

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

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My dear Confreres,

Happy Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary! The month of September is an important month for us, as we celebrate during this month the Feast of Mother of Sorrows as well as the Founder’s day. May our blessed Mother and our beloved Founder always intercede for every one of us and also for our mission and ministry in East Africa! I wish you all a Happy Feast of Mother of Sorrows and a happy Founder’s Day in anticipation!

**YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH AND YEAR OF MISSIONS:
 Called to evangelize with a father’s heart after the model of St. Joseph**

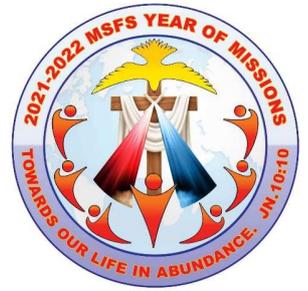
Pope Francis declared 2021 as the Year of St. Joseph. This coincides with the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX’s declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. Pope Francis also published an apostolic letter about St. Joseph, “Patris Corde,” which means “With a Father’s Loving Heart.” In it, he names St. Joseph’s many admirable qualities, for our imitation.



In the apostolic letter Pope Francis unveils St. Joseph as a father, who had a number of outstanding and admirable characteristics. He was a beloved father who was tender and loving. He was also an obedient father, an accepting father, and a creatively courageous father. We know, too, that he was a father of sacrifice, responsibility and self-gift. He was also a hard-working father and an unassuming one, a father in the shadows. In choosing to focus on St. Joseph, Pope Francis is prioritizing for the faithful a figure whose humility, faith, and patience are greatly needed during this time of global pandemic Covid 19.

In Patris Corde, Pope Francis notes that throughout his life, St. Joseph had to make many hidden sacrifices, both great and small, to protect and guide the Holy Family. Similarly, many ordinary people have made sacrifices in the face of great hardship due to Covid 19 to protect their family as well as the society. In proclaiming 2021 as the Year of St. Joseph, Pope Francis is reminding the faithful of the need for patience, humility, hard work, and closeness to Jesus through our trials.

Our Congregation is marking 2021 as the Year of Missions to revitalize the primordial apostolate of our Congregation following the missionary heritage bequeathed by our Patron and Founder. St. Joseph is a model for our missionary endeavours. During this Year of St. Joseph and the Year of Missions, we are reminded of our obligation to evangelize with a father's heart after the model of St. Joseph. He fully participated in the salvific plan of God like Mary and remained as the guardian of the Son of God through whom the eternal Father "destined us to be his sons through Jesus Christ" (Eph. 1:5) (Redemptoris Custos 1).



Emeritus Pope Benedict says that at the heart of the Evangelization is 1) Conversion, 2) The Kingdom of God, 3) Jesus Christ and 4) Eternal Life. St. Joseph is a model of faith who draws us to conversion through his faithful and focused response to God's call in his life. Just like Mary, St. Joseph also said "yes" to the will of God in his life by accepting Mary as his wife and her son Jesus. It required of him an "obedience of faith" (Rom.1:5) and a total conversion to do the will of God in his personal life. He remained always faithful to his commitment as the guardian of the mystery of God (Redemptoris Custos 4). St. Joseph is inviting us to become committed missionaries and faithful stewards of the missions entrusted to our care. As ministers of evangelization, we need to deepen our relationship with Christ, to proclaim his Word.

St. Joseph proclaimed the Kingdom of God through the authentic witness of his life. He had to undergo several trials in the process of being the foster father of the Son of God, be it the decision to take Mary as his wife, patiently bear with the troubles during the birth of Jesus, the seeking of refuge in Egypt to protect the Child Jesus or to sustain the Holy Family through his hard work. Joseph bore witness to the Kingdom of God which Jesus was yet to proclaim, by being a loving and obedient father, a just man and a faithful husband. He was an epitome of the values of the Kingdom of God. "Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift. In him, we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to concrete expressions of trust." (Patris Corde). People address us "fathers". Are we really "fathers" to the people entrusted to our care? St. Joseph invites us to bear witness to the Kingdom of God by being loving, obedient, just, holy and trustworthy "fathers". His self-emptying and self-giving attitude always inspires us to be true missionaries.

Joseph knew that Jesus Christ, his adopted son, the one he received for supernatural adoption was his Lord and Saviour. After Mary, Joseph was the closest to Christ. Therefore, his relationship with Christ was, like Mary's, incredibly rich and profound. Much can be pondered from the silence of St. Joseph, but one thing is sure – his holiness was intensified and illumined through his life with Christ. Our lives likewise should be intensified and illumined through our encounter with the living God – especially in the Eucharist.

And finally, our ultimate goal is Eternal Life and St. Joseph was aware of this. His example and faithfulness show us that it is not in the big things, in recognition or wealth that one acquires the greatest of prizes. It is the final union with God and life everlasting with him that is our ultimate goal and to that goal all our endeavours should be geared.

St. Joseph who lived a life of holiness in union with God continues his role as the patron of the universal church. He is the model for us in living our missionary vocation. May St. Joseph inspire us and intercede for us in all our missionary endeavours empowering and transforming us and the world we live in.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER

V. Rev. Fr. Superior General has convoked the Extraordinary General Chapter. It will take place in Fransalian Seminary, Pune, India, from February 01-07, 2022.

TRIENNIAL MANDATORY MEETING 2022

The venue of the Triennial Mandatory Meeting of all the major superiors with the General Curia that was originally scheduled to take place in LCI, Arusha is shifted to Fransalian Seminary, Pune and will be held from February 10 to 12, 2022. All the Provincial Superiors (12) and the General Curia members (7) will participate in the TMM 2022.

JUBILEE OF THE PROVINCE

We are completing the Jubilee year of the Province on September 15, 2021. Although, we have decided not to have any common celebration since we have already celebrated the Jubilee of our arrival in East Africa and also due to Covid pandemic, I request every Apostolic community to kindly come together for a Thanksgiving Mass on September 15th or any other day in September according to your convenience. Please plant as many trees as possible to mark our Jubilee. A financial contribution will be given to the Dispensaries in our Parishes for the treatment of poor patients as a remembrance of our Jubilee Year.

PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

The priestly ordination of Fr. Joseph Ambongo and Fr. Fabian Wasonga took place on August 12th at Kisumu. The priestly ordination of Fr. Brain Wasswa was on 14th August at Kampala and that of Fr. Lubega Gonzaga was on 15th August at Masaka.

Hearty Congratulations to our newly ordained priests!

PERPETUAL PROFESSION AND DIACONATE

The Perpetual Profession of Bros. Avil Viegas, Edward Mgagi, Level Winner and S. Jerald is planned for October 22nd in Fransalian Scholasticate, Kola and their Diaconate is planned for October 23rd in JUKO.

FIRST PROFESSION

August 28 was a joyous day for Fransalians in Africa as 12 Novices made their First commitment to the Lord (Tchad-Cameroon Delegation: 9; and East Africa Province: 3). Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel, the Provincial of East Africa province presided over the Eucharistic celebration and received the vows. Hearty congratulations to all our newly professed confreres as we welcome them to the Fransalian Family.

I sincerely thank Fr. Stephen Ubadesi, Director of Novices, Fr. Prakash Prashanth and Fr. Rakesh Ekka, who accompanied the novices during their canonical year of novitiate and assisted them to discern and grow in their vocation to religious life in the Fransalian Family.



INITIATION TO THE NOVITIATE

On 27th August, 12 Pre-Novices were initiated to their canonical year of Novitiate at Kibaha by Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel, the Provincial of East Africa. This year there are eight novices for Tchad-Cameroon Delegation, and four for Mozambique Delegation. We wish them God's blessing as they begin to discern their vocation as Fransalians and experience the basics of religious life in the Novitiate.



BLESSING OF KIKUNDE PRESBYTERY



August 15, 2021 was a joyous day for the newly established St. Francis de Sales Parish, Kikunde as on that day a new presbytery was blessed by Rt. Rev. Prosper Lyimo, the Auxiliary Bishop of Arusha. We thank our benefactors and well-wishers particularly, Church in Need, Living Waters International, MSFS East Africa Province and the people of Kikunde for the realization of the Presbytery at Kikunde. Hearty Congratulations to Fr. Patrick Musyimi and Fr. Martin Pendanath for

their dedication and commitment for completing the Presbytery in a short span of eight months' time. May God bless them all!

BLESSING OF SCHOOL AT BISSIL

September 03, 2021 was a historical day for the people of Bissil as the newly established St. Francis de Sales Kindergarten and Primary School was blessed and inaugurated by Rt. Rev. John Oballa Owaa, Bishop of Ngong. The function was attended by a large number of religious, priests and the faithful of Bissil Mission. Bissil is a backward Masai area and the opening of the new school is expected to



open new vistas for the education of young pupils in and around Bissil. We thank all our benefactors particularly Jane and George Shinnors Foundation and various other project partners who have helped us to realize the construction of the school building. Hearty congratulations Fr. Augustine Mangatt, Fr. Aristedes Danda and Bro. Darius Orikiriza for their dedication and hard work in establishing the school in Bissil. May God bless them all!

INAUGURATION OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR AT LCI

On September 01, 2021, LCI began its twelfth academic year. The Holy Eucharist was presided over by Rev. Fr. Engelbert Kilasara CP, Rector of Passionist Seminary, Njiro. He also delivered the Lectio Brevis on the theme: "Moral Relativism and African Values".

In this academic year there are 56 seminarians for Bachelor of Philosophy (East Africa: 10; Tchad-Cameroon 18; Mozambique: 1; Southern Africa: 3; other Religious Congregations: 4, Diocesans: 20), 14 for Formators' course and 29 applicants for the Certificate course in Catechetical training. We wish the staff and students of LCI a fruitful academic year.

NEW PARISH OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS – One of the sub-parishes of Our Lady of Compassion Parish, Mji Mpya Relini, in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam was erected into an independent Parish as St. Thomas Aquinas – Kipunguni on 7th July 2021 by his Grace Most Rev. Jude Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi, the Archbishop of Dar es Salaam. On 24th July the new Parish Priest Fr. Erasto Kamugisha, arrived in the parish and was welcomed with great joy by the leaders and Christians to the Parish. He was welcomed into the newly built presbytery. On 25th July the new Parish Priest was installed by the Dean of Ukonga Deanery Rev. Fr. Steven Nyalavila, on behalf of the Archbishop. The Holy Eucharist was presided over by the Provincial Superior of the Passionist Fathers Rev. Fr. Josephat Bernard Kiwori CP and was concelebrated by priests from the Passionist Congregation. Many men and women religious, civil dignitaries and a great number of faithful took part in the celebrations. The newly erected parish of Kipunguni is entrusted to the Congregation of the Passionist Fathers (CP). We wish the new parish team a fruitful ministry. Hearty Congratulations to Fr. Jacob Thekkekara and our confreres in Mji Mpya who paved the way for the new Parish!

SFS SEMINARY, BUWOOYA

The construction of St. Francis de Sales Minor Seminary at Buwooya, Lugazi Diocese, Uganda is expected to be completed by the end of September. The beginning of the new academic year of the seminary is scheduled for October 15, 2021. The official opening of the seminary will be held later as Uganda is under lockdown.

FRANSALIAN PASTORAL CENTRE, NDAGANI

The erstwhile Fransalian Seminary in Ndagani has ceased to function as a seminary since we have both Aspirancy and Postulancy at the new seminary in Buwooya. The infrastructure at Ndagani will be made use for a new Pastoral centre particularly for Family Apostolate and Parish Mission Preaching.

EXCLAUSTRATION

Through a decree given by Rev. Fr. Superior General, Fr. Sony Kochumalayil is granted exclaustation in view of incardination in the Diocese of Würzburg. We appreciate and thank Fr. Sony for his dedicated services in the Province of East Africa. We wish him God's blessing and all the best in his future life.

STUDIES

Fr. Jomon Vellachalil has begun his studies in Clinical Psychology at St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas. He continues to serve in the parish.

HOLIDAYS

Fr. Leonard Musembi	August 2 – October 2
Fr. Jobin Karottukampadathil	August 7 – October 10
Fr. Clement Sudhakar	August 13 – September 18
Fr. Sebastian Williams	August 13 – September 18
Fr. Robert Raj Soosai	August 17 – November 05
Fr. Amal Neerolickal	August 29 – October 30
Fr. Patrick Musyimi	September 01 – 30
Fr. Richard Tamaro	September 3 – October 3

OBITUARY

Sr. Angela Klewuza (71), sister of Bro. Ivan Mubbo (Kola), passed away on 27.07.2021.

Mr. Philip Nzioki (80), paternal uncle of Fr. Patrick Musyimi, passed away on 01.08.2021.

Fr. Sean Fleury MSFS (91) of English Province passed away on 06.08.2021.

Ms. Sphensia Sifuna, the niece of Bro. Collins Barasa (Kola), passed away on 20.08.2021.

Mr. Elias Benedict Minja (90), grandfather of Bro. Denis Minja (Kola), passed away on 21.08.2021.

Fr. Devasia Aylukunnel MSFS (70) of Visakhapatnam Province passed away on 30.08.2021.

Mrs. Scholatica (66), mother of Fr. Patrick Musyimi, passed away on 01.09.2021.

Fr. Varghese Puthuparambil MSFS (73) of South-West Province passed away on 06.09.2021

May God grant them eternal life!



MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
05 – 08. 09. 2021	Uganda Apostolic Community
09 – 12. 09. 2021	Kenya Apostolic Community
15.09.2021	Feast of Mother of Sorrows, Conclusion of Jubilee Year, Morogoro
17.09.2021	Education Forum Meeting, Morogoro
19.09.2021	Episcopal Ordination of Msgr. Lazarus Msimbe, Morogoro
26.09.2021	Parish Feast of Mji Mpya/Relini
02.10.2021	Graduation Fransalian Hekima School, Arusha
03 – 08.10.2021	TAKA Apostolic Community
15.10.2021	Beginning of the academic year at SFS Seminary, Buwooya
09.10.2021	Graduation SFS Junior Seminary, Morogoro
22.10.2021	Perpetual Profession, Morogoro
23.10.2021	Diaconate, Morogoro

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS
Provincial - East Africa Province

Prayer to St Joseph by St Francis de Sales

Glorious St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary, grant us, we beseech thee, thy paternal protection, through the Heart of Jesus Christ. O, Thou whose infinite power reaches out to all our needs, rendering possible for us that which is impossible, look upon the concerns of thy children with the fatherly countenance. In the troubles and sorrows that afflict us, we have confident recourse to thee. Deign to take under thy loving protection this important and difficult endeavour, the cause of our worries, and dispose its success to the glory of God and to the benefit of His faithful servants.

Amen.