

MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

NORTHEAST INDIA PROVINCE, MSFS PROVINCIALATE

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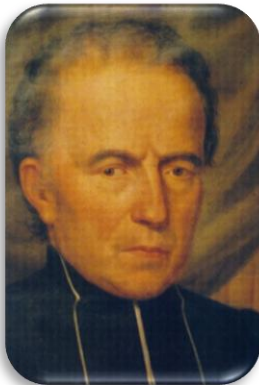
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GPA/32–Circular – September 2018

Dear Confreres,



WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY FEAST OF OUR BELOVED FOUNDER, FR PETER MARIE MERMIER, THE SERVANT OF GOD!

Fr Peter Marie Mermier, the Servant of God, was born on August 28, 1790 at Vouray in the parish of Chaumont en Genevois in Savoy. The Church in Savoy was badly affected by French Revolution and many priests left the country while a few went into hiding. The revolutionaries had closed churches and schools. Fr Peter Mermier had his primary education at the hands of his own mother, a woman of noble character, of whom he later said: “I repent for not having written anything about my mother. My God how much I owe her! No, no, she was not an ordinary woman” (Cf. Srs Maria Goretti and Berchmans, Trs, *Family Annals*, Trichy: The Printing House, 2009 - 4th

Edition, p. 9). He did his secondary school studies as a boarder in Melan.

In 1807 he joined the Major Seminary at Chambéry. He was fervent in prayer, and a hard worker with genuine concern and love for his companions. He was ordained priest on March 21, 1813 at the age of twenty-three-and-half. His first appointment was at Magland as Assistant Parish Priest to Canon Desjacques. There he made two rules for himself on poverty and chastity. 1. Poverty: “As much as it depends on me, I will have a room without any tapestry or decoration. It will always be clean and white. Secondly, my cross or crucifix will not be gilded, but of simple wood. I will, however, look for one where the figure of Christ is expressive. Thirdly, I will have an earthenware holy water font....; I will observe the same rules of simplicity and poverty with regard to other necessary furniture: candlestick, writing material, etc., I will never have a mattress on my bed at home.” 2. Chastity: “While I am a young assistant parish priest, I will act with the servant of the presbytery in such a manner as to be a stranger to her at the end of two or three years as I was on the first day of my arrival. I will examine myself on this point during my one hour’s review each week and it will be the subject of my particular exam for week, in case there is something to be reformed” (Ibid.).

He taught the little ones by day and continued his theological reading and study at night. After three years he was appointed to teach at the College of Melan and to serve as Prefect of Discipline. The Archbishop of Chambéry appointed him Parish Priest of Le Chaterlard in 1819, at the age of thirty.

Fr Mermier was an austere priest of unbounded zeal. Mgr de Thiollez, Bishop of Annecy, appointed him spiritual director at the Major Seminary in 1823. In the meantime, Fr Mermier realized the importance of parish missions, the need for a religious congregation of missionaries under the patronage of St Francis de Sales. The political disturbances in the country, especially the French Revolution, had its impact in the spiritual realm too as it left the people in a deep spiritual crisis and indifference towards their religious duties. Reading the signs of the time, Fr Mermier took upon himself the task of a spiritual renewal of his people by preaching. In 1826, the Bishop permitted him to dedicate himself entirely to the mission.

Peter Joseph Rey became the new Bishop of Annecy in 1832. He allowed the missionaries, at that time six in all, to move to a house in La Roche in June 1834. On September 29, 1836 Bishop Rey gave provisional approval for their rule and they were known as Missionaries of Annecy. They set up a motherhouse in Annecy at a place called La Feuillette on August 8, 1837. It became a house of prayer and study. It was the house where the young religious received their formation in the apostolic and Fransalian life. The civil approval to the new religious society from the Duke of Savoy came on October 15, 1838. It stated that the Missionaries were approved under the title of St Francis de Sales. On October 24, 1838 Bishop Rey issued an official document giving canonical approval to the Congregation founded by Father Peter Mermier known as “The Missionaries of St Francis de Sales.” It was followed by the foundation of “The Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross” on November 4, 1841.

He founded the MSFS Congregation for parish mission, foreign mission and education of the youth. His missionary zeal impelled him to request the Holy See for a mission abroad. He began negotiations to take up missions, preferably in Africa, for the evangelization. In 1845, the Holy See entrusted to the missionaries of St Francis de Sales the Visakhapatnam Mission which then comprised of nearly one third of India. The first batch of missionaries reached Pondicherry on September 8, 1845 and Visakhapatnam on February 19, 1846. Ever since, the MSFS have generously and powerfully contributed to the development of the church in India. As regards education, he believed that one has to be a mother to the pupil by tenderness and a father by prudence. He accepted the management of the College of Avian in 1856 and the College of Melan in the following year.

Between 1828 and 1857, Fr Mermier himself conducted ninety missions. He considered preaching as the chief means of proclaiming the word of God. He adopted the method of carefully prepared simple preaching. He spoke with conviction of faith, using a fatherly tone of voice marked with a kindly understanding of sinners as St Francis de Sales had done. He guided the missionaries to lead a life of pleasing and kindly charity in their apostolic ministry and interpersonal relationships. He considered prayer to Our Lady of Seven Dolors to be an eminent Salesian devotional practice.

Despite his advancing age, Fr Mermier took over the Parish of Pougny as priest-in-charge on June 26, 1857. His last years were a time of purification and edification. He fell seriously ill at Pougny and was taken to La Feuillette with his eye-sight weakened. Nevertheless, he was extremely happy to do whatever he could do despite his discomfort. He wrote to Sister Marie Pecllet on November 30, 1858: “In spite of my discomfort, I consider myself satisfied and happy to be a little useful to our good scholastics and our good Brothers. I have the happiness of being able to be a little quiet, to celebrate holy Mass, to hear the confessions of our Sisters, to follow all the little exercises of our little community” (Ibid., p.239).

When he felt a little better he went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of La Salette in July 1859. He suffered a fierce relapse on June 6, 1860 and became totally blind. Meanwhile, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars approved the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales as a congregation with simple vows. On August 10, 1862, Fr Mermier had a fall, which caused a double fracture of his right leg. He left for his heavenly reward on September 30, 1862.

Transfers and Appointments

- Fr Donsuk Lyngdoh is appointed Local Superior and Local Bursar of MSFS Community, Lengpui, with effect from September 10, 2018.
- Fr Francis Peethuruthel is appointed Principal of SFS High School and Hostel Warden at Umwahlang with effect from September 19, 2018.
- Fr Mathew Puthumana is appointed to the MSFS Provincialate Community, Narengi, for the ministry of Counseling with effect from September 5, 2018.
- Fr Carlus Barowa is appointed to the MSFS Provincialate Community, Narengi, as an Editor of the CRI Encyclopedia, Associate Secretary to Pre-Capitular Commission of the General Chapter-2019, Director of Salesian Studies in the Province and Organizer of Annual Salesian Research Seminar with effect from October 9, 2018.

Result of the Second Round Election for the Delegates to 20th General Chapter 2019

DELEGATES	SUBSTITUTES
01. MAPPILAPARAMBIL Emmanuel	01. KIZHAKUMPURATH Philip Thomas
02. PUTHIYAKULANGARA Saji George	02. ARACKATHARA Baby
03. MUNDACKAL Baiju Kurian	03. POOVATHUNKAL George

Pre-Capitular Commission (PCC) in preparation for the General Chapter XX:

Fr Saji George Puthiyakulangara, Secretary General of the Chapter (SGC), Fr J. Stephan, Fr Suresh Babu, Fr Manoj Turkey, Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial of Northeast India, and Fr George Parampukattil, Representing the General Administration.

Information of / Thanks / Congrats /Appreciation To:

HEARTY CONGRATS AND PRAYERFUL WISHES TO FR S JOSEPH PULIYILAKAT AND JIJESH PALATY, THE NEW REGIONAL COUNCILLORS OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION AND LUKOSE PERUMANNIKALA, THE RE-ELECTED REGIONAL BURSAR. I sincerely thank fathers for accepting this responsibility, and assure them our prayers and wholehearted cooperation in the exercise of their ministry.

- Fr Saji Tharayil and Fr Sabin Kavunkal for organizing the celebration of the Sacrament of first Holy Communion and Confirmation. Most Rev. Paul Mattekatt, Bishop of Diphu, during the Eucharistic celebration conferred the sacrament of First Holy Communion to 44 children and the Sacrament of Confirmation on 66 children on August 19, 2018. A short felicitation programme was organized by the Parish Council members with the help of FCC sisters, the catechists, families and friends.
- Fr Firstar Shylla for facilitating awareness programme and free medical camp organized by Men association of SFS Parish, Umwahlang, in collaboration with the office of the District Medical and Health Officer, West Khasi Hills, on August 25, 2018.
- Fr George Vadakkeperincherimannil, staff and students of SFS Higher Secondary School, Medziphema, for winning the 6th edition of the Inter-school Football Tournament organized by Medziphema Town Students' Union at Local Ground, Medziphema, on August 25, 2018.
- Fr Lukose Kavunkal and Fr Stephen Pou for organizing Mothers' Day at Holy Rosary Church, Basar, on August 26, 2018. Madam Gracy a senior teacher of Higher Secondary School, Basar, was the Chief Guest of the day.
- Fr Andrew Ashihe and Fr Melvin Parampukattil for organizing the opening of the Silver Jubilee celebration of Ka Syiem Jingsuk Parish, Amlarem, and the Parish Day celebration on August 26, 2018. Most Rev. Victor Lyngdoh, Bishop of Jowai Diocese hoisted the jubilee flag and declared the jubilee year opened. He presided over the Holy Eucharist and was the chief guest of the day's function. Mr Kyrmen Shylla, the honourable Minister of Social Welfare Department, was the guest of honour. The celebration witnessed the participation of 1800 people.
- Fr Peter Marak and Fr Priyor Khongsit for the meaningful celebration of the National Bible Sunday at St Paul Parish, Panishali, with bible quiz competition and veneration of the Bible on August 26, 2018.
- SFS School, East Harina, Tripura, was nominated for Swachh Vidyalaya Puruskar instituted by the Ministry of Human Resource Department of India. Award was received by Fr James Pezhathumootil, the Principal of SFS School, East Harina, on September 1, 2018, from Mr Biplab Kumar Deb, the Chief Minister, in the presence of Mr Ratan Lal Nath, Education Minister of Tripura.
- Fr George Poovathunkal, Principal of SFS School, Narengi, staff and students for hosting and organizing the 12th SFS Challenger's Trophy Interschool Basketball Tournament from August 30 to September 2, 2018. It was a four-day event where 28 teams (boys and girls) of 17 city based schools participated. In both the categories, the host school emerged champions. Rev Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial, was the Chief Guest at the closing ceremony.

- Fr Genes Shangpliang, Fr Joby Kurikilamkattu and Fr Lijo Thakidiyel for organizing the Mother of Compassion Parish Day at Mawkhlam with Spiritual and Cultural Festivities on September 16, 2018, during which Don Bosco Secondary School, Mawkhlam, praised God for the first time with its Musical Band.
- Fr Abraham Ponvelil and Fr John Kelamkuzhakkal for organizing Parish Day at Mary Mother of Compassion Church, Somonpara, from September 14 to 16, 2018. The three-day celebration began on September 14 with Holy Eucharistic Celebration by Fr Saji Kaippallil, Director Holy Redeemer Retreat Centre, Tura. On the concluding day Most Rev. Andrew R. Marak, Bishop of Tura, celebrated Holy Eucharist and administered the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and marriage.
- Fr Saji Kaippallil, Fr Philip Kurisummoottil and Fr Bernard Sangma for organizing the 3rd Foundation Day of the retreat centre and 450th birth anniversary of St Francis de Sales, blessing and rededication of the convention hall and residential facilities on August 21, 2018 and for conducting the first residential retreat for prayer group of Tura Diocese from August 23 -27, 2018 and 2nd retreat for catechists of Tura Diocese from September 13 to 17, 2018 at Holy redeemer Renewal Centre, Tura.
- Fr John Kelamkuzhakkal and Fr Abraham Ponvelil organized a seminar with the help of FAsCE India and MISEREOR for high school students and Self Help Groups on 'Alcoholism and Human Trafficking.' The seminar was animated by Dr Aruna Momin and Team on September 7, 2018 at SFS School Campus, Somonpara.
- Fr Albert Sahayaraj and Fr Biju Kanicherry for conducting one-day animation programme for all women of St Jude's Parish, Bahalpur, on September 9, 2018. Sr Anitha Lakra, the Coordinator of Women Association of Bongaigaon Diocese was the resource person. She highlighted the role of women in the church and in the family. She inspired all women to take active part in the church's activities. There were 150 participants for the programme.
- Congratulations to Fr Carlus Barowa for successfully completing his doctoral studies on September 21, 2018, with **Auszeichnung** from Salzburg University, Austria; his thesis is on "**Missionaries of St Francis de Sales and it's Contribution to the growth of the Catholic Church in North East India: A Historical-Contextual Approach**".
- Mermier's Tournament, Upper Assam, took place on September 22, 2018 at SFS School, Telam. Fr Roy Muthadathu co-ordinated the event with the help of other fathers from Upper Assam and Fr Philip Purayidam with the help of Fr Jose Mundolil, the Local Superior, the staff and students made the immediate arrangements. The events were Football for Boys and Throwball for girls. Congratulations to all the MSFS Fathers in Upper Assam for organizing such an event in honour of our heavenly Founder.
- Fr Lijeesh Kadathanathu and Fr Jaimon Thadthil for organizing the celebration of Parish feast of Mary Mother of Compassion Parish, Sateek, on September 23, 2018. The ceremony began with blessing of the church gate and the newly constructed grotto by Most Rev. Stephen Rotluanga, Bishop of Aizawl, and Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial, inaugurated the same. The Holy Mass was presided over by the Bishop which was followed by cultural programme and common meal.
- Congratulations to Fr Shiji Poonthuruthil for securing first class in B. Ed from Chaudhary Ranbir Singh University, Jind, Hariyana.

Education Forum: Core Committee Meeting

The first meeting of the newly formed Core Committee of Education Forum for 2018-19, Northeast India Province, was held on September 1, 2018 at MSFS Provincialate, Guwahati. Fr George Poovathunkal, Councillor In-charge of Education Forum and the Vice-Chairman of the Core Committee, introduced the resource person of the day, Dr John Jose, a faculty of IIT, Guwahati, to the assembly and welcomed him amidst the gathering. He also welcomed the members of the newly formed Core Committee and all others present to the meeting. Further, he introduced the agenda. **Message by Fr Provincial:** Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial and Chairman of the Forum, urged everyone present to actively participate in the meeting that the core committee of the education forum can bring out the best to follow up in the coming days. He said, "Let's be sufficiently communicative that we can avoid maximum confusion and have smooth functioning. And he stated that the 'communicative action' (> an idea proposed by philosopher Jürgen Habermas) is the need of the hour when issues arise. It is not enough that we follow the majority opinion in any decision making, but should aim at arriving a consensus through communicative action." **Input Session:**

Followed by Fr Provincial's message, there was a two-hour input session by Dr John Jose. Through the well-prepared presentation, he invited the participants to adapt to the technological changes and adopt an open approach of inquisitiveness and innovation so as not to be outdated and displaced. From within his experience and expertise, he shared certain strategies for building up extraordinary standards and make the region shine.

Release of the Service Manual: During the meeting Rev. Fr George Panthanmackel released the Service Manual and handed over the first copy to Dr John Jose. Introducing the Service Manual and explaining some of the crucial points within, Fr George Poovathunkal asked the fathers to take the document seriously and implement it prudently step by step. Fr Provincial suggested that the document could be explained to all the members of the Forum in detail at the earliest opportunity available, which was agreed upon so as to bring about a smooth implementation of it. **Vision and Mission:** Fr George Poovathunkal informed the Forum that the mission and vision statement of our Education Institutions has been edited with the help of experts in tune with our objectives and other requirements. He suggested that we could have a common design and the prints be made available to all the schools. All agreed to have a common design but declined to print together as the requirement of size will differ from school to school. **Desalite Olympiad for Students and Teachers:** As a pursuance of the suggestion by the previous Education Forum Meeting, the core committee decided to conduct a Desalite Olympiad for all the students and teachers of our schools so as to assess their standard and recognise them as part of a larger family. The Forum agreed upon entrusting the task of conducting the Olympiad with *EduGenie*, an Educational Services firm based in Guwahati, that we can have a smooth go. The following details have been decided upon concerning the Desalite Olympiad.

SL. No.	Event	Date & Time	Subjects
1	Teachers' Olympiad	Oct 06, 2018: 09 - 10 am	Mathematics, Science, English, Social Science, Hindi & Assamese
2	Students' Olympiad	Oct 31, 2018: 8.30 – 9.30 am	Mathematics, Science, English & Logical Reasoning

Desalite Inter School Fest: After some discussion, it was decided that the Inter SFS School Competitions will be held on Nov 09, 2018, at SFS School, Narengi. The events finalised to be part of the competition are Prepared Speech, Solo Singing, Pencil Drawing, Quiz and Solo Dance. Unlike the previous year, drawing competition also will be held at Narengi on the same day. A committee was set up to organise the events smoothly. The committee consists of Fr Biju Kanichery (Convener), Fr Jose Karipadam (Member) and Fr George Poovathunkal (Member). (Other details attached.) **Updates on NAAC Accreditation of SFS College, Aalo:** Fr Vipin George, the Principal of SFS College, Aalo, updated the members regarding the status of the College's NAAC Application. **Regional Education Seminar – 2020:** Fr Poovathunkal informed the gathering that the Regional Education Seminar 2020 of the Congregation, with the approval of the Provincial, is scheduled to be in Guwahati. **Common Syllabus for SEBA Board:** As a follow up of the suggestion by some members previously it was taken up to discuss that we could have a board of ours consisting of all the schools falling under SEBA. A committee was set up to study the matter further and submit a report. The Committee consists of Fr Vintu Avittappallil (Convener), Fr Biju Kanichery (Member) and Fr Jacob Raising (Member). **Principals' Training Programme:** The date for the Principals' training programme at the province level was fixed for March 21-22, 2018, prior to the Forum Meeting scheduled to be held on March 23. It will be compulsory for all the principals of the province and it will be a standardised programme with certificates. Crisis Management and Legal Awareness were proposed to be two topics for the orientation. **Desalite Connect Online Version:** Fr George Poovathunkal introduced the Online Version of Desalite Connect software for our schools, which is already functioning at Narengi. Explaining the merits and benefits of it, he urged all those schools for which it is feasible to go for it. He said that such software can ease our work a lot (reported by Fr Vintu Avittapallil).

Ongoing Formation Programme on Media and Journalism

An ongoing formation programme was organized at MSFS Provincial house on 'Media and Journalism' on August 29-30, 2018. Fr. George Plathottam SDB, former Secretary, CBCI Commission for Social

Communications and Director of National Institute of Social Communications Research and Training, New Delhi, conducted the programme. A group of 15 MSFS priests and 11 sisters attended it.

Fr Philip Thomas Kizhakumpurath, Admonitor and Councillor Incharge for Mission and the organizer of this programme, welcomed the resource person and the participants. He reminded us how the social, print and electronic media affect every aspect of our lives, the chaos created by the fake news and misinformation and the influential role of the social media. In his address, Fr George Panthanmackel, the Provincial, urged the participants to be aware of the nature of media that is changing drastically in the Indian perspective and exhorted them to make use of the social media responsibly.

Fr George Plathottam dealt with different topics like the technological development of the media in the last two decades, role of media in disseminating knowledge and creating awareness on various issues pertaining to the society, news reporting, writing the lead, the techniques involved in writing a press release, some tips for crisis management and effective usage of media for carrying out the works of evangelization. The participants were appreciative of the workshop as it facilitated media awareness and its effective usages in today's context and resolved to use social media responsibly.

A Course on Salesian Spirituality

A Course on Salesian Spirituality was conducted at MSFS Provincialate, Guwahati, from September 25 to 27, 2018 by Fr Philip Valakodiyil MSFS, Director of Indian Institute of Spirituality, Bangalore. It was attended by 45 MSFS fathers and 13 sisters belonging to Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC) and Holy Cross Sisters of Chavanod. The seminar was well organised by Fr Philip Thomas Kizhakumpurath and members of the MSFS Provincialate.

The participants were reminded that Salesian spirituality is a spirituality of little things or little virtues that can radically change the nature of Christian vocation. It invites us to be willing to love, to be gentle and humble. The course included specially selected topics: 1. **Community Life in a Salesian Perspective:** Following the Holy Scripture, love of God and love of neighbour should become more manifest in our religious communities. St Francis de Sales gives us the following practical methods in manifesting this love in our communities: preferring our Brothers/ Sisters to ourselves and loving them more than ourselves, having a kind, gentle and adjustable attitude, letting ourselves be used for the mission of the Lord, praying for others, accepting fraternal correction and loving community members impartially. 2. **Friendship:** You become what you love. All love is not friendship; we can love without being loved. Communication is at the core of friendship. Praiseworthy friendships communicate knowledge, virtues, charity and devotion to others. Nevertheless, evil and frivolous friendships communicate flattery, passion and honeyed words, carnal and disgusting requests, calumnies, deceptions, sadness, confusion and jealousy. St Francis de Sales gives the following remedies against evil friendships: running to the cross of the saviour for protection against evil friendship, recollecting and praying as often as one can, reading holy books, going for frequent confession and spiritual direction. 3. **Vows:** Obedience, chastity and poverty are the three great means of acquiring perfection. Obedience consecrates our will, chastity our body and poverty our material possessions. All these vows lead one to the love and service of God. St Francis de Sales speaks of two kinds of **obedience**, one necessary and the other voluntary. Necessary obedience is our obedience towards ecclesiastical superiors, civil authorities and household authorities; whereas voluntary obedience is that to which we bind ourselves by our own choice and which is in no way imposed on us by another. For St Francis de Sales, 'blessed are the obedient, for God will never let them go astray.' **Chastity** is the lily of virtues. It renders men almost equal to the angels. It is necessary for every class of people. He advises everyone to be extremely prompt to turn away from all tendencies and attractions towards lust. It is always easier to run away from it than to heal it. While speaking of **poverty**, St Francis de Sales teaches that the possessions we have are not our own. God has given them to us to develop and wants that we make them profitable and useful and thus render him loving service in taking care of them. If poverty displeases someone, it means one is no longer poor in spirit but rather rich in attachment. 'Do not be ashamed of being poor and of asking for alms in charity. Receive with humility what will be given to you and accept the refusal with gentleness. Often recall to mind the journey our Lady made to Egypt, to carry there her dear child. How much contempt, poverty and misery she had to endure! If you live like this you will be very rich in your poverty.' 4. **Gentleness and Humility:** These virtues of

gentleness and humility reveal the very heart of God and are very close to Jesus' heart. Humility makes us perfect towards God and gentleness towards our neighbour. "Learn from me for I am gentle and humble of heart." (Mt 11:29). Gentleness is the resume of the life of St Francis de Sales. If he accomplished great things, it was by the rule of gentleness. But gentleness was not born with him. He had a method of constant examination of conscience which helped him to grow in gentleness. He never scolded anyone except by means of a gentle remonstrance or by a silence more significant than words. For him, 'It is better to learn to live without anger than to try to make a wise and moderate use of anger.' The gentleness of St Francis de Sales was not a mere external politeness which shows itself in a few gracious words and manners, but it was genuine, and solid, springing from the heart and forming the flower of charity. That is why, St Vincent de Paul cried out: "Oh my God, if the monsignor of Geneva is so good, how very good thou must be Thyself!" Similarly, 'genuine humility does not make a show of itself. It scarcely says words of humility because it does not only wish to hide the other virtues but also and especially seeks to hide itself. To receive the grace of God into our hearts, we ought to empty them of our own glory. Vainglory is the glory we give ourselves for what is not in us, or for what is in us but is not ours, or what is in us and is ours but for which we do not deserve any credit.' The highest point of humility consists not only in the voluntary acknowledgement of our abjection but in loving it and taking pleasure in it. 'Humility does not allow us to have any desire for your good name. , we are not to be very eager, exacting and too formal in preserving our good name. For those who are very touchy and sensitive about their reputation resemble those who take medicines for every little discomfort. While thinking of preserving their health, they ruin it utterly. In the same manner, those who wish to keep their reputation with such concern lose it entirely. Let us continue to humble ourselves, thus entrusting our reputation and ourselves into the hands of God. Let us serve God in good and bad reputation (2 Cor. 6:8).'

Updates from Southern African Region by Regional Superior

By the grace of God we conducted successfully the 6th Regional Assembly of the Southern African Region of the North East India Province of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales from August 14 to 16, 2018 at Padre Pio Retreat Centre, Pretoria, South Africa, under the theme: ***Joyfully Committed to the Mission of Christ: Recapturing the Legacy of the Fransalians*** in line with the theme of 20th General Chapter: ***"MSFS, Wake up to the Basics"***. Fr Jijeesh Palatty, Fr Joseph Puliyilakat and Fr Noble Nakathingal were the steering committee members and they did a sterling job in organizing the Assembly. Fr Libin Chiraparambil assisted the steering committee with his digital and technical expertise. As decided by the confreres and the steering committee, it was a ***"paperless"*** Regional Assembly. The Assembly was attended by 25 members, including Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial of North East India Province of the MSFS and Fr Philip Thomas Kizhakumputath, Provincial Councillor and Admonitor. Bro. Ventino Mutume, who will be ordained a deacon on the 27th of October this year, representing our scholastics in formation, was also present at the Assembly.

We thank God for every blessing and grace received during the days of the Assembly. We are much indebted to our beloved Superior General, Rev. Fr Abraham Vettuvellil, for his prayerful support and best wishes to the members of the Assembly. We thank Fr George Panthanmackel, our Provincial, and Fr Philip Thomas, Provincial Councillor and Admonitor, for their valuable presence and encouragement. We gratefully remember Fr Mathew Thazhathukunnel, Provincial of East Africa and Convenor of the MSAF, for his concern and support. We express our sentiments of gratitude to Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, Regional Superior of Dibrugarh Region of the North East Province, and to all confreres of the Region, the Province and the whole Congregation who accompanied and supported us with prayers during the days of the Regional Assembly. All confreres of the Southern African Region deserve special words of appreciation for their active participation, showing their deep concern and love for the Region.

With the approval of the Provincial, I am happy to present to you the Mission Statement and the Action plan of the Regional Assembly. I would like to thank Fr Joseph Kunjaparambil, Fr Jose Mamalassaryil and Fr James Madapally for being the Statement and the Action Plan committee members. Thanks to Fr Augustine Parampuzha and Fr Bibin Martin for being the secretaries to the Assembly.

STATEMENT

We, the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales of the Southern African Region, under the Province of North-east India, gathered at Padre Pio Retreat Centre, Pretoria, South Africa, for our sixth Regional Assembly from 14 to 16 August 2018, with the theme, JOYFULLY COMMITTED TO THE MISSION OF CHRIST: RECAPTURING THE LEGACY OF THE FRANSALIANS.

After having prayerfully reflected on the theme of the Assembly, we resolve to commit ourselves more joyfully to the pastoral ministry, particularly the Parish ministry, in Southern Africa through a deeper understanding and acquaintance of the history of the Congregation, Salesian spirituality and literature, by walking closely in the footsteps of our Founder and drawing inspiration from the missionary fervour of our pioneering missionaries. Responding to the particular pastoral situation in the Region, we shall intensify our efforts in reaching out to the poor and the vulnerable in the society and accompanying the young in their journey of faith.

As Fransalians in Southern African Region, we shall recommit ourselves to the mission of Christ by being faithful to the missionary legacy of our Congregation.

ACTION PLAN

LIVING THE LEGACY OF THE CONGREGATION

1. Deepen the study of Salesian spirituality by personal efforts, Salesian recollections and annual Salesian seminars.
2. Commit to the renewal of spiritual life through community and personal prayer.
3. Make St Francis de Sales known in our parishes through dissemination of Salesian literature, celebration of the feast of St Francis de Sales, and distribution of printed materials (e.g., pictures of St Francis de Sales, prayer to St Francis de Sales, etc.).
4. Arrange 'a day with the pioneers' as part of the induction programme.

COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION OF CHRIST

1. Evolve an effective format for ministry to the young people, in order to strengthen their faith and to engage them actively in evangelization.
2. Renew the parish communities through regular/frequent parish Missions with the help of the Parish Mission Preaching Team.
3. Equip the members with specialisation to cater to the different needs in the Region (with special attention to catechetical training and youth ministry)
4. Initiate the process of starting a music school in Swaziland.

Hearty welcome to Fr Libin Pallattutharayil: Fr Libin arrived in Cape Town, South Africa on September 12, 2018. He will stay with the confreres for a few days in Cape Town for an induction programme and acclimatisation and will then travel to Vredendal, to the place of his appointment as Assistant Parish Priest. By the end of October he will be moving to Keimoes, the place where the bishop will arrange for his study of Afrikaans language. As we welcome Fr Libin to the Region, we wish him all the best and offer him our prayerful support. May God grant him the heart of a true missionary and may he find happiness and fulfilment in his ministry as a priest in the Region.

Regional Councillor in charge of Mission Preaching Team: I am very happy to announce that Fr Joseph Puliylakat will be the Regional Councillor assigned to co-ordinate the Mission Preaching Team of the Region. May I request that all those parishes/missions that would like to organise mission preaching for 2019 to contact Fr Joseph Puliylakat. Kindly email him with your preferred month and dates to plan well ahead for next year. **The New Mission Preaching Team of the Region:** Fr Joseph Puliylakat, Fr Noble Nakathingal,

Fr Joseph Kunjaparambil, Fr Saju Thalayinakandathil, Fr Philip Mangatt, Fr Alwyn Zothansanga, Fr Francis Huwn, Fr Augustine Parampuzha, Fr Jijesh Palatty and Fr Nikseng Sangma.

Kerala Flood Disaster Fund: Thanks to everyone who positively responded to my request. Those who still like to make a donation/contribution kindly do so. From Southern African Region a donation is made to the FASCE India Kerala Relief Fund of the North East India Province. We thank Fr Joseph Kunjaparambil for negotiating with the Bank in Namibia for the transfer of donation to the FASCE India Relief Fund on behalf of the Regional Bursar, Fr Lukose Perumannikala.

Renaming the Apostolic Communities of Southern African Region: At the Regional Assembly, following a request and much discussion, it was agreed to re-name the existing Apostolic Communities to avoid the communities being called by names of towns or country. From now on the Apostolic Communities of the Region will be known as follows:

Cape Town and Vredendal Apostolic Community - **De Sales Apostolic Community**

Ermelo, Midrand and Swaziland Apostolic Community - **Mermier Apostolic Community**, and

Namibian Apostolic Community - **Mother of Compassion Apostolic Community**

Salesian Literature: Fr Joseph Kunjaparambil has made available the web link: salesianliterature.wixsite.com/spirituality for anyone looking for Salesian literature. Thank you Fr Joseph for making the Salesian literature available on the website. Congratulations for the great work!

Higher Studies: The Southern African Regional Council, with the approval of the Provincial, has given permission to Fr Babychan Arackathara to pursue his higher studies in the USA. He will begin his studies in the USA sometime in the middle of 2019. We wish Fr Babychan all the best and God's blessings.

Holidays:

Fr Joseph Kunjaparambil will be on his home leave from September 18 to October 22, 2018.

Fr Thomas Vanderkunnel will be on his home leave from November 08, 2018 to January 08, 2019.

Bro. Ventino Mutume: After having spent a few weeks in the Region for his holiday ministry, Bro. Ventino has gone home (Uganda) for his holiday. He will return to the Seminary in early October to prepare for his diaconate. He is scheduled to be ordained a Deacon on October 27, 2018, in Morogoro, Tanzania. Kindly keep him in prayer. Fr Jijesh Palatty and I will be representing the Region at his diaconate ordination.

Change of Address and Contact Number

- P. Binu James Puthenkunnel
Kath.Pfarramt St. Martin
Hauptstrasse 22
91301 FORCHHEIM
Tel: 0049 9191 2234
Mob: 004915784727248

- P. Stephen Marayikulam (Jr)
Krankenhaus der barmherzigen Brüder
Eggenberg, Bergstraße 27
A- 8020 GRAZ
Austria
Mob: 0043 676 3635 224

Half Yearly Internal Audit

The Half yearly internal audit will begin from the First week of October. The Provincial Bursar and the Regional Bursar accompanied by the accountants will be visiting the centres as per the schedule given. The requirements for the time of internal audit are given below. Kindly make sure that these requirements are well furnished so that the internal audit will go on smoothly, and the time allotted is to be respected by all. The centres, which do not have Tally Programme installed in their computers and those who lost their previous data, are requested to inform us in advance, so that what we have in our server can be brought and uploaded for reference.

Registers and Other Requirements to be Ready for the Internal Audit

I. Audited Report of the Previous Year (2017-18)

II. Updated Statements of All Operating Bank Accounts (Up to 30-09-2018)

III. Parish/Community (April-Sep 2018)

1. Cashbook of April-Sep 2018
2. Receipts Book
3. Box Collection Register
4. Bills and vouchers of Parish/community Expenses
5. Salary Register of Domestic Staff
6. Personal Allowance Register
7. Hostel: Register of Inmates
8. Fee Register book and Receipts of Hostel
9. Hostel: income and Expenditure

IV. School (April-Sep 2018)

1. Cashbook
2. Salary Register of Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff
3. Admission Register
4. Receipt Books of Admission Fee, Tuition Fee, Smart Class and Computer Fee
5. Bills and Vouchers
6. Class wise Enrolment Register of Students

Note: Ensure that the Records of all income collected through the bank is kept (Admission and Tuition Fee etc.)

V. Stationary(April-Sep 2018)

1. Purchase Register/ Bills Record
2. Selling Price List
3. Cash Book/Sale Record Register
4. Receipts and vouchers

VI. Bus (April-Sep 2018)

1. Cashbook
2. List of students Travelling with the amount collected (Distance Wise)
3. Receipt book/Register

VII. Registered Society

1. List of the Present Governing Body Members
2. Activity Report of the Previous year
3. AGBM ,GBM Reports
4. A Copy each of The Memorandum of Association, certificate of Registration Certificate and PAN card (For documentation)

Collection of Land Documents for the Documentation: This year we are planning to renew our filing of Land Documents as well as Fixed Assets of all our centers. Please keep a copy each of them for the provincial archive.

Half Yearly Internal Audit April - September 2018

Sl. No.	Place	Team 01	Sl. No.	Place	Team 02
1.	Amlarem	04-09 Oct 2018	34.	Yingkiong	22-27 Oct 2018
2.	Mawrengkneng		35.	Tato	
3.	Shillong Study House		36.	Kaying	
4.	Umroi		37.	Basar	05-09 Nov 2018
5.	Mawkhlam		38.	Purul	
6.	Umwahlang		39.	Kangpokpi	
7.	NARENGI, Provincialate	01-03 Oct 2018	40.	Imphal Press	22-26 Nov 2018
8.	NARENGI, SFS School		41.	Pasighat	
9.	Manikbond	04-05 Oct 2018	42.	Jonai	
10.	Chandrapur	09 Oct 2018	43.	Telam	
11.	Hamren	10-11 Oct 2018	44.	Gogamukh	
12.	Along Parish	22-24 Oct 2018	45.	Tenning	04-08 Nov 2018
13.	Along Collage and School		46.	Peren	
14.	Medziphema Parish	01-03 Nov 2018	47.	Mangkolemba	
15.	Medziphema – Seminary				
16.	Diphu	03-04 Nov 2018			
17.	Galsi	09-11 Nov 2018			
18.	Silapathar	18-22 Nov 2018			
19.	Dhemaji				
20.	HRRC Tura	25-27 Nov 2018			
21.	Somonpara				
22.	Nongalbibra				
23.	Bahalpur- Chappar	02-05 Dec 2018			
24.	Panbari				
25.	Panishali				
26.	Chabua Novitiate	13 Dec 2018			
27.	Chabua Parish				
28.	Sateek	Completed			
29.	Lengpui				
30.	Thamarassery	December			
31.	Sindukpathar	17-21 Jan 2019			
32.	East Harina				
33.	Amarpur				

NB: Please note that the dates are flexible. Bursar will give prior information if there is any change in the exact date of auditing. If you have any serious inconvenience, please do inform the Provincial Bursar well in advance.

Special Communications

INSTITUTION	PROGRAMME	DATE	CONTACT
NAVJIVAN RENEWAL CENTRE	Retreat: Cost of Discipleship	Oct 13-21	Fr George Peter, S.J. Director-NRC (08447144890)
	Audio-Visual Retreat: The Ignatian Way	Nov 1 st -9	

	Integral Training for Early Formators (for in-charge of Formation of Religious & Clergy) (35-Days)	Nov 13- Dec 16	
FIAT MISSION	Retreat for Priest	Nov 5 th (3pm) – 9 th (3pm)	Ph. 09961550000 (Off.), 09847373788
	Growth Retreat 2019	Jan 18 th (3pm) – 22 nd (3pm), 2019	fiatpriestretreat@gmail.com fiatxtn@gmail.com

Let Us Pray For the Departed:

- Mrs Eleyamma Chacko (95), aunt of Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, who passed away on August 21, 2018.
- Mr Clement Aind (35), brother-in-law of Fr Carlus Barowa, who passed away on August 21, 2018.
- Mrs Thresiyamma Lukose(92), paternal grandmother of Fr Noble Jose Nakathingkal, who passed away on September 2, 2018.
- Mrs Mariamma John (87), mother of Fr Devasia Manalel, who passed away on September 22, 2018
- Mr Agasty Mundoliputhenpurayil (85), paternal uncle of Fr Jose Mundoly, who passed away on September 23, 2018
- Mr Timothy Khuptawnga (43), brother of Fr Stephen Sawma, who passed away on September 24, 2018.

Provincial's Programme

October

- Oct. 2: Canonical Visitation to Manikbond
- Oct. 5: Canonical Visitation to Imphal
- Oct. 6: Canonical Visitation to Kangpokpi
- Oct. 7: Canonical Visitation to Purul, Tingbakhullen, Tingbakhunou
- Oct. 13: SFS School, Medziphema
- Oct. 15-20: Province Annual Retreat II (from 15th evening to 20th evening)
- Oct. 15-18: Provincial Congress of Visakhapatnam Province
- Oct. 20-23: ACPI Meeting, Kozhikode
- Oct. 24: Canonical Visitation to Vinaya Bhavan, Thamaraserry
- Oct. 25: Muringoor
- Oct. 26: Vaikom
- Oct. 27: Charis Bhavan, PCGF Programme
- Oct. 30: Provincial Council Meeting

November

- Nov. 1-30: CRI Encyclopedia Editing
- Nov. 10: Annual Convention at Mawkhlam
- Nov. 13: Ranchi
- Nov. 13-16: Counselling and Communication Skills (priests from 1 to 10 years)
- Nov. 21-22: Pre-Capitular Commission Meeting
- Nov. 29: Guwahati Apostolic Community Meeting
- Nov. 30: Provincial Council Meeting

December

- Dec. 1: FAsCE India Meeting and CRI Encyclopedia Editorial Board Meeting
- Dec. 4: Canonical Visitation to Tura
- Dec. 5: Canonical Visitation to Somonpara
- Dec. 6: Canonical Visitation to Nongalbibra
- Dec. 9-10: Accountancy Course
- Dec. 11: PIF-GB Meeting at Suvidya College

Dec. 12: Gabriel Memorial Lectures, Suvidya College

Dec. 13: Canonical Visitation to Galsi

Dec. 17: Provincial Council Meeting

Dec. 21: Canonical Visitation to Novitiate

2019

January

Jan. 2: Ordination of Dn. Sibin Vemballykunnel

Jan. 3: Ordination of Dn. Rojin Pullattuvaliyaparambil

Jan. 5: Ordination of Dn. Alock Tigga

Jan. 17: Somonpara

Jan. 18: Panbari

Jan. 20: Installation of the Regional Superior of Dibrugarh Region

Jan. 24: Feast of St Francis de Sales

Jan. 25: Provincial Council Meeting

February

Feb. 1-13: MSFS General Chapter at MSFS Provincial House, Narengi, Guwahati

Feb. 18-Mar. 15: Classes at St Clement College, Nagaon

Feb. 23: Provincial Council Meeting

March

Mar. 1: Local Superiors Forum Meeting

Mar. 2: Stewardship Forum Meeting

Mar. 3-6: Budget scrutiny by Finance Committee

Mar. 6: Ash Wednesday

Mar. 8: Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries Forum Meeting

Mar. 23: Education Forum Meeting

Mar. 24-26: Provincial Council Meeting (Budget Approvals and Promotion of Candidates)

Mar. 29: Mission Forum Meeting

April

Apr. 8-11: Counselling/ Communication Skills (For Priests from 11 to 25 years)

Apr. 21: Easter

Apr. 24: Provincial Council Meeting

May

May 6-9: Counselling/ Communication Skills (For Priests from 25 years and above)

May 10-11: CRI-CBCI Meeting, Bangalore

May 14: EACM of Mizoram and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

May 17: EACM of Tripura and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

May 20: EACM of Galsi-Ranchi and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

May 24: Provincial Council Meeting

May 25: EACM of Nagaland and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

May 26: EACM of Manipur and Pastoral meeting with Archdiocesan Authorities

May 28: EACM of Khasi Hills and Pastoral meeting with Archdiocesan and Diocesan Authorities

June

June 1: EACM of Upper Assam and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

June 3: EACM of Arunachal Pradesh and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

June 6: EACM of Guwahati and Pastoral meeting with Archdiocesan and Diocesan Authorities

June 7: EACM of Lower Assam and Pastoral meeting with Archdiocesan and Diocesan Authorities

June 8: EACM of Garo Hills and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

June 12-18: Suvidya College

June 25: EACM of Thamaraserry and Pastoral meeting with Diocesan Authorities

June 29: Provincial Council Meeting

July

July 22-27: Province Annual Retreat I (From 22nd evening to 27th evening)

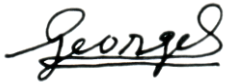
A Concluding Thought

On June 18, 1815, Napoleon led his army of some 72,000 troops against the 68,000-man British army, which had taken up a position south of Brussels near the village of Waterloo. The British army, which included Belgian, Dutch and German troops, was commanded by Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, who had gained prominence fighting against the French during the Peninsular War. In a critical blunder, Napoleon waited until midday to give the command to attack in order to let the waterlogged ground dry after the previous night's rainstorm. The delay gave Blucher's remaining troops, who, by some accounts, numbered more than 30,000, time to march to Waterloo and join the battle later that day. Although Napoleon's troops mounted a strong attack against the British, the arrival of the Prussians turned the tide against the French. The French emperor's outnumbered army retreated in chaos. By some estimates, the French suffered more than 33,000 casualties (including dead, wounded or taken prisoner), while British and Prussian casualties numbered more than 22,000. Reportedly fatigued and in poor health during the Belgian campaign, Napoleon committed tactical errors and acted indecisively. He also was blamed for appointing inadequate commanders. Ultimately, the Battle of Waterloo marked the end of Napoleon's legendary military career. He reportedly rode away from the battle in tears. Wellington went on to serve as British prime minister.

Indomitable spirit and timely action of Wellington brought glory to British Crown. In the same way, indomitable spirit (ardent zeal), and ever vigilant and timely action by religious missionaries, as we are, will bring glory to the Lord, the Church and the Congregation. As we walk the path of Fr Mermier, the Servant of God, we need to be persons of indomitable spirit, timely action and courageous commitment in all challenging and discouraging situations as Fr Mermier was. Then, we will be able to help the glorification of God and sanctification of humans through love and service as a missionary and religious community, the twin purpose of every missionary activity.

Fraternally

Yours in the Lord,



Fr George Panthanmackel MSFS
Provincial of Northeast India Province

WALKING ON THE PATH OF THE PATRON

“Separation of hearts and disunity of spirit should be feared rather than grieving over mere physical separation between persons one loves” SFS