

**MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES**

**Fransalians - Province of East Africa**  
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**Provincial Circular EAP – MT.12** **Aug 04, 2019**

**My dear Confreres,**

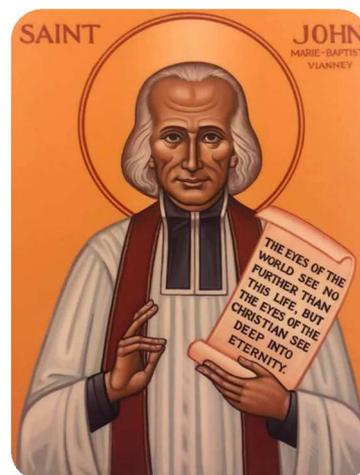
Greetings of peace and joy on the feast day of St. John Maria Vianney! May his life and example always inspire our priestly ministry for the people of God!

**CURÉ D'ARS**

We are celebrating today the feast of St. John Maria Vianney (1786 – 1859), the patron of parish priests. He is a model for all priests not because of his brilliance nor of numerous writings. He did not found a congregation or some spiritual movements but bore simple witness by being a faithful, zealous and dedicated Parish Priest of the remote village of Ars. His sole aim in life was to love God and bring others to him.

Despite his poor academic performance, he overcame all the hurdles and became a priest in 1815.

Fr. Vianney became the parish priest of Ars in 1818 and remained there until his death in 1859. Ars was a small farming village of 230 people. Majority of them did not practise religion. Love and prayer were John Vianney’s guiding principles as a priest and as a man. He knew this assignment was not an easy one. As the son of a farmer, he understood these people. He reached out to them, talking about farms and the needs that accompany this way of life. He built relationships with them. As a priest, he lovingly challenged them in many ways. Over time, they would invite him to their homes to share a meal. Eventually, attendance increased at Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation found a restored place in the people’s hearts. For Vianney priestly ministry was nothing but revealing the loving Heart of Christ to others. Holy Mass and the Sacrament of Penance consumed most of the priest’s day, sometimes as much as 16 or 18 hours. But when there is pure zeal for the Lord in the heart, what things cannot be accomplished? Vianney knew success comes when all things are entrusted solely to the Lord.



His success, however, was not always met with admiration or appreciation. Few neighbouring priests complained that their own parishioners were going to him instead of them. But his humility did not allow him to worry about such matters. There is a story about how some clergy wanted to send a petition complaining of Fr. Vianney's work to Bishop. When Fr. Vianney heard about it, he said that he too would sign in it. In addition to the frequent objections and persecutions from those, including some of his fellow clergy, who did not like his pastoral work in Ars, he would experience great trials that tested his moral strength, his priestly ministry, and his spiritual core. It is said that when one embraces virtue, opportunities to practise it will abound. The life of St. John Vianney should encourage us to exercise our priestly ministry to reveal Christ to all despite discouraging moments in life as priests. His life calls us to examine our life as priests for Christ.

Pope Francis constantly encourages priests to be authentic to their vocation. On the feast day of St. John Vianney, it may be good to remind ourselves of Pope's understanding of priesthood which comes through his various exhortations from the beginning of his papacy. Please find below a summary of his vision of Priesthood:

1. **The strength of a priest depends on his relationship with Christ.** Pope Francis has said that the touchstone of how deeply a priest is living his vocation is the extent to which he seeks Christ in his daily life. For this to happen, the priest needs to continue to grow in union with Christ through prayer and intimacy.

2. Just as he must be close to Christ so the **priest must also be close to the people he serves.** In his first Chrism Mass homily, Pope Francis famously spoke of how priests must be "shepherds living with the 'smell of the sheep'".

3. As Pope Francis emphasized in the homily of his inaugural Mass, **a priest's authority must be linked to service**, especially to the care and protection of the poorest, weakest, the least important and the most easily forgotten. This means that priests have to leave their comfort zone and have "real contact with the poor and the marginalised."

4. The **priest must be a minister of mercy.** Pope Francis told a group of ten newly-ordained priests that the most important advice he could give them was simply, "Be merciful."

5. The **priest is called to simplicity of life.** He calls priests to commit themselves to a simple lifestyle. Pope Francis has repeatedly criticised priests who give in to vanity and worldly ambition.

6. The **priest must be a model of integrity.** There should be no room in the life of priests for haughty clericalism and any kind of abuse of their position. Pope Francis is calling and requesting priests to understand that their authority derives not from worldly power but from personal integrity and humility in imitation of Christ.

7. The **priest is to be a source of blessing for his people.** The anointing which he receives at his ordination is not meant just for himself – it is to flow through him to those he serves. Again to quote from the homily of his first Chrism Mass, "A good priest can be recognised by the way his people are anointed... when our people are anointed with the oil of gladness, it is obvious: for example, when they leave the Mass looking as if they have heard the good news."

8. The **priest should be a genuine missionary at all times**. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis proposes a profound missionary renewal of the entire Church. “I dream of a “missionary option,” that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything (EG 27)” In his address to the 2016 assembly of the Pontifical Missionary Societies, Francis spoke of “the passion for God and for the mission of the Church”; He left his audience (and us) with a clear challenge: “We must grow in evangelizing passion!”

The life of St. John Maria Vianney and the teaching of Pope Francis challenge us to live our priestly and religious vocation genuinely amidst growing scandals and apathy towards priesthood and religious life.

**CALL OF GENERAL CHAPTER 2019: A FOLLOW UP**

The General Chapter 2019 under the theme “MSFS, Wake Up to the Basics” invites every confrere to live the charism of the Congregation as envisioned by our beloved Founder. The four basics of our charism: Community Life, Mission, MSFS-ness and Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales, are to characterize our daily lives and apostolate. Our Superior General Rev. Father Abraham Vettuvellil exhorts every confrere to implement the Call of the General Chapter in our personal lives as well as in our communities.

Following the directives of the General Chapter, the Province of East Africa has decided to intensify the study of Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. As a first step, Salesian retreats are organized for all priest-confreres. A four day Salesian seminar and a three week long Salesian retreat is being organized for second and third year Theologians prior to their Perpetual Profession.

**VISITATION OF SUPERIOR GENERAL AND GENERAL CURIA**

Our Superior General Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil will be visiting our Province from March 07 to April 08, 2020. There will be also Forum meetings with the General Curia. Please find below the details:

March 07 – April 08	Visitation of Superior General
May 04	SAIM
May 05	Formation
May 06	Education
May 07	Stewardship
May 08	Superiors’ Forum
May 09	MSAF with General Curia
May 11	LCI Graduation
May 12	LCI Decennial Celebration
May 13 – 14	Meeting of East Africa Provincial Curia with General Curia

Please keep in mind these dates when you plan programmes in your communities.

**NEW PROVINCIALS**

**USA Vice Province**

Rev. Fr. Superior General has appointed Rev. Fr. Tomy Puliyanampattayil as the Vice Provincial of USA Vice Province for a second term with effect from July 02, 2019.

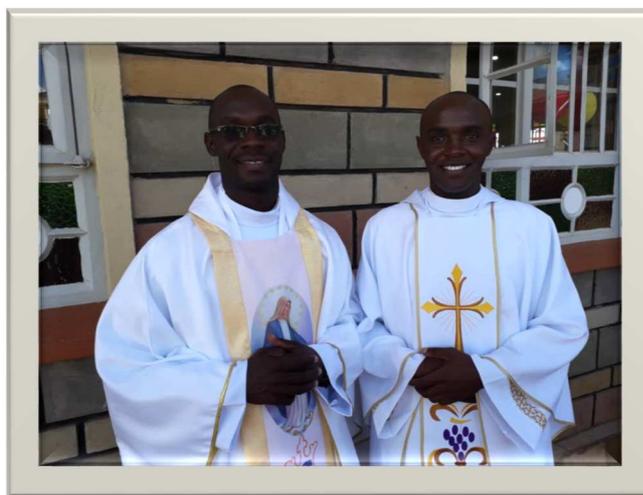
**Franco-Swiss Province**

Rev. Fr. Superior General has appointed Fr. Jean-Yves LE TUÉ as the Provincial of Franco-Swiss Province with effect from August 01, 2019.

Hearty Congratulations and prayerful wishes to both Fr. Tomy and Fr. Jean-Yves.

**PRIESTLY ORDINATION**

**Father Ventino Peter Mutume** was ordained a priest on July 13, 2019 by Most Rev. Paul K. Bakyenga, Archbishop of Mbarara, Uganda. He was ordained along with other eight candidates to priesthood at the Cathedral, Mbarara. It was witnessed by a large number of priests, religious and laity. Fr. Baiju Mundackal, the Regional Superior of Southern African Region and Fr. Job Karikkampally were also present as the newly ordained priest belongs to the Southern African Region. Hearty Congratulations!



**Father Kennth Maina Mwangi** was ordained a priest on August 03, 2019 by Rt. Rev. David Kamau, Auxiliary Bishop of Nairobi at Divine Mercy Church, Muigai, Thika, Nairobi. A large number of priests, religious and laity witnessed the priestly ordination of Fr. Maina. We specially thank Vincentian Fathers who organized the Priestly ordination in their parish. Hearty Congratulations!

**DIACONATE ORDINATION**



Dn. Francis Indumuli Aloo and Dn. Richard Tamaro Gitono were ordained as deacons by Most Rev. Sosthene Leopold Bayemi Matjei, Bishop of Obala, on June 29, 2019 in the Minor Basilica of Mary Queen of the Apostles, Yaounde, Cameroon.

Hearty Congratulations!

## FIRST PROFESSION

July 27, 2019 was a joyous day for Fransalians in Africa as 9 Novices (Southern Africa: 01, Tchad-Cameroon: 4 and East Africa: 4) made their First Commitment to the Lord at St. Francis de Sales Church, Mkuza, Kibaha, Tanzania. His Excellency Archbishop Jude Thadeus Ruwaichi, the Coadjutor Archbishop of Dar es Salaam presided over the Eucharistic celebration and Fr. Mathew Thazathukunnel MSFS, Provincial of East Africa



received the vows. A large number of priests, religious and lay people participated in the celebration. Hearty Congratulations to all our newly professed novices. Hearty welcome to the Fransalian Family.

Sincere thanks and hearty congratulations to Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, Director of Novices and Fr. Prakash Prashanth, Socius, who accompanied our novices during their Novitiate and helped them to discern and grow in their vocation to religious life in the Fransalian Family.

## OUR NEW NOVICES



On 26th July, 2019, twenty Pre-novices (Mozambique: 01, Tchad-Cameroon: 5 and East Africa: 14) were initiated to an year of Novitiate by Fr. Mathew Thazathukunnel MSFS, Provincial of East Africa. Fr. Provincial explained to the new novices the importance of Novitiate in the life of a religious. He exhorted the Novices to deepen their prayer life, learn to live in community and discern their vocation to religious life in the Congregation of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales focusing on the charism and apostolate of the Congregation during their time in the Novitiate.

## ANNUAL RETREAT

Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu MSFS General Secretary for Formation animated two Salesian retreats for our confreres in East Africa (July 15 to 20 and July 29 to August 3). The theme of the retreat was “Growing in Holiness in a Fransalian Way”.



Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu who is a renowned Salesian retreat preacher opened the treasures of the Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales from various perspectives and encouraged everyone to understand the rich

heritage that we possess as sons of St. Francis de Sales who made practical and simple methods to imitate Christ and achieve perfection. The Province of East Africa is indebted to Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu for animating the Salesian retreats for our confreres.

## NEW COMMUNITIES

**Ibihwa Fransalian Community** (Archdiocese of Dodoma, Tanzania) will come into existence with effect from August 11, 2019.

**Kalamira Fransalian community** (Diocese of Jinja, Uganda) will come into existence with effect from September 01, 2019.

**Kikunde Fransalian community** (Archdiocese of Arusha, Tanzania) will come into existence with effect from September 01, 2019.

**Bissil Fransalian community** (Diocese of Ngong, Kenya) will come into existence with effect from October 01, 2019.

## INFORMATIONS

**Fr. Stephen Ubadesi** has completed successfully MA in Psychology and Counselling at Montfort College, Bangalore, India. Hearty Congratulations.

**Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil** has published a new book under the title "Empowering the Individual: A path toward eliminating ethnic conflicts". Hearty Congratulations.

**Fr. Jomon Vellachalil** has reached the diocese of San Antonio, Texas, USA on July 14, 2019. He is appointed as the Associate Pastor in Grissom. We wish him all the best in his pastoral ministry in San Antonio. His Address: Prince of Peace Catholic Church, 7893 - Grissom Rd, San Antonio, Tx - 7825 USA. Phone Number: +1 (210) 978 3300.

**Fr. Patrick Musyimi** will be attending the Salesian Programme at Annecy (SPA) from September 12 to October 31, 2019.

**Fr. Sunny Mattathil, Fr. Jacob Thekkekara and Fr. Tomychan Perumanoor** will be attending a retreat for priests at Ars (France), and will be visiting a few pilgrim centres and our confreres in Europe from September 23 to October 14, 2019 as part of the Sacerdotal Jubilee gift from the Province.

## TRANSFERS AND APPOINTMENTS

**Fr. Johnson Kallidukil**, the General Councillor for Mission, is being assigned by Rev. Fr. Superior General to reside at Lumen Christi Institute with effect from 01.08.2019.

**Fr. James Panthalanickal** is appointed as the Superior of Lumen Christi Institute and Rector of Fransalian Scholasticate at LCI by Rev. Fr. Superior General with effect from 01.08.2019.

**Fr. Agnelo Fernandes** is appointed on the staff of Lumen Christi Institute with effect from 30.07.2019.

**Fr. Augustine Mangatt** is appointed as the Superior of Fransalian Community at Bissil with effect from 01.10.2019.

**Fr. C. Arokiasamy** is appointed as the Bursar of Fransalian Community at Bissil with effect from 01.10.2019.

**Fr. George Antony** is appointed as the Superior of Fransalian Community at Chera and is designated to be appointed as the Parish Priest of Chera with effect from 20.08.2019.

**Fr. Jobin Karottukampadathil** is designated to be the Assistant Parish Priest of Chera with effect from 20.08.2019.

**Fr. Peter Johnson Napoleon** is designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Mkuza with effect 20.08.2019.

**Fr. R.V.P.Prasad** is designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Osia with effect from 15.08.2019.

**Fr. Anthony Samy** is designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Ibihwa with effect from 05.08.2019.

**Fr. Ibrahim Musajja Kisegerwa** is appointed as the Superior of Fransalian Community at Lububu and is designated to be appointed as the Parish Priest of Lububu with effect from 25.09.2019.

**Fr. Kenneth Maina Mwangi** is designated to be appointed as the Assistant Parish Priest of Lububu with effect from 13.09.2019.

**Fr. Francis Kallikatt** is appointed to Fransalian Community at Kalamira with effect from 25.09.2019. He will be responsible for the construction of Aspirants' house in Kayunga.

**Fr. Ventino Mutume** is appointed to Fransalian Community at Kalamira with effect from 01.09.2019. He will be in the community until he gets visa for South Africa/Namibia.

### Regency

**Bro. Peter Ngatia Githungo** is appointed at Fransalian Hekima School, Maji ya Chai with effect from 15.08.2019.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

A committee is constituted to draft a Child Protection Policy for our schools in East Africa as per the civil and ecclesiastical regulations. The following are the members of the committee:

Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal ( C )

Fr. Zachariah Bureferro

Fr. Jonathan Muema

Fr. Simon Nabande

## HOLIDAYS/STUDIES

Fr. Jacob Thekkekara

July 23 – August 22

Fr. Jonathan Muema

August 01 – 31

Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal

August 14 – 22 (South Africa for Studies)

## MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
August 04	SAIM Forum Meeting, LCI
August 05	Pastoral Forum Meeting, LCI
August 10	Graduation at Mkuza
August 11	Erection of the new Parish at Ibihwa, Dodoma
August 12	LCI
August 13	Nairobi
August 14 - 17	Uganda Apostolic Community
August 15	Meeting with Lugazi Bishop
August 19	Ndagani
August 20	LCI
August 23	Final Profession, Morogoro
August 24	Diaconate Ordination, Dumila
August 26 - 28	Tabora Apostolic Community
September 02	LCI Academic year opening
September 03	Formators Forum Meeting, LCI
September 04 - 05	Council Meeting, LCI
September 06	Morogoro
September 13	Graduation, Ipuli
September 14	Salvation Hill, Lububu
September 15 - 18	Uganda

My dear Confreres, once again wishing you a happy feast of St. John Maria Vianney, I remain.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS,  
Provincial - East Africa Province

### Salesian Thought

The Lord expects of you nothing else than that you share in His mission, and what he demanded of the Apostles when He sent them into the world: to give life in its fullness to all (Jn. 10:10) (AE VI 89, Conf. 6).