



# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

NORTHEAST INDIA PROVINCE, MSFS PROVINCIALATE

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**GPA/21 - Circular - December 2016**



**Dear Confreres,**

**WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A BRIGHT NEW YEAR!**

Angels were heralds of the new-born Saviour, but they were only sent to some poor, humble, pious, industrious shepherds, who were fully committed to their vocation, keeping watch over their flock. We are not out of the way of divine visits, when we are honestly committed to our vocation as the shepherds were. However, God must have the honour and glory of this honest commitment to our vocation. “Glory to God in the

highest.” God's good-will to men, manifested in sending the Messiah, redounds to his glory. Other works of God are also for his glory, but the redemption of the world is for his glory in the highest. The shepherds lost no time, but came with haste to the place. They were satisfied, and made known abroad concerning this child, that he was the Saviour, Christ the Lord. Mary carefully observed and thought upon all these things, which were so suited to enliven her holy affections.

Saint Luke writes: “And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (2:19), and tells us yet again: “and his mother kept all these things in her heart” (2:51b). On these two separate occasions—the presentation of Jesus in the temple as an infant, and finding Him there as a twelve-year-old child after searching for three days—Mary responds to the mysteries of God in the same way. She reflects. She ponders. She keeps all these things in her heart. Luke’s repetition of a seemingly insignificant detail in fact demonstrates to us what it means to be a faithful disciple: one must contemplate the mysteries of God revealed in the Incarnate Word, Jesus. In her life of contemplation, Mary provides us with an example of one who sought tirelessly “the one thing” that is needed (cf Lk 10:42).

The beauty of Luke’s words and the perfectly serene images of Mary can belie the intensity and the truth of what it means to live a contemplative life. Reading into the Gospel narrative, we might mistakenly think of Mary as somewhat superhuman, even to go so far as to dismiss her as a model for imitation on the grounds that her status as “full of grace” automatically endowed her with a perfect understanding of God’s intent with regard to her and her Son. But Luke shows us that this was not the case: at the Annunciation, Mary poses the question to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” (1:34). When she and Joseph find Jesus in the temple after three anxious days of searching, her first words to Him are filled with the anguish of an ordinary mother: “Son, why have you done this to us?” (2:48b). In fact, during his account of the finding of Jesus in the temple, Luke conveys both Mary and Joseph as “astonished,” saying “they did not understand what [Jesus] said to them” (1:50). As a human being, Mary undoubtedly struggled along the way to understand the divine plan in which she consented to participate. However, the grace that permeated every fiber of her being allowed her to remain in a state of radical openness, humility, and obedience before God and the divine plan for the salvation of the world. Therefore, she who asked “how can this be” was also able to state moments later, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (1:38).

While Mary pondered all things in her heart, she also carried the Good News of the Incarnation to others. Just after the Annunciation narrative, we read that Mary “set out and travelled to the hill country in haste” to attend to her pregnant cousin Elizabeth (1:39). Mary’s life of contemplation filled her with a desire to share with others the divine mysteries that had been revealed to her, so that they, too, might become people whose souls “proclaim the greatness of the Lord” (1:46).

By first pondering all things in her heart, Mary was then able to open others up to an encounter with the mysteries of divine love, as she did at the wedding feast of Cana: “Do whatever he tells you” (Jn 2:5). When we imitate her spirit of profound adoration, we see more clearly the face of Christ in our midst and discern more readily the path to which God is calling us. In this way, Mary teaches us to seek the face of Christ in all facets of life, whether in the radiant light of joyous moments or in the darkness of sorrow and death, and even in the midst of our astonishment or confusion, to continue open ourselves up to profound trust by pondering all things in our hearts. As we contemplate with our Mother the mysteries of her Son, she becomes for us a means of learning; she teaches us to ‘read’ Christ, to discover his secrets and to understand his message, so that we may then share that message with all people. For, the perfection of contemplation is manifestation of contemplation in perfection of action.

### **Two Annual Retreats in 2017**

The next obligatory annual retreats of the Province will be on the following dates: 1. From July 10<sup>th</sup> evening to 15<sup>th</sup> evening at MSFS Study House, Shillong; 2. From September 25<sup>th</sup> evening to 30<sup>th</sup> till 3 p.m. at MSFS Provincial House, Guwahati. Kindly register for one of these retreats at the earliest and do not organize any personal or community programme that prevents you from full participation in annual retreat. You may avoid coming late and leaving the venue early before the conclusion of the retreat.

### **Transfers and Appointments**

#### **New Local Superior for Inter-provincial Local Community of German Speaking Switzerland**

- Rev. Fr Sunny Panthanazhivadakethil is appointed Local Superior of Inter-provincial Local Community of German Speaking Switzerland (GSS) by Superior General on the nomination by the Provincials of India Forum and Provincial of East Africa (PIF-PEA) with effect from January 01, 2017. Hearty congrats and prayerful wishes to Fr Sunny as he begins his ministry of leadership as Local Superior.

#### **Rector and President of Suvidya College**

- Rev. Fr Joy Mampally is re-appointed as Rector and President Suvidya College for a second term of three years with effect from January 16, 2017, by Superior General on the nomination of the Governing Body of Suvidya College.

#### **New Chairman of Governing Body of Suvidya College**

- Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal, the Provincial of South West India Province, is appointed Chairman of Suvidya Governing Body and Major Superior and Superior Delegate to Suvidya Local Community for a term of three years with effect from January 24, 2017, by Superior General on the nomination of the Governing Body of Suvidya College.
- Fr Sudhir John Kullu is appointed Associate Priest of St Francis de Sales Church, Narengi, with effect from November 21, 2016.
- Fr Xavier Daimari is designated to be appointed Priest Incharge of Holy Angels Parish, Principal of SFS School, Local Superior of MSFS Community, Tato, with effect from November 25, 2016.

### **Mode of Canonical Visitation by Provincial / Regional Superior /Delegation Superior in Northeast India Province with Effect from January 01, 2017**

**Meetings with MSFS Community:** Personal meeting with confreres and Common meeting with all confreres. **Formation Houses:** Personal meeting with formees (novices and scholastics), Common meeting

with formees/ spiritual conference and Common meeting with staff /and formees. *Parishes /Educational Institutions*: Campus Meeting. **Documents to be submitted by the Local Superior**: Community timetable, Brief written report of the community and the religious life of the confreres, Brief report on the financial status of each Institution and community, The vision and mission statements of the community, Brief report on the projects being implemented: incomplete/ stagnant/ abandoned etc, and Plans for the future. **To be made available in the updated condition**: The account books, Details of the bank accounts, Chronicles, Personal Mass Register, Reports of the community meetings, Inventories of the community, Copy of the contract with the employees, Land documents and Any other documents. **Things to be ensured during the visitation**: Adequate preparation in advance, Praying for the event of visitation, 30 minutes of Adoration with the community, Eucharistic celebration at least once in the community and a photo with Provincial/Regional Superior / Delegation Superior and members of the community. **Things to be avoided**: A pompous reception of the Provincial / Regional Superior / Delegation Superior (cut outs / flexes / bands etc) and too many cultural programmes and major events attached to Canonical visitation. **After the visitation**: After the visitation the Provincial/Regional Superior/Delegation Superior prepares an evaluation of the community / institution /apostolate and places it in the archive after communicating the content of the same to the concerned community.

### Communication from Superior General of the Process of Father Mermier's Cause

My dear Fathers:  
Greetings to you!

I am glad to inform you that we have some good news about the Cause of Father Peter Mermier. I thank God for his intervention to our prayer for the glorification of Father Mermier, which, I believe, is glorification of God Himself for the great things accomplished through this Servant of God for His Church. I have been in touch with Fr. Yves Carron who is in touch with the Bishop of Annecy. I thank Fr. Carron for taking significant steps to re-open the cause of our Founder. These are the recent developments:

1. Cardinal Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Cause of Saints, has given 'nihil obstat' to re-open the Process of the cause of Father Peter Mermier, by a letter sent to the Bishop of Annecy

2. Mgr. Yves Boivineau, Bishop of Annecy, will announce the re-opening of the Cause of Fr. Mermier on January 24, 2017. It will be published in the diocesan bulletin of January

(We shall have special prayers in our communities to mark the reopening of the Cause. Please arrange appropriate prayer services)

3. Bishop Boivineau has also appointed Fr. Pierre-Marie MASSON as the Delegate priest to conduct the procedures at the diocesan level in view of beatification and canonization of Fr. Mermier

4. The Prayer for the cause of Father Mermier is approved by the Bishop of Annecy with a minor correction. Please note the Correction in the prayer below (Mother Claudine Echernier is to be inserted)

5. Please print this prayer for the use of People of God and for our own use communities in whatever language is used in the place

6. You can have your own format for printing the prayer but it will be good to have a picture of Father Mermier on one side and the prayer on the other side.

7. At the bottom of the picture of Father Mermier you can mention:

*(Servant of God and Founder of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, and of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod with Mother Claudine Echernier)*

8. Here is the approved prayer for circulation:

#### **PRAYER OF DEVOTION IN HONOR OF FR PETER MARIE MERMIER (1790 – 1862)**

God of Love, You care for us and You guide us in numerous ways. We thank You for inflaming the heart of Fr Peter Mermier with an intense love for You and a zeal for the salvation of souls. You blessed him with a total trust in You and in humble surrender to Your holy Will.

It was your will that he should found the Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales, and with Mother Claudine Echernier, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod, to spread your

mercy and compassion, to all by witnessing to Your love and through their prophetic ministries. His life of holiness was his supreme act of glory to You.

Loving Father, while he was on earth, You blessed many through him, especially in the renewal of Christian faith and family through the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. You raised him to the saintly state of Servant of God. Thereby You testify that he is Your highly favoured son for whom You refuse nothing. So we pray that through his holy intercession, You bless us now with favour we request and pray for ... (silence)

We make this prayer through Christ Your Son who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever ... AMEN

Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father,  
Servant of God, Father Peter Mermier: Intercede for us

+ Mgr. Yves BOIVINEAU, Bishop of Annecy

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9. At the end of the prayer, please add:

(If you receive any favor through the prayer of intercession of Servant of God, Fr. Peter Mermier, please report it to: name, email id, telephone number of the promoter of the Cause in your Province)

Let me know if you have any question in this regard,

Live Jesus!

Father Abraham, MSFS

### **Information of / Thanks / Congrats /Appreciation To:**

- **MSFS Taking over the New Catholic Mission at Mangkolemba:** Most Rev. James Thoppil, Bishop of Kohima, erected a new centre dedicated to the loving Patronage of St Andrew the Apostle and will be known henceforth under the title of St Andrew's Centre, C/o St Andrew School, Mangkolemba-798 604, Nagaland, with effect from November 11, 2016, and handed over to the MSFS. Fr Kurian Pattimackel is the first Priest Incharge of the new Quasi-Parish and Principal of St Andrews School, Mangkolemba.

It was a dream coming true for the people of Mangkolemba and a new missionary endeavour for the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales, when Most Rev. Dr James Thoppil, Bishop of Kohima, officially read out the decree of the canonical erection of St Andrew's Centre, Mangkolemba, as well as the appointment of Rev. Fr Kurian Pattimackel MSFS as its first Priest Incharge, entrusting it to the care of the Northeast India Province of the MSFS, Dibrugarh Region on November 11, 2016, at the premises of St Andrew's School, Mangkolemba. This new MSFS venture was in response to the invitation of Most Rev. James Thoppil, Bishop of Kohima, to open a centre in the Ao village of Mangkolemba, a sub-centre of Mokochung Parish. With this initiative, Bishop Thoppil expressed the hope that the MSFS with their vast experience as pioneering missionaries would be able to make inroads into Ao communities in and around Mangkolemba, especially by providing quality education to them through the development of the existing St Andrew's school.

Besides Bishop James Thoppil, Mrs Nymbo Konyak, EAC Mangkolemba, Rev. Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, Regional Superior of MSFS Dibrugarh Region, Rev. Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil, Provincial Admonitor cum Councillor, many Fathers, Sisters, village leaders, parents and local catholic community members were present for the function. Rev. Fr James Mlakuzhiyil, the Parish Priest of Queen Mary Parish Mokochung, Rev. Fr Paul Thungbemo, Principal of Queen Mary Higher Secondary School, Mokochung, Rev. Fr Thomas Toretkiu, Secretary to Bishop, Mr Lanuwati, Chairman Longjimdang Village Council, Mr Imkongwati, Chairman Mangko ward, were the other important persons present during the august gathering.

Fr James Mlakuzhiyil welcomed all to the gathering and gave a glimpse into the history of the Centre. He said that St Andrew's school began in 1987 by an engineer, Mr Ashiko Mao. It grew up steadily but could not proceed beyond class VIII due to various adverse factors and finally it ceased to exist in 2012. In 2013 the diocese restarted the school for the benefit of the three ranges of Mangkolemba, namely Changkikong, Japukong and Tsurangkong.

Mrs Nymbo Konyak, EAC cum Border Magistrate Mangkolemba, speaking on the occasion, recalled her own days in the Catholic school and the values it has imparted, with which she lives her life. “The people of Mankolemba is lucky,” she said, “to have a new centre of the Catholic Church and the people of the three ranges will benefit profusely in the future.”

Bishop James Thoppil, while addressing the gathering, thanked the MSFS for taking up the challenge to work at the centre, especially Fr Kurian, a veteran missionary, who spent over 41 years in Nagaland and Manipur, for his willingness to be a pioneer again. Bishop reiterated that the Catholic Church is at the service of the people and now it has come to Mangkolemba not for profits; instead the Church has to invest hugely here to make it viable. “The real investment,” he said, “is the commitment of its personnel, namely the priests and sisters who work tirelessly for the development of the centre where they are sent.”

Rev. Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil, the Provincial Delegate, thanked the diocese for putting their trust in the MSFS and inviting them to work at the Centre. He also thanked all for the warm welcome accorded to the MSFS Fathers and for all the assurance of help and support.

Mr Lanuwati, Chairman of Longjemdang Village Council, Mr Imkongwati, Chairman of Mankgo ward and Mr Panger, representative of the school parent body, are others who spoke on the occasion, assuring help and support and expressing great happiness at the erection of the new Centre as well as the arrival of the MSFS Fathers there.

Rev. Fr Kurian Pattimackel, the newly appointed Centre Incharge, thanked all for arrangements made to welcome the MSFS there and for the assurance of all possible support and collaboration. He assured the people his commitment for the development of the centre and hoped “to work together with the assistance of the Lord for the development of the community.” The whole programme came to an end with a delicious community meal served by the people (Report by Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, Regional Superior of Dibrugarh Region).

- Rev. Fr Agnelo Fernandes, under whose supervision, a Power point Presentation on the Spiritual Directory of SFS has been prepared, and it has already been sent to all the confreres of the Congregation by Superior General.
- Fr Joy Mampally, the Rector, staff and students of Suvidya College, Bangaluru, for organizing, “Fr Gabriel Memorial Lectures 2016,” on December 08, 2016. A series of lectures, focusing on various dimensions of ecology in the light of the Encyclical “Laudato Si”, were delivered on the day by Dr Kuriakose Poovathumkudy, Dr Thomas Kalariparambil, Dr Jacob Parappally and Dr Phinu Jose.
- Fr Vintu Avittappallil, Fr Athnas Kerketta, Fr Benjamin and the Campus Community of Dhemaji for organizing the Parents’ Day celebrations on November 4, 2016. Mrs Roshini Aparanji Korati IAS, the Deputy Commissioner of Dhemaji District, was the Chief Guest and Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel, the Provincial, and Rev. Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, the Regional Superior, were Guests of Honour.
- Fr Francis Thadathil, Fr Lijeesh Kaduthanathu, Fr Daniel Lalmuanzela and Catholic Community of Sateek-Aizawl for organizing the blessing and inauguration of the new school building of St Francis de Sales School, Sateek, on November 9, 2016. Thanks to Fr Lijeesh Kaduthanathu and Fr Daniel Lalmuanzela for supervising the construction of the building with the constant support of Fr Joseph Kannamnagalath, the Provincial Bursar. The Province remains grateful to Fr Francis Thadathil who organized a group of benefactors – Fr Clayton Elmherst, Fr Billy James Dodge, Susan Marie Weiner, Christina Sue Sage, Reghan Raina Sage, Mary Katherine Eiler Radl and Patricia Gale Daniells Ambort – who financially supported the school project.
- Fr George Poovathunkal, Fr Praveen Kumbattu, Fr Varghese Chettupuzhakaran and other members of Provincial House Community, Rev. Sisters of Venerini Community and staff of SFS School who organized the Parents’ Day celebrations at SFS School, Narengi, on November 26, 2016. Mr Sanjib Das, CBSE Regional Officer, was the Chief Guest, and Most Rev. John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati, and Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial of Northeast India Province, were the guests of honour.
- SFS Seminary, Ettumanoor, is celebrating its Golden Jubilee (1967-2017), an occasion for us to thank God for all his blessings for the last 50 years. The conclusion of the Jubilee year is scheduled to take place on October 4-5, 2017. All the past students are cordially invited to the conclusion of the Jubilee year and for the alumni gathering.

- Fr John Kuttikottayil and Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil who attended the National Major Seminary Rectors Meeting from November 03 to 07, 2016 in Goa.
- Fr Shaibu Ezhanikat who organized pilgrimage for the faithful of Narengi Parish to the Cathedral Church of Guwahati on November 6, 2016. The programme in Cathedral was animated by Fr Sebastian Vadakumpadam enabling the faithful to participate in the celebrations of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Mass.
- Fr Joseph Kannamangalath and Fr George Poovathunkal for the construction of basketball courts inaugurated by Fr Joseph Kannamangalath and blessed by Fr Varghese Chettupuzhakaran in the presence of MSFS Provincialate Community, staff and students of SFS School, Narengi, on November 10, 2016.
- Fr George Poovathunkal and the staff of SFS School, Narengi, for Organizing the SFS Challengers basketball Tournament at SFS School, Narengi on November 11 to 14, 2016.
- Fr Saji Kaippallil for organizing the first convention at Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre, Tura, on November 12, 2016. Fr Francis Peethuruthel preached the retreat and Most Rev. Andrew R. Marak celebrated the Holy Eucharist for hundreds of faithful gathered for the retreat.
- Fr Joby Kurikilamkattu, Fr Genes Shangpliang and Fr Mathew Muriankariyil for organizing a two-day convention on November 12-13, Women's Seminar on November 26, 27 animated by Fr George Jerain and Mr Snenglem Alfred Kurbah, Eucharistic Procession in Mawkynjoin village on December 04, and Children's Retreat on December 13-15, 2016.
- Fr James Pezhathumootil and Fr Joy Kaniyammattel for organizing the blessing and inauguration of the extension of school-building of SFS School, Harina, on November 13, 2016, by Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial.
- Fr Shiji Poonthuruthil and Fr Abraham Ponvelil for organizing Annual Retreat on November 25-27, 2016, at SFS Church, Hamren. The retreat was preached by Fr Aji Mathirampallil msfs.
- Fr Jojan Plathottathil, Fr Varghese Manickathan, staff and students of SFS School, Pasighat, for the participation in the ATL Innovation Challenge at Guwahati on November 05, the achievement of the first prize in the District level Science Exhibition on November 09 and organizing of the SFS Science Exhibition cum Craft Expo on November 16, 2016.
- Fr Reji Kizhakethalackal, Fr Jude Poovakulathu, Fr Saji Kaippallil, Fr Francis Peethuruthel and Fr Jijesh Palatty for attending the training programme for the Parish Mission Preaching (PMP) at Visakhapatnam on November 15-19, 2016.
- Fr Athnas Kerketta, Fr Cornelius Bara, Fr Bernard Sangma, Deacon Ajit Daimary and Sr Rita Basumotary for organizing and animating the training for the trainers (TOT), in collaboration with FAsCE India and Mission Forum of the province, on the theme "Whole Community Catechesis" on November 14 to 17, 2016 at Holy Redeemer Retreat Centre, Kaying.
- Fr Stephen Marayikulam(Sr) and Fr Jose Chettaniyil for organizing the Eucharistic Procession in the Archdiocese of Guwahati on November 20, 2016, at Christ the Bearer of Good News Cathedral, Rukminigaon.
- Fr Jose Thekkel for facilitating the construction of houses for Mr Libinson Marak in collaboration with FAsCE India and for Mr Probath Marak in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Guwahati to mark the Jubilee year of Mercy and the Jubilee year of the Archdiocese. The house of Mr Libinson was blessed by Fr Saji George Puthiyakulangara and inaugurated by Fr Nongbak Clean Areng on November 21, 2016, and the house of Mr Probath Marak was blessed and inaugurated by Most Rev John Moolachira, Archbishop of Guwahati, on December 09, 2016.
- Fr Saji Puthiyakulangara, Fr Clean Areng Nongbak and staff of FAsCE India for observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with Blind Walk in collaboration with Jyothinikethan School for Blind on December 04, 2016, and for organizing Medical Camp in Panikhethy to mark the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Mercy.
- Fr John Barman, Director of Fransalian Youth Ministry in Northeast India, for organizing a social gathering of Fransalian Youth for Christ at DBYC, Shillong, on November 20, animating Youth Convention at Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre, Tura, on November 19 and for the Pre-Christmas celebration in the far-flung villages of SFS Church, Narengi, on December 2-4, 2016.

- Fr Jose Mundoly, Fr Hriinii Mark and Fr Belo Francis for obtaining *khelal myadipatta* for the newly purchased land at Chabua through their tireless effort.
- Most Rev. Joseph Aind, Bishop of Dibrugarh, transferred the ownership of the present church in Chabua town with the plot of land to Northeast India Province, and gave written-permission to build a church and presbytery there as well as to start MSFS Regional House in Dibrugarh.
- Fr Biju Kanicherry and Fr James Pattarkalayil were in Europe for a short duration.
- Fr Benoy Veliyathu for organizing the Vocation Promoters Meet on November 28, 2016.
- Rev. Fr Thomas Aarathedathu, Provincial of Brazil, for his visit to our Provincial House on ---on his way to Oriens Theological College, Shillong, for lectures.
- Rev. Fr A. Dharmaraj, Provincial of Southeast India Province, for his visit to our Provincial House during his visit to Northeast from November 14 to 18, 2016.
- Fr Saji Kaippallil was elected CRI President in the Diocese of Tura.
- Fr Johny Kuttikottayil, Fr Sudhir Hasda and Editorial team of 'Fransalian Blooms: Northeast India Formation Forum Newsletter' for bringing out the latest volume FB/15.
- Fr Varghese Chakalamuriyil and Fr Roshan Kanjirathinkal for conducting courses on driving for the youths from the villages of Kaziranga from November 16 to December 16, 2016, and a two-month's Course on Hospitality in collaboration with the Bosco Tech at SFS Technical Institute, Diphu.
- Fr Bashena Adani James, Fr Solomon Tirkey, Fr Augustine Thundathil, Fr George Vettukatiil and Fr Thomas Edakazhickal for organizing Eucharistic Procession at St. Mary's Parish, Aalo, on December 04, 2016.
- Fr Thomas Nirappel and Fr Sibi Mattapallil for the celebration of Parish day cum sacerdotal silver jubilee of Fr Thomas Nirappel on December 07, 2016, at St Francis de Sales Church, Nongalbibra.
- Fr Stephen Pou for organizing the celebration of Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee of Fr Lukose Kavunkal on October 16, 2016 at Holy Rosary Church and on November 11, 2016 at SFS School, Basar.

### Updates from Southern African Region

- **Substitution for Matroosfontein and Grassy Park:** Since May 2016 we have been depending on substituting of priests for Matroosfontein with Fr Job Karikkampally as the administrator. We are grateful to Frs Joseph Puliylakat and Nikseng Sangma for substitution at Matroosfontein. Currently Fr Joseph Puliylakat has returned to Cape Town after completing his classes at LCI to continue to help at Matroosfontein. Since August 2016 we have also been relying on substitution at Grassy Park due to the absence of an assistant priest. Currently Fr Shiju Poomarathinkal is at Grassy Park to assist Fr Baiju Mundackal. We thank Frs Nikseng, Joseph and Shiju for their generous support. Fr Nikseng will once again come to Grassy Park during the holidays of Fr Baiju.
- **St Philip's Swaziland:** Our Fathers continue to learn the local language as they go about with their pastoral activities. The presbytery is under renovation and it is already looking good. Fr Augustine Parampuzhayil is issued with a new passport since his original passport was stolen.
- **Holidays:** Fr Babychan Arackathara will be on home-holiday from December 6, 2016 to January 10, 2017. During his absence, please contact Fr Job Karikkampally for any emergencies. Fr Thomas Vanderkunnel will be on home-leave from the first week of January 2017.
- **Omutumi 2017:** The Region's annual newsletter will be distributed during the coming days. On behalf of the Region, I wish to congratulate Fr Libin for bringing out the Omutumi ahead of time. I also wish to thank everyone who helped him in editing, and all those who contributed news, views and photos. It's a work well done.
- Fr Salu Thattaparambil has translated the content of the **Omutumi into German language**. Thank you Fr Salu for your generous support. Besides the hard copies, the soft copies will also be available for distribution among the parishioners and benefactors.
- **Pocket Money:** For priests in the Region, the pocket money will be R (NSD) 600.00 per month effective from January 2017.
- **Please continue to pray for Fr Alex George Varickamantthottiyil's dad** who is still under medication for cancer.

## **Forthcoming Events**

- **Regents Meet:** Fr Benoy Veliyathu, the Councilor Incharge of Formation, will organize the mid-term evaluation of the regent brothers from January 11 to 14, 2017 at MSFS Study House, Shillong. Brothers are expected to arrive on 11<sup>th</sup> evening and will be able to return on 14<sup>th</sup> morning.
- **Superiors Forum Meeting:** Superiors Forum Meeting will be held on January 23, 2017, **from 9.30 a.m. to 3 p.m.** in which all Local Superiors, members of Provincial Curia and Regional Curia are expected to participate. You are also cordially invited to join for solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Archbishop of Guwahati in the evening at 5 pm, followed by festal programme and dinner.

## **Let us Pray for the Sick**

- Mr Luis Kanjirathinkal, the beloved father of Fr Roshan Kanjirathinkal, who is hospitalized.
- Miss Elistina Shangpliang, niece of Fr Genes Shangpliang, who is suffering from cancer.

## **Let us pray for the Departed**

- Fr John DeVore MSFS (91), belonging to USA Vice Province, passed away on November 23, 2016.
- Bro. Job Poovathumootil MSFS (86), belonging to Visakhapatnam Province, passed away on November 26, 2016.
- Fr Louis Brugger MSFS (96), belonging to France-Suisse Province, passed away on November 30, 2016.
- Sr Felici Maria SMMI (84), maternal aunty of Fr Francis Poovelil, passed away on November 22, 2016.
- Mr Joseph Thekkel (80), father of Fr Tomy Thekkel, passed away on November 26, 2016.
- Mrs Heshoru Theresa Dio (81), mother of Fr Dio D. Jacob, passed away on December 07, 2016.

## **Update and Renewal Programmes**

- Don Bosco Renewal Centre, Bangalore, organizes Personal Growth and renewal programme for Priests and Religious from February 1 to 24, 2017, and also a course on Leadership and Animation of Communities from February 27 to March 26, 2017. Contact address: Director, Don Bosco Renewal Centre, SOS Post, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore - 560076. Tel: 080-26584115, 26593522. Email: [admitdbrc@gmail.com](mailto:admitdbrc@gmail.com).

## **Provincial's Programme**

### **December**

- Dec. 31-Jan. 1: Canonical Visitation to Vinaya Bhavan

### **January**

- Jan. 2: Ordination of Dn Bibin Martin Puthupalliyil
- Jan. 5: Somonpara
- Jan. 7: Bahalpur
- Jan. 9-31: Classes at St Clement College, Nagaon
- Jan. 23: Superiors Forum Meeting, Celebration of the Feast of SFS, Re-installation of the Provincial and Provincial Council Meeting
- Jan. 26: Salesian Provincial House, Guwahati
- Jan. 28: Steering Committee Meeting

### **February**

- Feb. 1-17: Classes at St Clement College, Nagaon

### **March**

- Mar. 3: Ranchi
- Mar. 18: Canonical Visitation to Novitiate
- Mar. 23-24: Provincial Council Meeting
- Mar. 27-30: Trichy

### **April**

- Apr. 3-5: Update Programme for Formators, Medziphema

## A Concluding Thought

As we celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the *Treatise on the Love of God* by St Francis de Sales, it is worth reflecting on the different levels of love (charity) as taught by our beloved patron in his great masterpiece. In this work we can distinguish five levels of love: gratifying love, benevolent love, compliant love, submissive love and disinterested love (Cf. George Panthamackel, *God of Love: An Investigation into Transcendent Love in the Spirituality of St Francis de Sales*, Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2011, Pp. 61-82).

**Gratifying Love:** Gratifying love is the delight one has in the perfections found in God. The perfections of God become the food and drink of the soul. God's loving-kindness feeds us with delights. His perfections completely satisfy the heart by the gratification they afford. It brings us to rest in what delights us, on which we feed our hearts. His goodness too delights and feeds on our gratification. This grows as we become aware that God is pleased to see that we find our contentment in him. The result of all these mutual delights is a supremely gratifying love. Once we are gratified at God's goodness, we will be impelled to praise Him.

**Benevolent Love:** Benevolent love leads us to praise God once we are extremely gratified at God's infinite perfection. We praise him with all our heart. When the human heart is seized with the urgent desire of praising God beyond its limits, it invites also all other creatures to join it in praising and thanking God. God's love can always be traced back to God's benevolence. First of all, God provides us with all the good he wants us to possess, and then he finds satisfaction in it. God created the universe and endowed each thing with such good qualities as appropriate to its nature out of sheer benevolence. On the contrary, our love for God begins the other way round. First, there is the gratification we experience in the supreme goodness of God, and only then we go on to practise benevolence. Benevolent love makes us want to increase the satisfaction which we find in God's goodness. To bring this about, we are careful to give up all other delights. A true lover's delight is centred on one's beloved. Once we are extremely gratified at God's infinite perfection, we come to realize that his perfection is beyond our thoughts and dreams. Then, we desire that God's name be hallowed, extolled, praised, held in honour and adored. The benevolence of soul inspires us to a desire for praising God. The more we discover how good God is, the more we are driven to sound his praises higher still. This growing satisfaction stimulates us to further praise. In this way, gratification and praise, each interacting on the other, are ever powerfully contributing to their common growth. Although a lover of God may long to praise God more perfectly in heaven, one will surely comply with the will of God even if that desire is not immediately granted.

**Compliant Love:** Compliant love is that in which one realizes that God's will – which is perfect, straightforward, just and fair – has to be the supreme rule and law of all things, accepted, obeyed, and served by all. All have to comply themselves with the will of God. We have to comply with God's 'declared will' found in Christian doctrine. The doctrine sets forth the truths God wants us to believe, the blessings to hope for, the punishments to fear, the things to love, the commandments to keep, and the counsels to follow. God desires that we keep his commandments. Thus charity makes one comply with God's will, leading to a careful and joyful observance of commandments. There is also difference between command and counsel. A command reveals a definite intention; whereas a counsel a desire. A command obliges us; whereas a counsel invites. The violation of a commandment makes one blameworthy; whereas the violation of a counsel makes one less worthy of praise. The response to a command is obedience; whereas the response to a counsel is confidence. We keep a commandment so as not to displease; whereas we keep a counsel to please. That is why gratifying love naturally leads us to follow his counsels and benevolent love causes us not only to oblige what he commands but also what he counsels. A more perfect keeping of the commandments enables us to unite our wills with divine permissive will through submissive love.

**Submissive Love:** Submissive love is union of human will with the divine permissive will. It implies the conviction that nothing, except sin, happens but by God's will to which one has to submit oneself at all time and in all places. A lover of God loves divine permissive will when things go badly no less than if they go well. His love is greater amidst crosses, toil and trouble. Love shows itself in suffering for the beloved. Jesus' love

for us reached its peak in the passion and death which he endured for our sake. Love of the cross leads us to go out of our way to meet unpleasant things. Such love is even more pleasing when we accept toil, trouble, trials patiently, calmly, and gracefully. Love is at its highest when we welcome them, love them, clasp them, because they come through God's positive or permissive will. Such compliance with God's permissive will is achieved either by the virtue of deference or the more perfect virtue of disinterestedness. Deference involves effort and submission. It means that we prefer God's will to all else, though we are attracted towards many other things. In disinterested love we are attracted to a thing only because God wants it not because we like it.

**Disinterested Love:** Disinterested love, the highest of all, means that we are lovingly attracted to a thing only because we see God's will in it. It is 'pure love.' When God's will makes itself felt, nothing else is of greater significance. The joys of heaven are not preferable to the sorrows and toils of this world but for God's will. Such a heart knows no personal preference. Its only aim is the fulfilling of God's will. When God's will includes several things, the heart chooses the one where God's will is chiefly to be found. Disinterestedness is to be shown in natural things, in social life, in the ebb and flow of spiritual life, and in whatever happens. Jesus practiced it beyond compare in his life on earth.

Fraternally,  
Yours in the Lord,

*George*

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### WALKING ON THE PATH OF THE PATRON

**Let us all belong to God in the midst of so much busyness brought on by the diversity of worldly things.  
Where could we give better witness to our fidelity than in the midst of things going wrong? (SFS)**

