

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

**Fransalians - Province of East Africa**  
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Provincial Circular EAP – MT.30
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**My dear Confreres,**

At the outset of the season of Advent, I wish you all a meaningful preparation for the celebration of the mystery of Incarnation of our Saviour, Jesus Christ! May he fill our hearts and minds with faith, hope and charity so that Christ may be born in us and live through us!

ADVENT: A SEASON OF HOPE



Pope Francis says that “Advent is a continuous call to hope. It reminds us that God is present in history to lead it to its ultimate goal and to its fullness, which is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. God is present in the history of humanity, He is the ‘God-with-us’, He walks beside us to support us.” Advent is a time of waiting and expectation; a season of quiet anticipation and preparation. We are waiting for our Lord to come into the world as a baby, born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem. We are also preparing for his return, his second coming, to restore harmony and right relationship to all

creation. Advent is the symbol of yearning for God to come and set the world right with perfect harmony, justice, truth and peace. It is the season of hope.

Advent is a time when we are invited to intensely prepare ourselves through prayer. While Lent emphasizes a spirit of repentance through prayer and fasting, Advent’s prayers are prayers of humble devotion and commitment, prayers of gladness and joyful expectation, prayers that express the anticipation for the light of Christ coming into the world. We are invited to reflect on those Advent readings from the Scriptures that reveal a strong prophetic tone of accountability and judgment. Just as those stewards who were found faithful in small matters by the master, we too are confident that we will be found faithful and will enter the joy of the master.

During Advent we anticipate the Lord's coming with hope. It is this hope, however faint it may be at times, that keeps us from despair and the darkness of sin and its destructiveness. It is a hope that urges us to be kind, loving and compassionate toward one another. It is a hope that encourages our faith in a merciful God who continues to pour his grace upon us. We don't know when Christ will come again to bring human history to its completion. But we celebrate with gladness the great promise of Advent and we rekindle that positive, joyful spirit within us because we know, as prophet Zechariah prophesied, that the light of Christ will shine on all who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and He will guide our feet into the way of peace. I wish you all a grace-filled season of Advent!

**FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH:  
COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION, AND MISSION**

The Synod on Synodality is a two-year process of listening and dialogue which began with a solemn opening ceremony in Rome on October 9 and 10, 2021. The Synodal process will conclude in 2023. Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission. "It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium." This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church's on-going "renewal" proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has already been made, the Church will be able to learn through her experience which processes can help her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open herself to mission.



The ecclesiology of the People of God is the core idea behind the Synod which was first introduced by Vatican Council II and has been emphasized many times by Pope Francis. This idea implies that the relationship between the People of God and the Church is not hierarchical anymore, that it is differentiated and complementary. It implies that bishops need religious and laypeople to accomplish their mission in the Church. The Synod is expected to enhance co-responsibility at all realms of the Church.

The novelty of the Synod is that it has involved theologians in the process of listening and discernment aimed at creating this new Synodal Church and the inclusion of theological reflection in the structures of the Church. In this way we don't have a theological reflection on one side, and people, on the other. It helps the Church to implement the decisions of the Synod into the real structures of the Church. It will bring about a new "ecclesial culture". Synodality is about diversity. We hope for a real dialogue between different sensibilities in the Church, through a consensus process.

I request you to kindly actively participate in the Synodal meetings of your respective dioceses and parishes to bring about a new ecclesial culture in the Church.

**EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER 2022:  
FOUR PAPERS FOR STUDY AND REFLECTION**

Very Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our Superior General writes: In the light of the decisions of the XX General Chapter 2019, with the theme 'MSFS, Wake up to the Basics', we are doing our best to study the basics of our Congregational life with a focus on the history, Spirit of the Founder, Charism, and the Principles implied in our Constitution and General Directory. It is an opportunity to continually educate us on our identity as MSFS, and the values and heritage of our Congregation. We hope this exercise will give us a deeper awareness of our basics. This will hopefully wake us up in turn to deepen our understanding of the basics of our consecrated life as MSFS and apply them in our apostolates and life in communities.

The objective of studying and reflecting on these documents (personally and communally) is: To gather different perspectives (including those not included in the documents) in order to make it comprehensive, focused, and relevant for application in today's context.

After personal study of the documents, confreres come together as a community (local or apostolic) to discuss the outcome of your personal study. After discussion in the community, please respond to the two questions:

1. What observations and comments would you like to add to make this document more focused and relevant for our times?.
2. Indicate what aspects of the Founder's Spirit need to be highlighted and applied today in our ministries, apostolates, and community life?

In short, we follow these four steps:

1. Personal study and reflection of the document
2. Discussion on the outcome of the study in the community level
3. Responding to the questions based on the document.
4. The Provincial/Mission Superior will collate the responses and send them to the Secretary General of the Chapter.

**NEW PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS**

**Visakhapatnam Province**

Fr. Baviri Suresh Babu :	Provincial Superior
Fr. Pathuppallil Manoj:	Provincial Councillor for Formation
Fr. Kurella Vijaya Sekhar:	Provincial Councillor for Mission
Fr. Mallela Joji:	Provincial Councillor for Education
Fr. Jaddu Joseph:	Provincial Councillor for Social and Innovative Ministries
Fr. Gade Bhaskar Reddy:	Provincial Bursar

## English Province

Fr. Benny Valiyavettill:	Provincial Superior
Fr. Paul Gonsalves:	Provincial Councillor and Admonitor
Fr. Thomas Kulandaisamy:	Provincial Councillor
Fr. Terry McGrath:	Provincial Bursar

## Southern African Region

Fr. Baiju Mundackal:	Regional Superior
Fr. Job Karikkampally:	Regional Councillor
Fr. Shiju Poomarathinkal:	Regional Councillor
Fr. Shibu Parampuzhayil:	Regional Bursar

We offer them our best wishes and prayers!

### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES MINOR SEMINARY, BUWOOYA

An informal opening of St. Francis de Sales Minor Seminary at Buwooya, in the Diocese of Lugazi, Uganda took place on November 11, 2021. Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazahthukunnel, Provincial Superior of East Africa presided over the Holy Eucharistic Celebration. There are 12 postulants and 14 aspirants in the seminary. The official opening of the seminary is expected to take place in January 2022. We thank and appreciate Fr. Francis Kallikatt, Fr. Jose Eriyanickal and Bro. Leo who supervised the construction of the Seminary. May God bless them!



## NEW PARISHES

### ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA, JAMAICA

St. Francis de Sales Parish at Mkuza (Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam) has given birth to yet another Parish: St. Anthony of Padua Parish at Jamaica which is three kms. away from Mkuza. It was a sub-station of Mkuza Parish and was established by Fransalians. The opening of the new parish took place on 15th August 2021. The new parish has two sub-stations and is administered by a diocesan priest belonging to the Neo-Catechumanate. This is the second parish bifurcated from Mkuza Parish. Hearty Congratulations to Fr. Pius Kochuparampil, Fr. Japhet Kirimi and all the Fransalians who served Mkuza parish in the past.

### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES PARISH, LUKOBE



November 21, 2021 was a joyous day for the people of Lukobe as well as for the Fransalians as the sub-parish of Lukobe was raised to a Parish by his Lordship Lazarus Msimbe, SDS, the Bishop of Morogoro.

The new parish was bifurcated from St. Monica Parish, Kihonda. Fransalians were taking care of this sub-parish for the last 28 years.

Fr. Sunny Mattathil was installed as the Parish Priest of the new parish. The parish has 3.500 Faithful. The Presbytery also was blessed on the same day. Hearty congratulations to all the Fransalians who developed Lukobe sub-parish in such a way that it could become a Parish!



## PERPETUAL PROFESSION AND DIACONATE



The Kola Fransalian community was indeed filled with joy and happiness as four of the brothers - Bro. Edward Mgagi and Bro. Avil Veigas from the East Africa Province and Bro. M. Level Winner Raj and Bro. S. Jerald from the South East India Province – made their final commitment to the Lord. On the following day they were ordained as Deacons. The perpetual profession ceremony was held in Kola Fransalian community Chapel, on 22nd October 2021. The Holy Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Rev. Fr. K. Ignaci Muthu MSFS, the Provincial Superior of South East

India Province, together with Rev. Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS, the Provincial Superior of East Africa Province. Rev. Fr. K. Ignaci Muthu, MSFS, received the Vows and welcomed them to the Congregation.

On 23rd October 2021, the ceremony of Diaconate ordination was held in the Jordan University College Chapel, Morogoro. Rt. Rev. Dr. Lazarus Msimbe, SDS, officiated the Holy Eucharistic celebration during which thirteen brothers, including four of our brothers, from various Congregations were ordained deacons. We congratulate the newly ordained deacons for their decision to accept the call of God.

(Reported by Bro. Arun Raj MSFS)

## GRADUATION OF CATECHISTS

After three months of intensive catechetical training, thirty-one Catechists graduated in Lumen Christi Institute, Arusha on 20th November, 2021. The Holy Mass was presided over by Rt. Rev. Prosper Lyimo, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Arusha along with all the staff members of LCI. During the Eucharistic celebration the Catechists were awarded certificates



of completion. In a meaningful ceremony after the homily, Bishop blessed and commissioned them officially for their ministry. The graduated Catechists hail from the various dioceses in Tanzania or Kenya. The Bishop appreciated Lumen Christi Institute for organizing catechetical courses since 2012 for the effective evangelization of the people of Tanzania and the neighbouring countries. In his homily Bishop reminded the catechists about the importance of holding on to one's faith and their call to serve and to be the shining light of the Gospel in their families and in the parishes or sub-stations. The mass was followed by a family dinner for which the entire LCI community came together. The programme ended with a thanksgiving speech by Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil, the director of LCI and 'Risale' by the Catechists.

(Reported by Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvattil MSFS)

## GRATITUDE TO FR. PADRE PIO MSFS

The Province of East Africa thanks and appreciates Fr. Padre Pio MSFS of Southern African Region for serving the Province of East Africa for eight months immediately after his Ordination. We appreciate his commitment and love for pastoral activities in Ibihwa Parish. He left for South Africa in October. We offer him our best wishes and prayers for his ministry in Southern African Region.

## GRATITUDE TO BRO. LEO

Bro. Leo Cheruvil, a Patrician Brother, was rendering his services in the Missions of the Province of East Africa for the last five years. He was instrumental in developing our SFS School at Iyolwa, and SFS Seminary, at Buwooya, Uganda. We thank and appreciate his commitment and expertise in construction and technical matters which were of great help in the constructions of the school and the seminary buildings. As he bids farewell to us, we wish him God's abundant blessing for his new ministry at Meru, Kenya.

## STEWARDSHIP FORUM MEETING

The Stewardship Forum meeting and Budget session for 2022 will be held at the Provincial House on December 16, 2021. I request all the members of the forum to kindly attend the meeting.

## MEETING OF REGENTS

A meeting of Regents will be held on December 29, 2021 in Lumen Christi Institute. I kindly request all our regents to attend the meeting.

## SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION

The Silver Jubilee celebration of our Fathers Sunny Vettickal, Francis Kallikatt, Kurian Kollapallil and Reji Pendanath will take place at Fransalian House, Kola on January 05, 2022. Hearty welcome to all!

## HEARTY WELCOME

**Fr. Innocent Ngowi** returned to the Province on November 04, 2021 after completing his Master's studies on 'Marriage and Family Counselling'.

**Fr. Thomas Chozhithara**, the Director of MDO visited the Province from October 28 to November 21. He also took some classes at LCI.

**Mr. Stephen Zimmerman**, a long time collaborator of Fransalians in East Africa came to Tanzania on November 02, 2021. He will be with us until March 2022.

## DEPARTURE FROM THE CONGREGATION

Frederick Bwoba, a second year theologian at Kola, left the Congregation for good. We wish him all the best and prayers for his future life.

## APPOINTMENTS

**Fr. Innocent Ngowi** is appointed as the Director and Superior of Fransalian Pastoral Centre, Ndagani with effect from December 15, 2021.

**Fr. Aristides Danda** is appointed as the Assistant Director and Bursar of Fransalian Pastoral Centre with effect from October 01, 2021. He also will pursue his Masters in Religion at Chuka University.

## HOLIDAYS

Fr. Reji Pendanath:	November 02 – December 12
Fr. Sijo Pendanath:	November 02 – December 12
Fr. Martin Pendanath:	November 02 – December 12
Fr. Sunny Vettickal:	November 12 – December 15
Fr. Sebastian Nirappel:	November 13 – December 27
Fr. Gerald Mabiriizi:	November 23 – December 23
Fr. A. Robert:	November 27 – December 20
Fr. Michael Mwangi:	November 27 – December 27
Fr. Joseph Kayanja:	December 15 – January 15

## OBITUARY

**Mrs. Elikutty (96)**, paternal aunt of Fr. Johnson Pathiyil, passed away on 19.10.2021.

***May God grant her eternal life!***



## MY TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

Date	Programme
November 22 – December 03	LCI
December 03	Novitiate, Kibaha
December 11	Stewardship Forum Meeting
December 16	Council Meeting
December 17	LCI
December 29	Meeting of Regents

Wishing you all a grace-filled season of Advent, I remain.

Yours devotedly in Christ Jesus,



Father Mathew Thazhathukunnel MSFS  
Provincial - East Africa Province

### Salesian Thought

Our heart is the source of our action. As our heart is, so are our actions. Whoever wins a person's heart has won the whole person. Yet even the heart, where we wish to begin, must be instructed. John the Baptist wants us to fill our fearful hearts with faith and hope.

Certain fears and anxieties, when excessive, unnerve the heart and often lead to discouragement. These are the ditches and valleys that must be filled with confidence and hope to prepare for Our Lord's coming.

