

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

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My dear Confreres,

I wish you all a very happy Founder’s Day! May the missionary zeal of our beloved founder, Venerable Father Peter Marie Mermier continue to guide our missionary endeavours in East Africa!

BAPTIZED AND SENT

OCTOBER 2019: EXTRAORDINARY MONTH OF MISSION



Pope Francis has declared October 2019 as an extraordinary month of mission to mark the 100th anniversary of Benedict XV’s Apostolic Letter *Maximum illud* (on the activities carried out by missionaries around the world). Pope wants to awaken the commitment to the *missio ad gentes* and transform ordinary pastoral outreach with missionary thrust. He says, “Not only the age of missionaries is not over yet, but the universal missionary momentum is urgently needed to awaken the ordinary and pastoral mission, where we can sometimes see tiredness and formalism”. Citing John Paul II, Pope Francis notes “that missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others! It is in commitment to the Church’s universal mission that the new evangelization of Christian peoples will find inspiration and support.” (Redemptoris Missio 11). Pope Francis tells in *Evangelii Gaudium* that “throughout the world, let us be ‘permanently in a state of mission’ (12). He invites us to have “love for the Church’s mission, which is “a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people (14).

In his message for the extraordinary month of mission, Pope Francis tells that the missionary mandate touches us personally: I am a mission, always; you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission. Our mission, then, is rooted in the fatherhood of God and the motherhood of the Church. The mandate given by the Risen Jesus at Easter is inherent in Baptism:

as the Father has sent me, so I send you, filled with the Holy Spirit, for the reconciliation of the world (cf. *Jn* 20:19-23; *Mt* 28:16-20). This mission is part of our identity as Christians; it makes us responsible for enabling all men and women to realize their vocation to be adopted children of the Father, to recognize their personal dignity and to appreciate the intrinsic worth of every human life, from conception until natural death. A Church that presses forward to the farthest frontiers requires a constant and on-going missionary conversion. The *missio ad gentes*, which is always necessary for the Church, thus contributes in a fundamental way to the process of on-going conversion in all Christians. Faith in the Easter event of Jesus; the ecclesial mission received in baptism; the geographic and cultural detachment from oneself and one's own home; the need for salvation from sin and liberation from personal and social evil: all these demand the mission that reaches to the very ends of the earth. Pope Francis tells that the centenary year of ***Maximum illud*** should serve as an incentive to combat the recurring temptation lurking beneath every form of ecclesial introversion, self-referential retreat into comfort zones, pastoral pessimism and sterile nostalgia for the past. Instead, may we be open to the joyful newness of the Gospel.

As we celebrate today the Founder's day, we are invited to take up *missio ad gentes* with renewed fervour and enthusiasm. Our Constitutions underline the missionary nature of our Congregation: "The daring and passionate affirmation of our Founder ***I want Missions*** is the inspiration behind our apostolic ventures and missionary initiatives" (Prologue e). Our Eastern African Mission offers us immense opportunities to fulfil the command of Jesus: "Go forth and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am always with you until the end of time" (*Mt.* 28: 19-20).

During this extraordinary month of mission, as we thank God for helping us to participate in the *missio ad gentes* in East Africa, let us seek his continuous presence in our missions so that without losing our missionary zeal, we can move forward and witness Christ wherever our presence is demanded by the Local Church. The Church in East Africa is still young (only 150 years old) and it requires further nurturing and care as it struggles with superstitions, cultural practices which are contrary to Gospel values, erosion of family and community values, challenges from various sects and growing secularization. The life of a missionary is a life of sacrifice and total dedication. Let us imitate the legacy of our beloved patron St. Francis de Sales who excelled as a missionary in Chablais and our venerable founder Father Mermier who said: "I have totally dedicated myself to the work of the missions, to the sublime ministry of Jesus Christ who is the first missionary and the leader in every mission."

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Rev. Father Superior General has requested the entire Congregation to pray for his special intention every month starting from October 2019. Please include this special intention in every community and formation house during the Liturgy of hours.

INTENTION FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2019 We pray: that our confreres working in the new missions of Ecuador, Malawi, and Indonesia may experience the merciful protection and care of the Lord in their missionary challenges and for an even greater commitment of the MSFS to the global Mission of Christ in the periphery of the society ... we pray to the Lord..

CALL OF GENERAL CHAPTER 2019: A FOLLOW UP

The General Chapter 2019 has exhorted us to get back to the foundational vision and mission of our Congregation. Our primary apostolate as envisaged by our venerable Founder is Parish Mission Preaching. In the recent years, the Congregation has made tremendous efforts to re-discover the Parish Mission Preaching. Though the instrumentality of Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes and his team, we have now a manual for Parish Mission Preaching (PMP). This manual is to be familiarized by every confrere as it is fundamental to our mission and ministry. Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes will give a two day seminar on PMP on November 26 and 27, 2019 (LCI Arusha); January 8 and 9, 2020 (Provincial House, Morogoro) and January 14 and 15, 2020 (Osia). I request everyone to kindly participate in any one of these seminars as per your convenience.

STEWARDSHIP FORUM MEETING

Stewardship Forum meeting will be held on November 28, 2019 at LCI. The bursars are requested to present the budget for 2020.

SEMINAR FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS & RELIGIOUS COLLABORATORS

Education Forum is organizing a Seminar for School Managers & Religious collaborators on December 10th and 11th, 2019 at Provincial House, Morogoro. The seminar will deal with MSFS Profile of an educator, Fransalian Education Policy and Child Protection Policy.

PERPETUAL PROFESSION AND DIACONATE ORDINATION

August 23, 2019 was a joyous day for Fransalians in East Africa as seven of our scholastics made their final commitment to the Lord at Fransalian House, Kola Hills, Morogoro, Tanzania. The event began with the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu MSFS, the General Councillor in charge of formation. Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, the Provincial Superior of East Africa province received the vows. Hearty Congratulations to our **brothers Dennis Dindi, Fabian Wasonga, Gregory Mutisya, Leonard Ngumbi, Michael Mwangi, Patropio Mungala and Ssentamu Ruthitical.**





On August 24, 2019, six of the brothers were ordained deacons by Bishop Telesphore Mkude, the Bishop of Morogoro Diocese. The diaconate ordination took place at St. Francis de Sales Parish Church, Dumila. Hearty Congratulations to our newly ordained deacons **Dennis Dindi, Gregory**

Mutisya, Leonard Ngumbi, Michael Mwangi, Patropio Mungala and Ssentamu Ruthitalal.

Both events were witnessed by a number of priests, religious men and women, parents, relatives and laity. The Final Profession and the Diaconate Ordination were held after a one week long Salesian seminar and a three weeks long Salesian retreat led by Fr. Suresh Babu MSFS, the General Councilor in charge of formation and Fr. Devasia Manael MSFS.

(Report by Bro. Gonzaga Lubega MSFS)

IBIHWA: OUR NEW MISSION

“Bloom where you are planted” has been the motto of all our ventures in East Africa. The new mission at Ibihwa is a visible sign of God’s providence for the people who longed for regular spiritual services. The Province of East Africa took one more step forward in the mission of the Lord by taking up a sub-station raised to a parish, in a challenging environment in a short time. On August 11, 2019 Ibihwa made history by witnessing the triple events: blessing of the new house, official opening of the new parish, and conferring the Sacrament of confirmation for 246 students. His grace Rt. Rev. Beatus Kinyaiya OFM Cap, the Archbishop of Dodoma was the main celebrant of the Holy Eucharist, Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, the Provincial Superior, Rev. Chesco CPPS, the Vicar general of the diocese, a number of priests and religious sisters, District Commissioner, District Executive Director of Bahi district and around 3,500 faithful witnessed the event. The parish at Ibihwa being the first mission of Fransalians in the Archdiocese of Dodoma was named after St. Francis de Sales. It has 6 sub-stations and 7 prayer centres, consisting 60 small Christian communities and a total of 7,000 faithful. It is a very promising parish for evangelisation and renewal of Christian faith. We are very grateful for all the support and contributions made by the Province, benefactors, and well-wishers. Our sincere thanks to Frs. Berin Charles and Jomon Joseph whose share in overcoming the struggles in the beginning of this mission cannot be forgotten. May Almighty God bless our new mission.



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(Reported by Fr. A. Sebastian MSFS)

EDUCATION FORUM MEETING

The meeting of the Education Forum took place on June 28, 2019 at MSFS Provincial House, Morogoro. After the opening address of Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, the Provincial Superior of East Africa, the Forum evaluated the administration of our schools. It was noted that all our schools have performed very well in the National Examinations. The Forum proposed further measures for improvement of both curricular and non-curricular activities in our schools. The Forum also discussed various means and ways to implement Action Plan of Provincial Congress 2017 and the Call of General Chapter on Education.

It also proposed to help as many poor students as possible in our schools. It also decided to engage students in social activities especially to help the poor and needy. The schools should follow strict budgeting and any infrastructure development is to be discussed first in LGB and a report of LGB has to be forwarded to Provincial administration for the approval. The schools also should follow government regulations with regards to the financial management of the school. The Forum emphasised the importance of Child Protection Policy in our schools. A committee was appointed to draft the Child Protection Policy for our schools. It was also suggested to send confreres for Bachelor of Education studies. The Forum also thanked the collaborators of our schools for their dedication and commitment. There was a suggestion to have a meeting with religious collaborators to explain Fransalian education policy. The meeting came to an end with a prayer at 17.50.

(Reported by Fr. Simon Nabande MSFS)

MISSION FORUM MEETING

The Mission Forum met on August 05, 2019 at LCI. The Forum evaluated the pastoral ministry in the Province. After the sharing from Parishes, the Forum discussed the Call of General Chapter 2019 and decided to implement the following measures immediately: Mission oriented formation, expansion of Fransalian Associates, Parish Preaching Mission, minimum two year mission exposure for newly ordained priests, community based ministry and team work in parishes, Family Apostolate and adequate preparation before taking up a new mission.

The Action Plan of Provincial Congress on Mission also was discussed in the meeting. It also emphasized the need to disseminate Salesian Spirituality in our parishes and promote devotions to our patron and our founder. The members felt that Catechists should be trained adequately to carry out their ministry in the parishes. The Forum also encouraged parishes to support financially Formation houses. The Forum requested the Provincial administration to expand our MSFS missions in Kenya and Uganda. The meeting came to an end with a prayer at 18.00.

(Reported by Fr. Joseph Poikunnel MSFS)

FORMATORS FORUM MEETING

The Formators' Forum Meeting of the Province of East Africa was held on September 3, 2019 at Lumen Christi Institute, Arusha! Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil, the councilor-in-charge of Formation presided over the meeting! Apart from enlightening each other about common concerns in formation and news from various formation houses in the province, the meeting also reviewed the implementation of the Action Plan of the Provincial Congress 2017, concerning formation. In line with the call of the General Chapter, Fr. Provincial exhorted the formators to communicate the mission legacy of our congregation to the formees at every stage! Besides, he insisted on the need to inculcate in the formees the virtues of loyalty to the congregation and accountability. In this regard, he exhorted that the scholastics should maintain an account book of the pocket money they receive. The formators are to check these books on a regular basis! The formation forum meeting was attended by most of the forum members. It was a wonderful opportunity to review and to plan formation programs at different stages of formation.

(Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil MSFS)

USA VICE PROVINCIAL CURIA

The recently held USA Vice Provincial Congress elected the following confreres to Vice Provincial Curia:

Fr. Tomy Puliyanampattayil - Vice Provincial

Fr. Luke Kalarickal - Admonitor & Councilor

Fr. Anthony Bonela - Councilor

Fr. Noble Ambalathuruthel - Bursar

We wish them God's blessing in their ministry of leadership.

MOZAMBIQUE DELEGATION CURIA

The Colloquium of Mozambique delegation has elected the following confreres to the Delegation Curia:

Fr. Henry Nedumkallel	Delegation Superior
Fr. Jinu Devasia	Councillor cum Bursar
Fr. Jijo Thomas	Councillor
Fr. Sebastian Annaikandathil	Councillor

Hearty congratulations and prayerful wishes!

On behalf of the Province of East Africa, I would like to thank **Rev. Fr. Petrus Kullu**, the former Delegation Superior of Mozambique for the collaboration and support in MSAF. We wish him God's blessings in his future ministry.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

Date	Programme	Venue
November 26 & 27	PMP	LCI
November 28	Stewardship Forum Meeting & Budget	LCI
December 10 & 11	Meeting for School Managers & Religious collaborators	Provincial House
January 08 & 09	PMP	Provincial House
January 14 & 15	PMP	Osia

TRANSFERS

Fr. Aristides Danda is relieved from his responsibilities at Kashishi parish and is designated for studies in Music with effect from 10.09.2019.

HOLIDAYS

Fr. Lawrence Ssebowa	September 11 – October 11
Fr. Amal Neerolickal	September 23 – November 23
Fr. Sudhakar Clement	September 27 – October 27
Fr. Thomas Njue	October 16 – November 16
Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal	October 17 – November 17

OBITUARY

Mr. Michael Pendanath, paternal uncle of Fathers Reji, Sijo and Martin Pendanath passed away on 15.08.2019. Please pray for the repose of the departed soul.

Mr. Paul Wekesa, paternal uncle of Bro. Collins Barasa Simiyu, passed away after a prolonged illness on 25.09.2019.

Mr. Oscar Wekesa, nephew of Bro. Collins Barasa Simiyu, died in an accident on 25.09.2019.



MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
October 2 - 11	Class in LCI
October 12	Fransalian School, Morogoro
October 14	Visitation Mkuza Community
October 15	Novitiate
October 17	Visitation: Kikunde Parish
October 19	Blessing of the renovated Presbytery at Mkuza
October 20	Visitation: Mji Mpya Parish
October 25	Visitors from Austria
November 03	Visitation: Mkuza Parish
November 09	Graduation: Mji Mpya
November 14	Meeting with the Administrator of Eldoret
November 17	Visitors from Austria
November 26 -27	PMP: LCI
November 28	Stewardship Forum Meeting
November 29	Visitation from Missio Aachen
December 2 - 3	Council Meeting
December 8	Visitation: Dumila Parish
December 10 - 11	Meeting with religious colloborators, Morogoro

My dear Confreres, I wish you all once again a happy Founder's Day.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS,
Provincial - East Africa Province

Salesian Thought

"Do everything calmly and peacefully. Do as much as you can as well as you can. Strive to see God in all things without exception, and consent to His will joyously. Do everything for God, uniting yourself to him in word and deed. Walk very simply with the Cross of the Lord and be at peace with yourself."

Saint Francis de Sales