deacon Jobin Karottukambadathil is assigned to do the ministry in the Noviciate, with weekend pastoral assistance in Mkuza Parish, from October 3 to November 3, 2016.
- We have obtained the Title Deeds for our plots in Kampala, Uganda and Turiani Tanzania. Congrats to our confreres who tirelessly worked on the matter.

New Address

Fr. Kurian Kollapallil MSFS
 St. Joseph Church
 415 Ormsby St.
 MI 49221. USA.
 Tel. +1 517 265-8938.

Greetings from Fr. Francis Kallikattu MSFS in Philippines: excerpt from his mail:

My dear Fathers and Brothers, Greetings from Philippines.. I hope everything goes well with you. Here I am fine and studies are in full swing. We are 48 participants for this course "PRULM" (Pastoral Renewal and Updating for Leadership and Mission) , from all over the world. We started our course on August 2, 2016 with three days retreat as an orientation to this course. It was really an enriching experience. It was something different from the retreat we are used to. Most of the classes are based on psychology and spirituality. It really helps one to have a holistic transformation. Here I am really busy with lot of discussions and writing assignment every week. It is really an experience to live in a multicultural community and to see the beauty and uniqueness of each person and their cultures.

The climate is here a little warm and sultry. Last one and half weeks it rained day and night! Food is ok here everything is boiled in the water nothing fried. Hence it is very good for health. Last weekend I paid a visit to our MSFS fathers at Molino Cavite, around 50 km from here. Please continue to pray for me. I will update to you later. My contact number is +639152707355

We wish Fr. Francis Kallikattu all the blessings in the new task entrusted to him.

Greetings from Fr. Tomy Kattikanayil MSFS in USA: excerpt from his mail:

My dear Fathers and Brothers, Greetings from USA ! I started my journey on July 13 evening from Dar es Salaam and landed in Detroit, USA on July 14, 2016 at 9.30 pm. I had a pleasant journey from Dar to Detroit. Fr. Kurian was there at the Airport to welcome me. From the Airport it took 1.30 hrs to the parish where Fr. Kurian is working. He has a parish and he is the administrator of the parish. At present I am staying with Fr. Kurian. I have already passed the test and obtained the driving licence. I was in Dallas, Texas recently for the Vice-Provincial Congress of the USA Vice Province. It gave an opportunity to meet all the members who are working here.

I had a meeting with Bishop of Lansing diocese, he welcomed me to the diocese. I have to take charge on September 1, in the Sacred heart Catholic Church in Hudson. Hudson is only 30km away from the parish of Fr. Kurian. So on Sept 1, I will be going to my parish. It has two churches and one school. I request your valuable prayers for me as I start my pastoral ministry in USA. I take this opportunity to thank all of you for your great support and prayers and I assure you my prayers. God Bless you.

My contact number is: +15172709127.

We wish Fr. Tomy Kattikanayil all the blessings in the new task of ministry in USA.

The Office Number of Provincial

The Office Number of the Provincial's office is: **+255 784 418 799**. This is the contact number printed on the CELEBRET given the priests. This is also in WhatsApp. Soon we will have official WhatsApp Group for EA. I request you to save this number in your system and send to me a message.

Prayers requested for our departed Confreres

- ✚ Fr. G. Dominic Savio aged 47, South East Province died in an accident on July 1, 2016.
- ✚ Fr. Jose Thenganakunnel MSFS of North- East Province aged 66, died on July 16, 2016.
- ✚ Fr. Melchiades Dalgado MSFS of Nagpur Province aged 87, died on July 26, 2016.
- ✚ Fr. Alexander Kottam MSFS of Vizag Province aged 85, died on August 7, 2016.
- ✚ Bro. George Clement Anthony MSFS of Pune Province aged 23. He was doing regency and he died on August 29, 2016

May they Rest in PEACE!

Kindly offer the suffrages for the departed confreres as required of our Rule of Life.

My Program

September 2016

6 - 8	Njombe (visit to the family of Deacon Aristides Danda)
12-13	Dodoma
14 -15	Mwakata
16	Bukene
17	Lububu - Hija
18	Kashishi
19-20	Ipuli, Council Meeting
21	Back to Morogoro
26 -27	In LCI
28	Travel to Kenya
28 - 30	Machakos- Embu (Visit to the families of Deacons Thomas Njue and Stephen Mutisya)

In the month of October and partly in November, I will be in India in order to participate in the PIF PEA Meeting in Vizag and to meet our confreres in India, very specially Fr. Joseph

Kunnappilly. During the second half of October I will be in our Mission House in Angamaly as Fr. Thomas Olickal will be making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I will be making also retreat for the priests at Sehion Retreat Centre Attappady, Kerala from November 6 to 11. I hope to back to EA on November 20.

Concluding words

My dear Confreres! Every day we come across several questions of anxiety and worry about our life and future. Some of those question are: What would my future look like? How will our Province be after one decade? What could be the best ministry I would be doing? Will there be any faith here in the next century? In looking for the convincing answers to these questions, often we fail to live and enjoy the present. As time goes by we need to expect the unexpected; we need to get used to things and situations different from what we are used to.

Let us listen to the wisdom of our dear Patron St. Francis de Sales:

Do not look forward to the changes and chances of this life in fear; rather look to them with full hope that, as they arise, God, whose you are, will deliver you out of them. He is your keeper. He has kept you hitherto. Do you but hold fast to his dear hand, and he will lead you safely through all things; and, when you cannot stand, he will bear you in his arms. Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow. Our Father will either shield you from suffering, or he will give you strength to bear it.

Let this wisdom guide us and move us in our daily life. My sincere good wishes and prayers accompany each of you in your life and mission.

Requesting your prayers

United with you in the Eucharistic Lord,



Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS

(Provincial Superior MSFS East Africa Province)

***May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O Lord,
my rescuer, my rock!***

Ps. 19: 15