

MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



NAGPUR PROVINCE

MSFS PROVINCIALATE

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CIRCULAR TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCE

14.06.2014

My Dear Confreres

Greetings of peace and joy of Christ to you

I start writing this Circular on the Feast Day of the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ at Dhynashram, Varanasi which gives the ambiance to be spiritually close to Him with its serene and prayerful environment with lots of local and cultural flavour infused into all rituals and worships. The scorching heat of the sun does not stand on the way of the spiritual feelings not only to the inmates of Dhyanashram but to the ordinary citizens who throng to this temple city from all over India at the time of summer vacation. The railway station is full of them. At the Eucharist we reiterated the Apostles' Creed which is the basic statement of our belief of Ascension: "He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty." It is our faith that after the Resurrection on fortieth day at Mount Olives, Jesus blessed his disciples and promising them the gift of the Holy Spirit, ascended into heaven. The gospel reading of the day gives us his intention to be fulfilled by his disciples. "Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Jesus also told them that he would be with them always. The Universal Church of today is the follow up of this commissioning by Jesus. The disciples filled with his spirit had no mistaken view of his mission for political struggle for temporal world but to work for the inheritance of heaven by doing away with a life of sinfulness. They embarked upon evangelisation, preaching, teaching and giving witness to Jesus. Pope Francis in his feast day homily said, "The word of God and the word of God alone is the basis of all ministries, for all pastoral ministry, for all priestly action." Let us remind ourselves of the mandate given to us to teach, to preach, to evangelise and to bear witness to him on this day of faith.

Perpetual Profession and Renewal of Vows



6th June marked a great spiritual event at Fransalian Seminary Pune in which eleven of our brothers committed themselves perpetually to God: nine of them belonging to our Province and two for Pune Province in a simple ceremony for which only MSFS confreres were present. Having completed the Congregational Retreat preached by Fr John Karondukadavil, fourteen Brothers belonging to both the Provinces renewed their Vows which were received by the respective Provincials. Fr Jacob Karamakuzhiyil presided over the Eucharist and was the main celebrant for the entire ceremony. Fr Vincent

Louduswamy in the homily reminded the Brothers of the exhortation of the Superior General asking them to opt to work in the periphery of the society and radiating the charism of the Congregation

which alone should give them their true visibility. He invoked God's blessings upon our Brothers as they have decided to be totally available to the mission of the Lord through our Congregation. The Eucharistic Celebration was followed by felicitation and festive dinner for all.

General Chapter Retreat at Mozambique

The visitation of two General Councillors to Mozambique was from 19th April to 1st May 2014. It was the privilege and blessing of the Lord to have the two General Councillors in the persons of Frs. George Parampukattil and Agnelo Fernandes to the Delegation of Mozambique. It was on Easter Vigil night that they arrived at Maputo. On 20th morning, Easter Sunday, they were at Our Lady of Mercy Church, Katembe for Holy Mass. On 21st April evening the General Councillors had a meeting with confreres of Mozambique and the retreat began with the introductory talk. For each day there was a theme for reflection, meditation and personal prayer. The days of retreat were blessed with good atmosphere, an environment pleasant and peaceful to experience the living God. On the final day each retreatant made a resolution in writing and offered it to the Lord at the offertory as an acceptance of his offering to the Lord. The aim of the retreat was to help us to become true followers of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of our Patron Saint Francis De Sales and to become effective in our pastoral ministry with the missionary zeal of Our Founder Fr. Peter Mary Mermier. We are grateful to our two General Councillors for having visited us and to guide us in our missionary spiritual journey. **Fr Petrus Kullu**

Nine Brothers ordained Deacons at Shillong

On 22nd May 2014 nine Brothers of MSFS Study House, Shillong were ordained deacons by Most Rev. Dominic Jala, Archbishop of Shillong. Among the nine ordained were three of the Province of Nagpur, namely Vineesh Chempakasserry, Ramesh Damala and Cyprian Dungdung. The solemn occasion was graced by large number of religious, priests and the near and dear ones of the ordinands. It was a moment of grace and a dream come true. Adequate preparations were done at the community and individual level. A spiritual animation program was organized on the previous day of the ordination as an immediate preparation. In his homily, Archbishop Dominic Jala exhorted the newly ordained deacons to be men of service especially for the cause of the poor. Quoting the new Apostolic Exhortation '*Evangelii Gaudium*' the Bishop also asked the deacons to shun and turn away from the alluring tendencies of the world and be true witnesses for Christ. The Deacons expressed their gratitude to all those who contributed to their growth.

- Vineesh Chempakasserry

Ceremony of Initiation into the Novitiate for fifteen pre-novices



15 pre-novices were initiated into the Novitiate at Dhyanaashram, Varanasi, on 30th May 2014 in a simple ceremony officiated by Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhiyil MSFS, the Provincial, in the presence of Dhyanaashram Community and few MSFS confreres. Fr. William D'Silva MSFS preached the Retreat for them and enabled them to be well disposed to enter into the Novitiate. After the evening prayers, Fr. Jacob in his introductory talk instructed the brothers about the significance of Novitiate Life in the religious

formation and wished them all the best and God's blessings. He said that the year of novitiate is a time to test the genuineness of our vocation, and a time to live in close union with the Lord by detaching oneself from everything else. It is also a year to assimilate the spirit of St. Francis De Sales and Fr. Peter Mary Mermier to live holy life as an MSFS. Fr. Scaria Kadamkulam read few articles from the Constitution and all the new novices were given a copy of the Constitution and a Rosary of the Seven Dolours. Though simple, the initiative and presence of Fr. William made the

ceremony more meaningful and lively. This year the novitiate community is enhanced with the presence of 5 novices from Pune Province.

Nine New Members to the Province



On 31st May 2014, at 06.30 a.m. nine of our brothers namely Kalyan Battula, Biraj Barla, Joseph Gollapudi, Rajat Digal, Romi Roy, Ruban Gilbert, Samir Minz, Sebastian Minz and Sunil Xess were newly professed at Dhyanaashram, MSFS Novitiate, during the Solemn Holy Eucharist Celebration, presided over by Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil, the Provincial of Nagpur Province. Fr. Alosius OFM Cap had spiritually guided the Novices to prepare themselves to make their First Religious Profession after completing one year of

discernment in embracing the religious life as MSFS, The Liturgy was well-prepared with a beautiful choir by the IMS Brothers. Priests and religious of the Diocese witnessed, prayed and blessed the newly professed. After the Mass, the community and the invited guests felicitated the newly professed brothers, followed by the Breakfast. The Superior General of the IMS and the Administrator of the Diocese of Varanasi were co-concelebrants for the Eucharist. Fr Bosco

MSFS Ambikapur Mission envisioned



On 27th morning at 9.00 a.m. I arrived at Ambikapur Railway Station as per the appointment with the Bishop of Ambikapur, Rt. Rev. Patras Minj SJ. Fr Oscar Kujur received me at the station and we both went to the Bishop's House and stayed there without meeting the Bishop who made an out of schedule visit to a distant mission and came back only in the evening. During our meeting with him, the Bishop looked happy at our willingness to work for the Diocese in the best interest of the local Church. He had many options to the extent of asking us to start an English Medium School at a distant

township where people are demanding for the same. We gave our priority as to develop a Parish initially. Although he wanted to show us not less than three places where such Mission could be taken up, only one visit was possible that day and I had to go to Varanasi the same evening. Next day immediately after breakfast, Bishop Patras, Fr Oscar and I set out for a Parish at Mainpat, the hill station of Chhattisgarh known as the Shimla of the State. Our lunch was arranged at Pathrai Parish in the hills where the famous Infant Jesus Shrine is situated. After lunch, we went to our destination Sikkeria Village in a valley surrounded by many overlooking hills. This village is cent percent Catholics with sixty families. There are number of surrounding villages where many Catholics reside belonging to different parishes. They are like stranded people distant from their parish churches whose spiritual needs are not sufficiently taken care. The villagers caught unaware by the visit of the Bishop gathered around us and led us to the proposed land for the construction of the Church which will be made available for purchase. The Bishop told them to pray that the Congregation may opt to work for them. We reached back in the evening. Although we did not give a final word to the Bishop saying that we would make our mind known after surveying more places proposed to us, both of us were of the opinion that the felt need for a priest is similar in all places therefore there is no point in making choices. Both of us were alike in our thinking to answer in the affirmative for the people and the Mission in Sikkeria

My Second Term in the Office of the Provincial

In the email dated 27th May, Rev Fr Superior General expressed the decision of the General Administration to appoint me as Provincial for the second term after considering the mind of the confreres through the ballots sent to them. Prior to that, he attempted to contact me telephonically

many a time while I was far away from telephone network in Chhattisgarh. In obedience to the Superior General and respecting the constitutional process of appointing the Major Superior, and invoking God's spirit for greater strength to live with needed commitment to lead the province for its religious missionary mandate, I gave my consent to shoulder this responsibility for another three years. I feel it again a new beginning. I express my gratitude to Rev Fr Superior General and his Council, to the confreres in the Province for reposing confidence and trust in me to serve the Province for the next three year.

My open letter to School Principals

Having sensed certain undesirable trends and changing orientations in high profile Christian Schools, I feel impelled to write this letter to all Principals and to aspiring Principals. I hold no malice to any one or to any Institution. Having experienced the agony and ecstasy of your office, I am well qualified to write this letter.

The Charvaka philosophy of life has found its dwelling place in schools with no word of protest and is being nurtured under the pretext of quality education. This threat shall result in the decline and death of the Christian principles of education. The words of Pope Francis uttered at Assisi against worldliness is in reference to the same. Making every one of us indulgent and addicted to one or the other thing is the order of the day. The idea espoused is freedom from enslaving habits but the activities carried out in schools are quite ironic. "Thou shall worship only one God and not any other God" says the Commandment. My dear Principal, you and me are idol worshipers in one or the other way. Are you championing the cause of the philosophy I mentioned above and facilitating the fall of your students, moving them towards world's fascinations? I don't mean that you have committed any excesses, but I see the writings on the wall of an unholy alliance and changed priorities. Principal, kindly keep away from those who have made friends with mammon.

Has sight-seeing trips abroad caught the imagination of Principals? The offering of mesmerising experiences in exotic places will be the most tempting thing for all. Those who have gone and returned will generate the euphoria for others to have such fascinating experiences. The impatience of students to have similar pleasure of senses is palpable and you can be sympathetic for the same. Is it not written in your school diary that the school shall not be the means for the promotion of hedonistic values? Don't you make your children to pray daily, "lead us from mortality to immortality, from darkness to light?" Are these sacred precepts become a pie in the sky or are they still alive in your vision and mission of education? My Dear Principal, please do everything possible to walk the talk.

You will be cajoled, enticed, coaxed and made to fall in line. Your changing orientation and vulnerability to smile at the incentives or the weakness to fall for freebies are being noticed. The businessman envies your infra-structure and your clout over affluent parents. Everyone wants to earn money and all that is required is just a visiting card and you will give the client all he wants on a platter by the stroke of your pen at the cost of our educational principles. You are a prize catch for greater marketing. The ever innovative groups give their money making enterprise an educational tag. They call it educational tour abroad, visiting NASA for inculcating scientific temper, football coaching in Europe. For such trips, it is not necessary to be a football player or a student with inclination for technology related subjects. Affordability is the only criteria. Two of our schools sent students to USA for such trips. Parents moved by the tantrums of their children and must have given in with a silent disapproval of the school's encouragement.

Those of you who in all fairness and purity of intentions responded in the affirmative for such trips should kindly evaluate and tell me if they served the purpose of education? The curriculum regulating body does not ask you to evaluate and measure the learning outcome of such trips. Who decides what is educational, the businessman or the educators in the school. Education of the youth for Fr Peter Mermier was the eradication of everything evil and negative which had the potential to mislead students. Mahatma Gandhi said that the future of India lies in her classrooms in terms of a value-based society. Formation of citizens who are led to self-indulgence, pleasure-seeking and totally oriented to short-term gratifications through such experiences is totally absurd to this ideal.

Children in your hands are in an impressionable age and it is you who can make them and break them. Have steadfast faith and understanding in our religious identity and be firm in resisting the

onslaught of an indulgent world. It would have been never in the dream of our educators in the past that a Catholic school student could afford for a sight-seeing trip abroad.

We see huge hoardings of schools promising comforts and quality of all sorts for those who can throw money. The education entrepreneur offers all sorts of facilities from horse riding to robot designing in buildings of aesthetic and architectural masterpieces. It points to a new school of thought than a school itself. The catch word is revolutionary teaching method using various instructional technologies. One may even wonder if the class teacher is replaced by some gadgets and the chalks and black boards have totally disappeared. When such schools like heaven on earth mushroom, your monopoly of educating the creamy layer shall become history and your school is relegated to a second or third place and you can still go down and disappear. Do not be panicky for all Missions are not relevant all the time. Confused with this scenario, you are engaged in recapturing the lost space by popularity gimmicks. You are neither ordained to run such schools nor the schools built to suit the needs of any creamy layer.

For some, quality is all about latest infrastructure and fitting some gadgets in the classrooms or mind-blowing display of capital assets. With these guiding principles do not convert your school reception or office into a five-star office. Do not posture yourself a wealthy man of the city for you are not from the lineage of a royal family nor born in the House of Lords. You are not the chairperson of a corporate firm but just the member of the religious order founded by Fr Peter Mermier, a poor diocesan priest of Annecy. Principal be not proud. You and I would not have occupied the chair if we were not to belong to this religious order. In one school, the ordinary admission seeking parents had to face the hardship of sitting on a rotating, moving and push back chair for two minutes in front of the Principal. Having seen the ordeal of these parents and the unpredictable mobility of the chair, the next Principal removed them and bought good stationary chairs. The admission seekers are not some employees of the embassy to sit on such chairs. These practices are due to misplaced perceptions and selective observations devoid of any discernment. I am afraid if one perceives quality at such display it would be short-lived. Blatant display of capital assets shall not improve the general standard and quality of one's school and make it international. I am afraid that a materialistic ambiance pursued with great passion and is being equated with quality. I know that we need durable buildings in conformity with the building bye-laws but certainly not multiple parlours and self-contained rooms for offices, VIP guest rooms, halls for big and small children for the sake of six hours in a day. It is almost becoming a practice that every principal is engaged in some construction to prove his worth whereas construction is not his actual business.

If you really care to enhance quality in the present competitive scenario, then stay back with your teachers after school hours and, if needed, with additional incentives help them to become knowledgeable and do research in class-room instructions, to measure the learning outcome of what is happening in the class-room. to make comparative study of results of different subjects and the effectiveness of teachers subject-wise, to evaluate syllabus preparation and the instruction- planning and its execution, to study project-preparation and its methodology and objectives, the examination and evaluation pattern and the conduct of curricular & co-curricular activities and their educational value. In fact, these things happen in a very minimum way and that is why the word 'innovation in curriculum transaction' is alien to your school. By uttering the word 'stay-back' your teachers will scorn at you as such a culture was never encouraged.

Remember that you are the head teacher destined to animate teachers. You are first among equals. Only a good teacher can lead another teacher and that is why Central Board of Secondary Education has laid down the rule of seven years of teaching experience eligibility to become a Principal. In the hectic administrative works, admissions and departmental pressures to have the upper hand, do not forget classroom teaching and activities, which are to be your first love and priority. When we started the school at Jhajjar, Haryana, our concentration was on class rooms teaching at the entry level. Counter checking the teaching-learning effect was made our obsession. When learning outcome was measured with the syllabus and approved planning, there were enough reasons to have collective and individual meeting with the teachers. The results of such assessment revealed the effect of teaching the same subject in different sections of the same class was vast. It was a revelation. Everything looked apparently good but our hearts went out to parents whose children were taught nothing in the class room. We had series of sessions with such teachers to make them

mend their way. My Dear Principal, please eliminate such teachers rather than opting to make generations of students to suffer for decades.

Installing gadgets and hiring education consultants is another ill-conceived idea to make your school relevant. Thus, the business group runs a parallel school within the school. You may feel complacent and relax thinking that the hired agency will bring quality. Teachers will not have loyalty to the program of some outsider. On taking a walk from class 1 to 10 in a school, I found just one class had the 'smart class' working. The installed gadgets looked more of decorative items for the visitors than aids for instruction. One staff member told me that teachers are not using it is a blessing in disguise for it may cause electrical break-down due to overload. My Dear Principal, make your own smart class with the assistance of your teachers. You need only a projector, interactive board and one computer with CDs which are prepared by publishers for all subjects. Some reputed schools have done away with consultants and have started in a limited manner their own 'smart class.' All these gimmicks will remain only for some time. Now, no schools give to agencies computer education as it was done earlier.

Sometime back a terrible thing happened in a high profile school which was shared in a meeting by the affected member. It was disturbing to know the crux of the matter which underlined the expectations and impatience of an aspiring principal who recalled the injury and insult while working as a staff member deprived of any honour and privileges. He felt that he was like a chapprasi in the school of high repute nothing more was specified. May be he was given a back seat on Parent's Day or not welcomed to walk on the red carpet spread for the Principal or treated as one in the crowd of staff-members. Does he want to taste the slice of cake before it was offered to him, or wants to share in the honour and privileges of the office before occupying the same? Was he not happy to be looked, insignificant and small, being a member of the managing society? I would not say that this member has a strong inclination for status, honour and position but there is something somewhere wrong. Is he disturbed and scandalized by your life-style and management of the School? You need to animate and guide him. You should make him feel contented, and at home. Remind him that he is an MSFS Religious and Missionary. He needs to be told that the position of equality is not compromised in religious community. He needs to be told that as a staff member, he is like any other staff member, reaching out to children and colleagues, showing commitment and dedication to do anything extra, to be and to give good example and live the present passionately rather than desiring to corner privileges, if by chance that is the real problem. I have sensed indirect overtures for post of Principals, palpable tension in determining who will occupy it, and subtle gambits to promote people for it. But I am afraid the Principal's post is not up for sale. It is for those who are qualified under the profile of a Fransalian Principal published by the Regional Education Forum.

Dear Principal I know that I have written a letter that provokes and challenges. I have been quite hyperbolic on the ground situation, as you know that we have very few high profile schools. Instead of encouraging your potential and raising it further for better ministry, I have resorted to play up the negative trend. Kindly forgive me. It is my intent that what is bad in its smallest form is to be nipped in the bud. The expressions of this letter spring from my own experience in Schools. Of late I began to really feel that I have not done enough for the cause of faith.. Late Fr K Joseph in his eighties was a worried man for not winning soul for Christ. In our busy life schedule, let us not forget Jesus in prayer, and in ministry.

Transfers and Appointments

Fr. Mario D'Souza of Pune Province is appointed Episcopal Vicar of Amravati Diocese, for Priests and Religious. He is attached to the MSFS Community of Badnera.

Fr. Stephen Soares is appointed Parochial Vicar at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana.

Fr Joseph Pullopillil is relieved of his present responsibilities due to his hectic engagement for the General Chapter Retreats. He will continue to be the Member of Prakash Bhavan Community.

Fr Pradeep Tirkey is appointed to the Fransalian Community of Jalna, and to be the Office Administrator of St Mary's School, Jalna.

Fr Emil Tirkey is appointed to give Pastoral Service in the Diocese of Alexandria, USA. He left India on 26th May 2014 for USA.

Hearty Congratulations to the Newly Appointed Provincials and the members of the Provincial Administration of North-East India Province

Provincials

Fr. Tomson Aerathedam of Brazil Province;
Fr. Vincent Lourduswamy of Pune Province;
Fr. Johnson Kallidukil of East Africa Province.

North East Provincial Administration

Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil - Admonitor cum Secretary for Education,
Fr. Athnas Kerketta - Secretary for Mission,
Fr. Benoy Veliyathu - Secretary for Formation,
Fr. Reji Kizhakethalackel - Secretary for Social and Innovative Ministries, and
Fr. Joseph Kannamangalath - Provincial Bursar

Congratulations to Fr Vishwas Torne and Community of Nimkheda in getting CBSE affiliation for St Francis de Sales School, Nimkheda.

Important Dates

Certain changes are made in the Dates of Retreat due to the Visitation of the Superior General. Kindly take note of them and make sure that you book your ticket early enough.

16.08.2014: Superiors' Forum Meeting in the Provincial House

08.09.2014 to 13.09.2014: First General Chapter Retreat at Provincial House, Nagpur. Retreat begins at night on the first day and ends at night on the last day. (Felicitation for the Jubilarians will be scheduled)

08.11.2014 to 09.11.2014: Education Forum Meeting Regional in the Provincial House

26.10.2014 to 15.11.2014: Visitation of the Superior General to Nagpur Province.

12.11.2014 to 18.11.2014: Visitation of the Asst. Superior General to Nagpur Province (He will visit all Apostolic Communities)

25.11.2014 to 26.11.2014: Meeting of the Provincial Curia with General Curia in the Provincial House.

27.12.2014 to 31.12.2014: Second General Chapter Retreat. Begins first day in the morning and ends on the last day with the dinner.

Let us pray and please fulfil the suffrages as prescribed for the departed confreres and enter the same in the Mass Register

Fr. Frederic Meynet of Franco-Swiss Province, aged 90, died on 17.03. 2014.

Fr. Abraham Chirayil, of Vizag Province, aged 85 died on 18.04.2014

Fr K Joseph of Nagpur Province who died on 29.04.2014

Fr SM Peter of Pune Province, aged, 48 died on 21.05.2014

Provincial's Itinerary

June

12 th & 13 th	Bangalore - PIF and Suvidya Governing Body Meeting
14 th	Suvidya Academic Year Inauguration
19 th	Meeting with Fr Simplicio Rocha, Goa
21 st	Nagpur

July

8 th	Latapara, Panderpalli
9 th	Jaratoli
10 th	Kandore

12th Nagpur
18th & 19th PCM
27th Mumbai

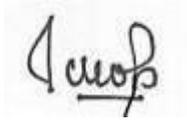
August

3rd to 8th Retreat at Attappadi, Palakkad
9th & 10th Pune
15th Installation of the Provincial
16th Superiors' Forum Meeting

Salesian Thought

God looks at the intention of the heart rather than the gifts He is offered.

- **St. Francis de Sales**



Fr Jacob Karamakuzhyil

Provincial Superior