

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

Fransalians - Province of East Africa

Provincial House P. O. Box 12 Morogoro Tanzania
 Tel: +255 689 882 711; +255 624 027 880
www.msfs-eastafrika.com
 e-mail: provincialeastafricamsfs@gmail.com

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My dear Confreres,

As we begin the season of Advent, let us experience the closeness of Jesus, who became a human being in order to save humanity. May the liturgical services and reflections during this season of Advent reinvigorate our faith and hope in the Incarnate Word! I wish you all a grace-filled season of Advent!

COME, LORD JESUS

We begin a new journey of faith with the beginning of the season of Advent. The liturgy of the Church prepares us for the annual celebration of Christ’s birth and at the same time it also directs our gaze to our final goal- our final encounter with the Lord who will come in splendour and glory. It is precisely in this double perspective that we must live the season of Advent. We look at the first coming of the Son of God, when he was born of the Virgin Mary and simultaneously to his glorious return, when he will come “to judge the living and the dead”, as we recite in the Creed.

The vision of Advent is twofold; it looks back at the first coming of Christ at Bethlehem, and it also points to the future when Christ will come again. In the interval between these two events we must find meaning for our life as Christians. The season of Advent prepares us to celebrate the Incarnation of Christ. The love of God that Jesus revealed to humanity and his exhortation to love and forgive one another is the hallmark of his life, which was culminated on the Cross. Through his life, passion, death and resurrection, Christ orients us to eternal life. The Incarnation of Christ becomes meaningful only in the context of his Resurrection. The Resurrection of Christ gives meaning and hope to our life here on earth and prepares us for the life to come. The season of Advent invites us to live a life based on the Gospel message which would lead us to eternal life.

The Jews expected a Messiah, who would liberate them from political bondage and restore the lost glory of Israel. They never thought that he would be born of a humble and unknown woman.



They could not understand the establishment of a spiritual kingdom based on love and mercy. Misguided expectations about the Messiah led them to take his life. What are our expectations of Christ? How do we live Christ in our daily lives? Has the birth of Christ become meaningful to my life? Are we really looking forward to his second coming? If yes, are we prepared to receive him? The answers to these questions should help us to live the message of the Gospel in our own lives.

The scriptural readings of the season of Advent invite us to re-focus our life on God alone. The readings encourage us to shift the focus of our life from ourselves and the worldly values to God and eternal life. There is a need for constant vigilance and prayer to experience the closeness of God in our daily lives. Let us not allow this season of Advent and Christmas to be merely an annual ritual exercise without any meaning for our life. The last but one verse of Scripture says: Come, Lord Jesus (Rev. 22:20). Let us allow Jesus to come into our lives and fill us with peace, joy, love, faith and hope here on earth as well as in the life to come.

NEWS FROM THE GENERALATE

CAUSE OF OUR FOUNDER

Rev. Fr. Yves Carron, the Assistant Superior General and the Postulator for the cause of our venerable Founder Fr. Mermier writes:

I am very glad to share with you that we had the tribunal hearing session in Annecy (in the Pastoral Center of the diocese – La Puya) on 19th October 2019. The theological censor (Père Marie-Joseph Huguenin) has submitted his 49 pages report and given his depositions. Please be reminded that we needed two reports from theological censors. The first report was given by a Redemptorist priest a few years back. So now we have two theological censors' reports as required by the law. The historical commission (comprising of Sr. Odile, a Holy Cross Sister of Chavanod, and Mr. Bouchet the Archivist) also has submitted their report and their depositions during the same session.

We have heard two witnesses during the tribunal session (Mrs. Joëlle Mermier- a fourth-generation niece, and Marie-Valerie Gow, a parishioner of Chaumont, birthplace of Fr. Mermier). We are in the process of gathering more witnesses, and will be organizing another tribunal hearing session when the witnesses are ready. Now, the process would not be complete, unless we hear the witnesses from wherever the MSFS are working. We definitely need at least 20 witnesses from India (of which 4/5 of them could be our own confreres), and at least a few of them from Africa (as well as other parts of the world like England, Brazil or USA). The witnesses don't necessarily need to have a very deep knowledge of the founder. If they have, it is well and good. What they need to share before the tribunal is that they have at least;

- 1) a basic knowledge of Fr. Mermier,
- 2) his reputation of sanctity and virtuous life and
- 3) his intercessory power.

My dear confreres, I kindly request you to send the information regarding the favours received through the intercession of our holy Founder to Fr. Sebastian Williams, who is the Vice-Promoter in our Province. Thus, we can speed up the beatification of our Founder.

YEAR OF FRANSALIAN ASSOCIATES

Rev. Fr. Superior General has declared 2020 as the year of Fransalian Associates. It begins on January 24, 2020 and ends on January 23, 2021. During this year of Fransalian Associates, we shall strengthen Fransalian Associates in our Province by initiating a formation programme in view of helping and encouraging people to consecrate themselves to God as Fransalian Associates, to intensively study the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and its practical applications in daily living and to live a life of holiness following the Spiritual Directory. I call upon the Coordinators of each country to organize Fransalian Associates in every parish/Institution.

NEW PROVINCES

On October 24, Rev. Fr. Superior General has erected two new Provinces – **Guwahati** and **Dibrugarh** - dividing the present North East India Province. Both Provinces will come into effect on January 24, 2020. Hearty congratulations to the confreres of erstwhile North East India Province for missionary initiatives and growth both in the number of centres and personnel which led to the establishment of two new Provinces. May God continue to strengthen your missionary dynamism in both Provinces.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF FRANCO-SWISS PROVINCE

Rev. Fr. Jean Yves La-Tue	Provincial Superior
Rev. Fr. Scaria Kannezhath	Councillor and Admonitor
Rev. Fr. Viju Kunnathott	Councillor
Rev. Fr. Binoy Kidangathukarot	Councillor
Rev. Fr. Samuel Devaraj	Provincial Bursar

We offer them best wishes and prayers as they begin their ministry of leadership in the Province.



GRADUATION CEREMONY AT SFS VTC MWAKATA



October 15, 2019, was a joyful day for SFS Vocational Training Centre Mwakata as 176 students graduated in various trades. The ceremony started in the morning with a Solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rev. Fr. Jose Eriyani, the Provincial Bursar. The graduation ceremony was attended by parents, teachers and more than a thousand people. The guest of honour was Hon. Ezekiel Maige, the Member of Parliament from Msalala District. Among those who graduated, 165 students were sponsored by Pact Tanzania (Kizazi Kipya) in collaboration with the Red Cross Tanzania. Some of them were

finishing long courses in various trades. Among those who graduated, 128 were pursuing certificates on Designing, Sewing and Cloth Technology (formerly tailoring), 11 of them were pursuing certificate on Electrical Installation and 26 of them were pursuing certificate on Computer applications. Having gone through this program they are now well placed to contribute to the development of the country. The whole program was broadcasted by TBC 1 and was reported in Nipashe Newspaper. The graduation ceremony is found in YouTube through the following link <https://youtu.be/DQt8Nky>. We are very grateful to our confreres in Mwakata, teachers, non-teaching staff and all the Students for their effort, support and cooperation. In a very Special way, we would like to thank Pact Tanzania (Kizazi Kipya) and The Red Cross Tanzania for trusting us and collaborating with us.

(Fr. Thomas Njue MSFS)

BLESSING OF THE RENOVATED PRESBYTERY AT MKUZA

The presbytery of St. Francis de Sales Parish at Mkuza underwent a total renovation with a new Chapel, roofing, flooring, windows, plumbing, solar installation and interior works. It was blessed on October 19th by Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, Provincial of East Africa. The renovation was made possible with the collections from the parish itself. Hearty congratulations to the parish council and our confreres – Fr. Pius Kochuparampil and Fr. Sebastian Williams – who took the initiative to renovate the presbytery.



BLESSING OF THE RENOVATED BOYS' HOSTEL AND KITCHEN AT BUKENE

The newly renovated Boys hostel as well as kitchen was blessed by Rev. Fr. Kenneth Maina MSFS and opened by Rev. Fr. Joseph Kayanja on November 13, 2019. The roof, floor and windows of the hostel were replaced. It can now accommodate 100 boys. A new kitchen was constructed with the help of Ms. **Lisa Pörtl and her friends** from Austria. Thank you dear Lisa and friends for your love and support for our school. God bless you and your companions abundantly.



Hearty congratulations to Fr. Siljo Auppaden and Fr. Jonathan Muema for providing better facilities for our students at Bukene.

PRIMARY SCHOOL RESULTS 2019 (TANZANIA)

SCHOOLS ABOVE 40 STUDENTS

Name of the School	Students Appeared for Exam	School Average/250	Rank of School in District	Rank of School in the Region	Rank of School in the Country
Fransalian Primary School, Morogoro	56	198.37	6/72	12/558	243/9929
Fransalian Mission Primary School, Mkuza	84	181.69	3/38	14/269	516/9929
St. Francis de Sales Mission Primary School, Tabora	126	179.36	2/48	8/453	570/9929

SCHOOLS BELOW 40 STUDENTS

Name of the School	Students Appeared for Exam	School Average/250	Rank of School In District	Rank of School in the Region	Rank of School in the Country
De Sales Primary School, Isaka	19	220.00	1/42	3/255	28/7102
SFS Primary School, Bukene	26	216.15	1/53	3/320	61/7102
St. Francis de Sales Primary School, Kagongwa	24	215.29	3/42	5/255	69/7102

Hearty congratulations to students, staff and management of our schools for the excellent results in the national exams.

GRATITUDE AND GOOD WISHES

Fr. L. Yesudoss, of the Mozambique delegation of Nagpur Province, who was on the staff at Lumen Christi Institute since June, 2017 has returned to his Province and is appointed in Mozambique for pastoral ministry. We sincerely thank Fr. Yesudoss for his yeomen service at LCI as well as for his pastoral services in the Province of East Africa. We appreciate his cheerful availability and commitment. May God bless abundantly his new ministry in Mozambique.

Fr. Stephen Nadakuzhackal, of Srikakulam Diocese, India, was an associate member of our Province since March 2017. He is returning to his diocese on December 06, 2019. We sincerely thank him for his dedicated services at Ipuli and Iyolwa. Thank you dear Fr. Stephen for your love and support for our missions in East Africa. May God bless your new apostolate in Srikakulam.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

Date	Programme	Venue
December 10 & 11	Meeting of School Managers & Religious collaborators	Provincial House
January 08 & 09	PMP	Provincial House

HOLIDAYS

Fr. Aristedes Danda	October 16 – November 16
Fr. Sebastian Palakudy	November 20 – January 05
Fr. Reji Pendanath	November 21 – December 21
Fr. Sijo Pendanath	November 21 – December 21
Fr. Martin Pendanath	November 21 – December 21
Fr. Stephen Mutisya	December 02 – December 29
Fr. Sebastian Kuzhupil	December 04 – January 20
Bro. Leo	December 06 – January 10
Fr. RVS Prasad	December 13 – January 13

OBITUARY

Mrs. Lourdu Mary (53), mother of Fr. Clement Sudhakar, passed away on 14.10.2019.

Rev. Fr. Wilson Kottam (51) of South West India Province passed away on 07.11.2019.

Mrs. Stella Rani (51), sister of Fr. Sebastian Williams, passed away on 13.11.2019.

Rev. Fr. Michael D'Souza (84) of Nagpur Province passed away on 21.11.2019.

Rev. Fr. Mathew Kalathungal (70) of South West India Province passed away on 22.11.2019.

Please pray the repose of the souls of our beloved departed confreres and family members.

MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
December 02	Provincial House
December 08	Visitation: Dumila Parish
December 10 & 11	Meeting with religious collaborators, Morogoro
December 13	Noviciate Kibaha
December 17 & 18	Council Meeting, Morogoro
December 22	Tabora
December 24 & 25	Kashishi
December 28 – January 29	Europe

My dear Confreres, I wish you all once again a grace-filled season of Advent.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS,
Provincial - East Africa Province

Salesian Thought

Let us walk happily and joyously, dear souls, among the difficulties of this passing life; let us embrace with open arms all the mortifications and afflictions that we will meet on our way, since we are sure that these pains will have an end when our life ends, after which there will be only joy, only contentment, only eternal consolation.

(Sermons of SFS on Eternal Happiness).