


MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

Fransalians - Province of East Africa
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Provincial Circular EAP – MT.01
July 25th, 2017

Beloved Confreres!

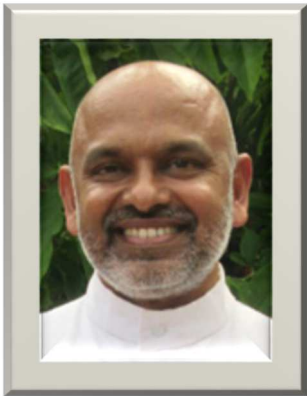
Greetings of peace and joy in the name of the Lord!

“How marvellous are your works, Lord, how deep are your thoughts” (Ps. 92:5). We, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales/Fransalians have experienced the amazing works of God in Tanzania since 1987. The Congregation has witnessed phenomenal growth over the years, thanks to the providence of God working through the commitment of our pioneering missionaries as well as of all those who followed them to serve the mission in Tanzania and elsewhere. The missionary spirit of our beloved founder, imbued with the spirituality and missionary dynamism of St. Francis de Sales is our guiding principle in spreading the Good News of Christ in this part of the world. Hardships, distances, inconveniences or sicknesses did not side-track their missionary focus. Our confreres put into practice the words of St. Paul in their lives: “Can anything cut us off from the love of Christ?” (Rom. 8:35). The dedication and commitment of our early confreres to the African mission was the catalyst for the further growth and expansion of Fransalians in East Africa and also in the rest of Africa. I take this opportunity to thank my predecessors, Fr. Augustine Mangatt, the first Mission Superior and Regional Superior, Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil, the first Provincial, Fr. Thomas Olickal and Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, all of whom have tirelessly worked for the growth and expansion of the East African Mission. What we are today in East Africa as a Congregation is due to their leadership qualities supported by the total dedication and missionary commitment of every confrere working in or for East Africa. My dear confreres, I thank and express my appreciation to each one of you for being loyal to our missionary vocation.

In a very special way, I would like to express our deep gratitude to Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz, the former Superior General, who was instrumental in hastening the growth and expansion of our East Africa Mission since its very inception. I also wish to express our sentiments of gratitude to all our benefactors and well-wishers, who have generously contributed for the growth of our missions. Let us thank God for the manifold blessings that we have received and experienced in our missionary commitment to the Church in East Africa. “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his faithful love endures for ever (Ps. 118:1).

My dear Confreres, trusting in God and counting on your collaboration, I have assumed the responsibility to be the fourth Provincial of the Province of East Africa on 15th July 2017. I sincerely thank each one of you for your confidence in me and for entrusting me the animation of our beloved Province for the next three years. I sincerely thank Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our Superior General and the General Curia for their trust in me and for asking me to guide the Province according to the hallowed Constitutions of our Congregation. I promise to be at your service for the greater glory of God. I request you to kindly guide and strengthen me through your valuable prayers. Let us live joyfully our missionary vocation in our communities manifesting 'MSFSness' in our daily lives.

Thanks to Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the outgoing Provincial

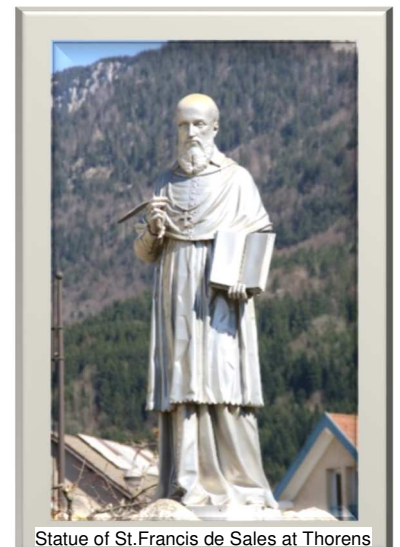


Fransalians in East Africa deeply appreciate and thank Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, who has just completed his six year tenure as the Provincial (2011 – 2017). We thank Fr. Johnson for the dedication and love with which he animated the Province during the past six years through his exemplary religious life and through the ministry of leadership. He consolidated our missionary endeavours throughout East Africa and was at the service of each mission and confrere. We thank him for his administrative skills, excellent organization of the matters of the Province, personnel planning and his vision for the entire Province. His deep trust in God has enabled him to make wise decisions for the growth of our missionary endeavours.

As we express our gratitude, we wish him all the best in his future ministry at the service of the Province Family.

450th Birthday of St. Francis de Sales

Our beloved patron St. Francis de Sales was born on 21st August 1567 in Chateau de Sales at Thorens, Savoy, in present day France. This year, as we mark the 450th birthday of our patron, I urge each one of you to make a spiritual preparation by organizing a triduum at the level of local community/apostolic community and reflect upon the philosophy and spirituality of life of St. Francis de Sales and its relevance for our life and mission in East Africa to-day. Our formation houses could organize various programmes to instil in the formees the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales.



Statue of St. Francis de Sales at Thorens

Convocation of the 8th Provincial Congress

In consultation with the Provincial Council held on 15th July at Morogoro, and with the due approval from the Superior General, and in accordance with the Constitutions and General Directory of the Congregation (*Con. 234ff and GD. 261ff*), I am glad to officially convoke the **8th Ordinary Provincial Congress of East Africa Province**, to be held at Lumen Christi Institute, Maji ya Chai, Arusha, Tanzania from September 22nd (at 18 hrs) to 26th (at 20 hrs.), 2017. The theme of the Congress is:

FRANSALIANS IN EAST AFRICA: CONSECRATED TO LIVE JOYFULLY THE MISSION OF CHRIST, BEING LOYAL TO THE SPIRITUALITY OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES AND THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT OF FR. PETER MERMIER.

Provincial Congress is an extraordinary time of grace and blessing for each one of us. Let us make adequate preparations for the Provincial Congress so that it turns out to be a spiritual event for the growth of our mission and for the personal growth of each one of us.

The Provincial Council also has constituted a steering committee and four sub-committees for the preparation of the Congress.

Steering Committee

1. Fr. Jomet Kollapallil (Convenor)
2. Fr. Soosai Raj Robert
3. Fr. Tomichen Perumanoor
4. Fr. Jose Eriyanickal
5. Fr. Charles Ouma
6. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel (Chairperson)

The first meeting of the steering committee will be held on 22nd of August at 09.00 hrs at Lumen Christi Institute, Arusha.

The following committees have been constituted for the preparation of various papers to be presented in the Congress.

Consecrated life in Community: Fr. Innocent Ngowi (Convenor), Fr. Kurian Kollapallil, Fr. Santhosh Paul Prakashbhavan and Fr. Sudhakar Cemet.

Mission: Fr. C. Arockiasamy (Convenor), Fr. Jacob Thekkekara, Fr. Pius Kochuparampil, Fr. Nepolian, Fr. Sunny Mattathil and Fr. Joseph Kayanja

Formation: Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil (Convenor), Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil, Fr. Jomon Vellachalil and Fr. Thomas Njue.

Education: Fr. Sunny Vettickal (Convenor), Fr. Sebastian Williams, Fr. Sheejan Kallarakkal and Fr. Japhet Kiriimi.

Social Apostolate: Fr. Thomas Chozhithara (Convenor), Fr. Regi Pendanath, Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil and Fr. Stephen Mutisya.

The committees could meet at the earliest to prepare drafts of the documents for their respective areas and send these to the office of the Provincial before 10th of August 2017. The office of the Provincial will send the draft to local communities for study and discussion. The outcome of the discussions should then be formulated by the Superiors of the respective communities and they will send it to the office of the Provincial by 25th of August 2017. Please send your papers to provincialeastafricansfs@gmail.com

Visitation of Assistant Superior General

Rev. Fr. Thumma Mariadas, our Assistant Superior General will be visiting every apostolic community in our Province in preparation for the Congress. The purpose of the visit is to reflect upon and evaluate matters concerning our life and mission in East Africa and to draw necessary conclusions for renewal and reorientation of our consecrated life and mission. Rev. Fr. Assistant General has prepared an evaluation paper for our reflection and discussion in local communities. The Superior of the local community could send the outcome of the discussions to the convenor of the apostolic community and he will make the final report, which will be presented during the meeting with the Assistant Superior General.

The confreres, who are outside East Africa could send their reflections to the office of the Provincial. The Animation document is attached to the Provincial Circular. **Please find below the schedule of the visitation of the Assistant Superior General.**

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| 06 th September | Kenya Apostolic Community (09.00 hrs) |
| 08 | Uganda Apostolic Community (09.00 hrs) |
| 10 | Arusha Apostolic Community (17.00 hrs) |
| 12 | Dar-Kibaha Apostolic Community (09.00 hrs) |
| 13 | Morogoro Apostolic Community (09.00 hrs) |
| 15 | Tabora-Kahama Apostolic Community (09.00hrs) |

Prayer in Preparation for Provincial Congress

We have prepared a prayer for the spiritual preparation of the Provincial Congress. I request every community to kindly recite this prayer during the hours of liturgy. Please keep the success of the congress as an intention and pray specially during the Mass. The prayer is attached to the Provincial Circular.

Visitation of Communities

I would like to visit every confrere and community in the coming days prior to the Provincial Congress. Please see the dates of the visitation given below.

Installation of the new Provincial Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel



A famous English saying goes like this: “A Good day is seen in the morning.” The morning of Saturday of July 15, 2017 was a good and grace filled one. This was so owing to the fact that it marked the great event of the installation of the fourth Provincial Superior of East Africa province. The event took place at SFS Junior Seminary, Kihonda, Morogoro.

The Holy Mass began at half past nine with a solemn

procession from Mermier Hall to the Seminary chapel. The main celebrant was Rev.Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel, the Provincial elect. Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, the outgoing Provincial warmly welcomed everyone and urged everyone to join Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel in praising and thanking the Lord. After the reading from the gospel, the master of ceremony, Rev. Fr. Charles Ouma MSFS welcomed the congregation gathered for the occasion to witness the Installation ceremony. Then articles 225 and 226 of the MSFS constitutions were read out by Rev. Fr. Sunny Vettickal MSFS.

The new Provincial was introduced and his curriculum vita was read out by Rev. Fr. Mathew Chavely MSFS. This was followed by a hymn to the Holy Spirit led by the Seminary choir. After that the outgoing Provincial invited Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel to make the profession of faith and pronounce the oath of fidelity. The letter of appointment of the new Provincial from Fr. General was read out by Rev. Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil after which he handed it over to the new Provincial. Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazathukunnel in his homily encouraged all the confreres to renew and re-live the missionary spirit and pastoral dedication entrusted to them by the church and the congregation at large.

Rev. Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil MSFS graced the event by giving a felicitation speech. In his speech, he pointed out some of the challenges the pioneers faced in the beginning and the success achieved by the congregation during the last three decades of her presence in East Africa. Fr. Marlon OCD and Sr. Denis {St. Ann of Luzern} addressed the congregation on behalf of all the religious members present for the ceremony. The Mass was concluded with the song, 'showers of blessings' led by the seminary choir. The event came to an end after the fellowship meal at the Provincial House.

Reported by Bro. Fabian Wawi

Let us pray for the departed:

Fr. Sijo Olickal MSFS of South West Province, aged 31, died on 13th July 2017.

Beloved mother of Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, **Mrs. Annakutty Michael Kallidukil, aged 72, died on 24th July 2017.**

My tentative programme

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| 26 July | Visitation Ndagani |
| 27 | Visitation Chera |
| 28 | Visitation Iyolwa |
| 29 | Ordination of Dn. Lwarence Sebowa |
| 30 | Visitation Mlolongo |
| 31 | Visitation Katani |
| 01 August | LCI |
| 02 | Vistation Maji ya Chai |
| 05 | Odination of Dn. Ibrahim Musajia |
| 06 | First Mass of Fr. Ibrahim Musajia |
| 08 | Visitation Jinja |
| 09 | Visitation Osia |
| 10 | Visitation Agururu |
| 12 | Ordination of Dn. Gerald Ssekelembe |
| 14 | Visitation Mwakata |
| 15 | Visitation Lububu |
| 16 | Visitation Bukene |
| 17 | Visitation Kashishi |
| 18 | Visitation Ipuli |
| 20 | Visitation Ngurdoto |
| 22 | LCI: Steering Committee Meeting |
| 24 | Visitation SFS Junior Seminary, Kihonda |
| | Visitation Provincial House |
| 25 | Visitation Fransalian House, Kola |
| | Visitation Dumila |
| 26 | Visitation Mji Mpya |
| 27 | Visitation Novitiate |
| 28 | Visitation Mkuza |
| 29 | LCI |

Conclusion

Beloved confreres, I sincerely thank each one of you for your fraternal love and support as I assume the responsibility of animating our Province for the next three years. I am aware of my limitations, but with your valuable prayers and collaboration, we can fulfil our mission of service of the Church and the people of God. Let us work together as a family forgetting our racial, national, tribal or linguistic differences for the greater glory of God. Let us live our consecrated life joyfully in our communities. Let us always keep in mind the question that Jesus asked Peter: "Do you love me?" (Jn. 21: 15 -17). Let this question of Jesus resonate our hearts and minds especially when we face problems and difficulties. Our love for Christ and his mission should surpass all our limitations as human beings. May the compassionate mother of Jesus intercede for us and help us to live our missionary vocation following the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and with the missionary zeal of our Founder Fr. Peter Mermier.

Wishing you a happy feast of St. James, I remain.

Yours devotedly in Christ



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS

Provincial - East Africa Province

The daring and passionate affirmation of our Founder "I want Missions" is the inspiration behind our apostolic ventures and missionary initiatives. Ours is a call to be missionaries by remaining constantly attuned to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and by imbibing the spirit and vision of both our Patron and our Founder. It is a call to listen to and meditate on the word of God, to grow in communion with the Eucharistic Lord and with our brothers in community.

(MSFS Constitutions, Prologue F)