



MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

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My dear Confreres,

I wish you all a Happy Feast of Pentecost! May the Spirit of the Lord continue to guide our lives with his gifts and make us bearers of fruits of the Spirit!

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH



After 50 days of having the opportunity to celebrate the Easter faith, to live the Easter hope and to share the Easter joy, the Church is inviting us to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. It is an opportunity given to us to celebrate the Spirit - the fullness of God's presence and love with us and in us. Pentecost reminds us of the unmitigated joy and courage of the apostles, guided by the Spirit of the Lord, in proclaiming Christ as Lord and Saviour. This feast invites us to be guided by the gifts of the same Holy Spirit so that we can produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives too, which in turn will lead us to eternal joy.

Although, we have no dearth of images, statues and stained glasses representations of Jesus, Mary and saints, it is not easy to visualize the Holy Spirit. The images of dove (Lk. 3:22), powerful wind (Acts 2:2) and tongues of fire (Acts 2:3) do not adequately portray the Holy Spirit. All the same the Holy Spirit is profoundly real. Many things in our universe are real even though invisible to the naked eye. What we can see with our eyes is only a fraction of our physical world. The Holy Spirit belongs to the spiritual world, and is invisible to our eyes. Yet, there are helpful ways of imagining the Holy Spirit. St. Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit becomes visible to us through the fruits of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22). According to him the visible effect of the Spirit is on one's own life. We may not be able to see the Holy Spirit, but we can see the effect of the presence of the Spirit in our life, just as we cannot see the wind but can see the effect of the wind on people and objects of various kinds. St. Paul says that wherever we find love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control, the Spirit is at work. The Spirit becomes visible in and through these qualities and virtues. St. Paul invites us to mould our life guided by the Spirit (Gal.5: 25) so that the Holy Spirit

can become visible in and through us as we bear the fruits of the Spirit. The good things people do are all manifestations of the Spirit of God. The spiritual is not something other-worldly; it is humanity at its best.

The Holy Spirit instills in us unity. Pentecost brought about a wonderful bonding of people from all over the world (Acts 2:5 -11). They were united in admiring and praising the marvels of God. In spite of differences of language and culture there was a real communion among them. Wherever communion of heart and mind exist among people of different backgrounds, the Holy Spirit is at work. Unity in diversity is the mark of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit continues to inspire us to transcend linguistic, racist, ethnic, national and cultural differences and to bear witness to Christ, our Saviour.

Another manifestation of the Spirit is seen in the pursuit of truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). Only the Spirit can lead us to the complete truth. If someone is genuinely seeking for truth, and willing to engage in good works, the Spirit is at work there. Fullness of truth and love is always beyond us; but the Spirit comes to lead us towards complete truth and love, in all its height and depth. Skepticism and relativism are signs of modernity in the contemporary world and truth is relegated as an old-fashioned commodity of the past. We are blind to truth due to our prejudices, egoistic and utilitarian tendencies. However, there is no alternative to truth. The primary activity of the Holy Spirit is to teach and remind us of eternal truths which Jesus revealed (Jn. 14:26). The Spirit of Truth enables us to bear witness to Jesus (Jn. 15:26). The Spirit of Truth will “show the world how wrong it was, about sin and about who was right, and about judgement” (Jn. 16:8). The Spirit of Truth will lead us to complete truth (Jn. 16:13). Are we open to the Spirit of Truth? Do I allow him to enlighten me? Inspire me? Indeed, our actions are born from the deep within: it is the heart that needs to be converted to God, and the Holy Spirit transforms it, when we open ourselves to Him.

At Pentecost the Missionary Church was born through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Jesus. After Jesus’ crucifixion this small group of men and women were hiding as they were afraid and had lost all hope. But through the gift of the Holy Spirit they were filled with courage, enthusiasm and determination. Perhaps the greatest marvel was the fact that the weak, timid, and shallow disciples were changed into bold and wise apostles who would reach the ends of the earth to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. The missionary church was born from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the apostles went all over the world to proclaim the message of Salvation. It would be a mistake to think of ourselves today as being different from these men and women. Through the grace of baptism and confirmation, through our vocation as priests and Fransalian missionaries, each of us has been filled with the life and power of the same Holy Spirit to proclaim Jesus and bear witness to him in the contemporary world. To be a missionary for us Fransalians, is not an option, but an obligation (MSFS Constitutions 3, 4 & 19).

My dear Confreres, Pentecost takes place in our lives whenever we are guided by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and bear the fruits of the Spirit. Whenever and wherever, we become instruments of peace, unity, fellowship and forgiveness, Pentecost becomes a reality in our lives. Let the tongues of fire of Pentecost purify us and inflame us to be courageous bearers of the fruits of the Spirit, authentic seekers of truth and zealous missionaries to proclaim the message of salvation.



AFTERMATH OF COVID-19

The Covid-19 Pandemic has affected every sphere of our life. After two months of lockdown, Kenya and Uganda are planning to lift the restrictions. Tanzania, which did not have lockdown, is resuming classes in Universities and has lifted all travel restrictions, although Coronavirus is not fully contained. Our leaders are advising to learn to live with Coronavirus. It is a critical time as restrictions are eased. We have to be cautious and do everything needed to prevent further spread of Coronavirus. The economic impact of Covid 19 is devastating as people have lost jobs, production is reduced and prices of essential commodities have soared up. The economic crisis is affecting our parishes and institutions too, as they are struggling to pay salary for our employees. Let us deal with the crisis in all Christian charity and continue to help the poor and needy. Let us follow the instructions of civil authorities and Episcopal Conferences as we open the Churches for liturgical services and resume classes in our educational institutions. Let us continue to pray that God may help us to overcome this crisis and that scientists may find effective medicines to eradicate Coronavirus.

APPOINTMENT OF PROVINCIALS

Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our Superior General has appointed the following confreres as Provincials for the respective Provinces:

Fr. Jaganathan Gnanadurai:	Brazil Province (First Term)
Fr. J.B. Muthuswamy:	Nagpur Province (Second Term)
Fr. S. Jayaseelen:	Pune Province (Second Term)
Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel:	East Africa (Second Term)

The Province of East Africa assures them of prayerful wishes as they assume their ministry of leadership in their respective Provinces.

RENEWED MANDATE

My dear Confreres, as you were already informed, Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our Superior General after having consulted the members of the Province of East Africa, has appointed me as the Provincial of East Africa for a second term with effect from July 15, 2020. I sincerely thank Rev. Fr. Superior General, the General Administration and each one of you for placing your confidence in me to animate our Province for one more term. I am indebted to each one of you for your love and cooperation to carry out the apostolate of the Congregation during the past three years. I humbly request your prayers and support in future too, so that we all can continue the mission that God has entrusted us in East Africa. Let us continue to work together for the greater glory of God.

RETREAT

The annual retreat of the Province in Tanzania will be conducted as planned from July 06th evening until July 11th noon at OSS Sisters Retreat house, Marangu, Moshi. Rev. Fr. Innocent Bahati OFM will preach the retreat for us. Please inform the Provincial secretary about your participation in the retreat by June 10.

We had planned for a retreat in November in Kenya. However, we do not know how long this crisis will continue despite the easing of travel restrictions. If cross-border travel restrictions continue, confreres in Kenya and Uganda are free to attend retreat in their respective countries organized by dioceses or retreat centres.

PROGRAMMES OF THE PROVINCE

Due to travel restrictions, we are unable to fix the dates for Provincial Congress and Ordinations. The final decision regarding these matters will be made known as the situation evolves. The Perpetual Profession (on August 14 at Kola) and Diaconate (on August 15 at Mkuza) will take place as planned.

APPOINTMENT OF REGENTS

Bro. Albert Momanyi Ombati:	Fransalian Seminary, Ndagani
Bro. Denis William Minja:	Ipuli Community
Bro. Eric Nyamweya:	SFS School, Iyolwa
Bro. Linto Varghese:	SFS Junior Seminary, Kihonda

OBITUARY

Mrs. Ann Mary (87), mother of Sr. Margret Mary (Ipuli), passed away on 10.05.2020.

Mrs. Claramma Augustine (102), maternal grandmother of Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel, passed away on 18.04.2020.

Mr. Shaji (52), cousin of Bro. Leo Cheruvil, passed away on 18.04.2020.

Mr. John, brother of Fr. Stephen Nadakuzhackal, passed away on 02.05.2020.

Mrs. Leelamma (68), mother of late Fr. Lawrence Thadathil, passed away on 10.05.2020.

Mrs. Annamma Joseph (94), maternal grandmother of Fr. Thomas Chozithara, passed away on 22.05.2020.

May they rest in peace!



MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
June 03	LCI, Arusha
June 08	Ibihwa
June 21 & 22	Novitiate
June 23 & 24	RSAT Meeting, Dar es Salaam
June 25 & 26	TEC Meeting, Dar es Salaam
July 6 - 11	Province Annual Retreat, Marangu
July 15	Installation of Provincial
July 16	Council Meeting at Provincial house
July 27	First Profession

My dear confreres, I wish you all once again a Happy Feast of Pentecost.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS,
Provincial - East Africa Province

Salesian Thought

“Bees detest all artificial smells; the delights of the Holy Spirit are incompatible with the artificial delights of the world.” (IDL IV, 14)

