

MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



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CIRCULAR TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCE

22.12.2015

Dear Confreres

Christmas is Redemptive act of God

I write this circular on the eve of celebrating the feast of Christmas. Every Christmas invites us to contemplate the mystery of God becoming man. He was born in silence, poverty, simplicity and purity, in Bethlehem. Giving up the glory of divinity, he gave gladness to our hearts by giving himself to us. “ For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven and, by the Holy Spirit, was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man” When the greatest need was redemption, God sent us a Savior, Christmas is an invitation to us, if we are self-absorbed, resentful of the demands put upon us, it is time to become aware of it and change ourselves in order to be more benevolent towards those to whom we have been unkind. It is an opportunity for learning to live for others by braking through the circle of ego which will enable the light of Christmas to invade our souls and change ourselves into new beings filled with joy and hope. We all have wonderful memories of Christmas celebrations in the past. While reliving those memories, let us create some new ones. We are soon going to participate in the Christmas Eve liturgy, the choir would sing the most touching carols. Everything would assure us that God loves us so much. The Gospel tells us that the wheat and weeds grow together. Many times we make wrong choices in life. We need to examine if the weeds outnumber the wheat. Jesus is our model for overcoming the evil present in our lives. Tragedies exist, bad things happen, because we choose to move away from God by not paying heed to his words. Christmas is all about the saviour who came to save us from evil. We need to open our minds and hearts and allow this Saviour to possess our entire being. Pope Benedict XVI wrote “The Birth of Christ challenges us to reassess our priorities, our values, our way of life. While Christmas is undoubtedly a time of great joy, it is an occasion for deep reflection, even an examination of Conscience.” May our celebration strengthen our faith in the redemptive act of Jesus. I wish you all a merry Christmas and A Happy new year.

Primary Task is evangelization and faith formation in Simdega

Our dream to begin a mission at Simdega diocese in Jharkand may be realized soon. Bishop Vincent Barwa, in his letter dated 28th September, wrote “**we have decided to develop the eastern side of our diocese where mainly Munda tribe is in majority. The primary task is evangelization and faith formation**”. I had the joy of visiting Simdega, along with Fr Alan Gonsalves, Fr Issac, and Fr Bijay on 3rd December. Simdega district is merited as the only district in India to have majority Christian Population as per the census 2011. It has a long history of evangelization and establishment of Churches belonging to many denominations. We were given two options. They are St Paul’s Catholic Church, Tati, a newly erected Parish which formerly belonged to Kutungia Catholic Chruch and Pabura Mission Station which belonged to Lachragarh Parish Church. Geographically these areas are in between Ranchi and Rourkela

and, therefore, not very far from our Communities in Orissa and Ranchi. We had to travel through the jungle to reach the beautiful Village called Tati at the valley of two mountains through which Raourkela Ranchi Railway line Passes. Tati has around two hundred Catholic Families with a government aided primary school. The present parish priest is also the Principal of the aided school. Parishioners and the Parish Priest were waiting for us. People living in such far out places, though strong in faith, are deprived of many amenities and have to become a source of inspiration to all to be counted as one of them. Soon after breakfast we left for Pabura Mission Station. We reached the Lacharagarh Parish Church and with the Parish Priest left for Pabura substation, just six kilometers away from Lacharagarh which looked a Christian dominated area with institutions like schools, boarding, and technical Institutes. Even the shops and establishments had Christian names. We reached Pabura by 01 PM and had a survey of the land which the diocese is trying to buy. Many Parishioners were waiting for us on the land. Pabura is a catholic Village with many adjoining Villages where catholic families reside. On enquiry the Parish Priest said that Pabura has the potential to get bifurcated into more parishes, if attention is paid to the pagan Villages. At the end of it, we had a meeting with Parishioners at which Fr Alan spoke on behalf of the Province. All the representatives of the Mission spoke and the Parish Priest and his assistant welcomed us and hoped that MSFS will take up this mission in the best interest of the local Church. People said that many priests came in the past for survey of the Mission but there was no follow up. It is our dream to have a parish Church in Pabura for the last twenty years. We left for Raourkela immediately after lunch. We felt that Pabura will be best suited for MSFS in terms of evangelization and faith formation. Pabura also has an aided school and Mass Centre. The Provincial Council has approved the establishment of an MSFS community at Pabura and we are waiting for a positive communication from the Bishop. This new Mission is another gift to our Congregation which is basically founded for evangelization and Parish Mission. Our measure of success will depend on our ability to reach out to villages and people. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our endeavor to reach God's people and preach the Good news. May his kingdom grow through the works of our missionaries.

Provincials Meeting with General Curia in Belgaum

The annual Provincials of India, and provincial of East Africa meeting with General Curia was held from 20th November at Belgaum. Many of the concerns of the Congregation were deliberated on. There was an evaluation of the heritage week and discussion on how to celebrate the year of formation and year of Mercy 2016 at the province and Congregational levels. The Provinces were asked to show greater collaboration with the Mission of Africa and LCI in the light of the General Chapter 2013. Other things that were discussed and evaluated included the role of Major Superior in Suvidya, establishing local communities in Switzerland and Australia, functioning of local communities in England, triennial mandatory meeting in Arusha 2016, implementation and functioning of the new Moral Code of ethics, guide lines and follow up with the forum meetings, integration of new members into western provinces, finalizing of the draft document on Financial Accountability, system for transparency, Vision-Mission plan for follow up, deliberations on taking up new missions in Argentina, Cuba, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Bangladesh, Indonesia, National level social and communication Media, Social Apostolate and Justice and peace Commission, spiritual animation Centre and team of Parish Mission preachers in Provinces, De Sales and Mermier resource and research Centre at the General Secretariat, Mind of the General Chapter on the division of the provinces, evaluation of GAH, Spirituality Centre at Annecy, Mermier's cause, taking up the native parish of Fr Mermier, Common Mission animation Center in India and Salesian Retreat for perpetually professed members and presence of Provincials during the retreat for

accompaniment, and guide lines for non-permanent members in USA. These were some of the important deliberations during the three days' meeting. On the concluding day Belgaum Bishop presided over the Eucharist and appreciated the Congregation for the work done in Belgaum diocese by South West and Pune Provinces.

Provincials of India Forum Meeting in Bangalore

Provincials of India Forum held a meeting in Bangalore on 24th November at Vinayalaya and elected the Chairman and Vice Chairman for the PIF. There was a meeting with Fr Augustine Tharappel, along with Provincial of East Africa, to finalize certain guidelines for the non-permanent members attached to USA Vice Province. The meeting deliberated on placement of confreres for Ministry in USA, designation on specific number of years, taking up parishes for long term pastoral ministry, purchase of vehicles, pocket money, vacation and holidays, retirement and social security of members, budget for new arrivals, mission appeal and personal plan. Fr George Panthenmakel was authorized to prepare the draft of the finalized norms and guidelines for the Non- permanent members attached to the Vice Province. Besides finalizing the guidelines, PIF also deliberated on modalities to be followed for collaboration with needy provinces, evaluated Bible Diary publication and marketing, the need to evolve a common code of ethics undertaking, and the need for common criteria and guidelines of charging for the expenses of students studying in formation houses from other provinces. It was a hectic day of meetings. From the afternoon, until late in the evening, Suvidya Governing Body and General Body meetings were held. Suvidya gave warm welcome to Fr Chinnapa Reddy, an ex- student of Suvidya, visited Suvidya for the first time as Provincial of Vishakhapatnam.

Symposium on Rev Fr Gabriel MSFS

Symposium on Fr Gabriel was organized in Suvidya on 8th December. Rector, Fr Joy Mampally, extending a cordial and warm welcome to everyon, said that the symposium which is a first of its kind, will take us back to the good moments lived with Fr Gabriel. It is celebrating the very person and not certain aspect of his life. Fr Gabriel confronted uncertainties and dared to dream big with definite vision and had tremendous love for nature and walked the untrodden path and left a trail behind which continues to inspire us. Fr Santhosh Kumar, introducing the Symposium, said Fr Gabriel had spread words of cheer and encouragement. His legacy of intellectual contribution is to be recalled, recounted and emulated. He was the epitome of knowledge and wisdom. Intellectual culture of Suvidya finds its roots in Fr Gabriel. In his musings on Fr Gabriel, Rev Fr Superior General said that Suvidya History can be divided into two periods, Gabriel Era and Post Gabriel Era. The history of those who have experienced him and those who have heard about him. He never claimed to be perfect and respected every view point. He had a contemplative mind and not a calculative mind. Speaking on the occasion, Fr Dharmaraj of South East Province said that Fr Gabriel's single minded devotion to intellectual pursuits elevated him to a self-made theologian. There were two sessions on the philosophical Contributions of Fr Gabriele, between 11.00 a.m. and 12.30p.m. Fr George Panthenmackel spoke on Fr Gabriel's notion of being and Fr Thomas Kalariparambil spoke on Fr Gabriel's philosophical acumen. There were two sessions on Fr Gabriel's theological contributions. Rev Fr Jacob Parappally spoke on Fr Gabriel's Insights on the New Testament and Fr Stanislaus, professor at St Peter's Pontifical Seminary, spoke on Fr Gabriel's Insights on the Old Testament. There were two last sessions from 04.00 to 5.30p.m. on Fr Gabriel and his contribution to the MSFS. Fr George Parampukattil spoke on Fr Gabriel's Impact on the MSFS Congregation and Fr Anthony Mookenthottam on Fr Gabriel as a MSFS Religious Priest. It was indeed a wonderful

experience to have heard so many prominent people speaking on a person who made great impact on the life of others with his simple life style and intellectual contributions.

My Twenty Days in Darcona

I am in Darkona for almost 20 days. I must thank you for appointing me in this beautiful place. Lovely place with lovely and humble people. I feel my real formation for religious life begins here with the simple people here, mostly farmers. Several times I had visited the rural villages in Kanpur and Lucknow during my working years (1999 – 2003) but first-time I am living with them. Personally I love villages and ordinary life than city/town life. I love being here with financially poor but millionaires in Virtuous Life such as Humility, simplicity, honesty, hard work, real transparency, trust in God, true respect for others, community spirit etc. They share with us whatever they have prepared for themselves, which reminds me of the gospel story of the Widow's offering. They have high regard for us and we can do all kinds of ministry here (Parish, Education, Social and even formation).

I must say few words about my Superior, Fr Sandeep. We were together in formation from Novitiate onwards. Because of my Yoga studies, he went ahead of me by one year. I know him as a hardworking and people centered person. Here I see in him a more mature person as Priest-in-charge, superior and confrere. He does his duties as well as an experienced senior priest. He gives very inspiring homilies on all days during mass. He is very courteous and mature and cordial in his relationship with people, even with those of other denominations and faiths. He has the advantage of belonging to the same tribe (Urouv) as our people. He gets connected with people in their own language (UROUV) and he knows their way of life. People feel at home with him. You have chosen the right person for the Mission. I appreciate your HRM skills. I request you to appreciate him and encourage him; I know you are doing the same. I am in love with this place and the people. I enjoy being here. Thanking you very much for your prayers and encouragements.

Dn. Lijon Kachapally

Perpetual Vows and Diaconate at Maputo

On 13th November 2015, at 12:00 pm, Bro. Ashok Minj made his Final Profession in the presence of Rev. Fr. Petrus Kullu, the Delegation Superior, who presided over the solemn Eucharistic celebration with all his confreres of the Mozambican mission at Lar Mermier. The entire Fransalian family was present on the occasion. The angelic choir of the fathers and brothers made the liturgical celebration even more heavenly. This was followed by a small felicitation program for Bro. Ashok, He thanked everyone for this unforgettable day. He also thanked Rev. Fr. Abraham the Superior General and his councillors, Rev. Fr. Jacob the Provincial Superior and his councillors, Rev. Petrus Kullu the Delegation Superior and all the members of the delegation for their love, support, prayers and encouragement. It was immediately followed by a sumptuous meal prepared by the Lar Mermier community for this grand occasion. Everyone enjoyed this festal banquet to the full.

14th November 2016 was another memorable day in the life of the Delegation Mission. On this day Bro. Ashok Minj and Bro. Jinoy Kopoly were ordained Deacons at the hands of Joao Carlos Nunes, the Auxiliary Bishop of Archdiocese of Maputo. This attracted a large number of priests and religious, friends, benefactors and well-wishers of Fransalians, St. John the Evangelist Church, Malhangalene, Maputo, was packed to its capacity. The entire celebration was well organized by the parishioners themselves. After having participated in the Eucharistic banquet, everyone was led to the big hall where the newly ordained were felicitated and cheered with cutting of a cake. They were also showered with gifts and presents by the well-wishers and friends.

Fr. Ranjit Tirkey

Regents' Meet

The Nagpur Province Regents' Meet was held from 3rd to 6th December 2015, at Divya Jyoti Ashram Latapara., Fr. Freddy Santumayor SVD, the well known social reformer, retreat preacher and animator of youth and marriage counselor was the resource person. In his sessions, he spoke about the changing trends of religious life and highlighted the following points. 1. Young religious are energetic but it is hard for them to practice the virtue of silence. They find it difficult to be men of discipline, hard work and lack the capacity for endurance, spirit of sacrifice and perseverance. 2. He explained the problem of social status: many candidates come from economically weaker sections of the society and strive for higher social status through priesthood. 3. He explained the Inner Motivations and Outer Motivations of the candidates who join the seminary. 4. He mentioned about the Joys and Sorrows of Religious life: success must be measured not in terms of profit but faithfulness to the mission. 5. He questioned why is the zeal and enthusiasm of the young religious short lived? 6. He exhorted us to have a Personal Vision, besides the Vision of the congregation, province. 7. He explained that the poison of negativity kills our dreams and the violent and abusive language in our dealings is not a sign of consecration.

During the days that followed, we had the sharing of our regency experiences and visitation to the Missions of Raidhi, Panderpalli and Ambapani and some of the sub-stations. Each of us also had personal meeting with Fr. Benedict, who is the Provincial Councilor in charge of Formation. This was a unique Regency Mid-Term experience for all of us and we thank the Communities at Divya Jyothi Ashram with the formation Team. We pledged to renew our commitment to the tasks entrusted and persevere in our missionary vocation as Fransalians, after being inspired by and having learned from the missions in Odisha.

Bros. Anish, Santosh, Sujit, Deepak & Ajay

Our Sincere appreciations/thanks/congratulations to:

Fr. Issac Mankulathil who stayed a month in the Provincial House and assisted Fr. Wilson in the planning of the SJTIE venture of professional coaching in terms of preparing various literatures meant for publicity and other purposes.

Fr. Michael Raj who is in touch with the diocese of Regensburg to find a placement for Fr. Pradeep Tirkey. He has initiated the necessary paper works and has given necessary direction to Fr. Pradeep Tirkey.

Fr. Paul Varambinamkam for the various contact already established with many institutions and people in Kerala in view of next year's recruitment. He has formulated a prayer, in Malayalam, to Fr Peter Mermier for vocation to religious life.

Bro. Anto Thomas Mappilakunnel and Yobu Melchizedech who will be ordained deacons on 30th December 2015 at Fransalian Seminary, Pune.

Fr. Anand Kullu who has written two projects for the mission of Jaratoli. The community wants to pay greater attention to the sub centres and wants to strengthen these communities which are located at distance from the Parish Church.

Fr. Marcus Ruptake who has been appointed by the Bishop of Amravati to the priest council of the diocese of Amravati.

Fr. Bernabas Xalxo who has made visits to hostels and Schools in Simdega and in Chotanagpur area for Vocation Promotion. Jaratoli, Barardurgarpur Bhanji Kanodre Communities are also working in Jharkand

State for Vocation promotion. They too will visit schools, hostels and participate in vocation camps of the Diocese.

Fr. Melroy Almeida and Nanded Community for having secured the Minority status Certificate, for Ghyana Mata Vidya Vihar, Nanded, from National Minority Commission.

Fr. Francis Venmanikattayil who has collected number of mass intentions, through Sr. Marita SRA, from Germany. Sr. Marita is the niece of Fr. PM Joseph. Fr Francis has also helped Bela Vista Community for the extension of the Pre School.

Fr. Emmanuel Mappilaparambil of North East Province who has been appointed the First Regional Superior of the newly erected Region in the North- East India Province, by Rev. Fr. Superior General.

Fr. Benny Koottanal of South West Province who has been appointed by Rev. Fr. Superior General as the New Provincial of South West India Province.

Fr. George Panthenmakel, the Provincial of North East India Province, who has been appointed by Rev. Fr. Superior General the Chairman of Provincials of India Forum (PIF).

Fr John Dive who has been representing the society in the Jalna residence property case for some time. There is another claimant for the ownership. The judgment is predicted to be in our favor.

Fr Shantwan Kutekar who resorted to immediate legal remedy when the so called tenets of Bhusawal Church land forcefully occupied and ploughed it. The impersonator Bishop sold the land to the tenants who also managed to get the land mutated in their name. A powerful land mafia is at work and now it is going to be a long legal battle between these groups and Nasik Diocese.

Hearty Welcome to:

Fr Jins Devasya who arrived on 29th November from Mozambique for treatment and home holidays.

Fr Vincent Chettiar who arrived in India on 1st December for holidays and Ayurvedic treatment after his hip replacement operation in Germany.

Fr Paul Gonsalves who arrived in India on 6th of December for his home holidays and family function.

Fr Lalit Tigga who will arrive in India on 8th January 2016 from Germany for his annual holidays and will return on 8 February.

Let us pray for:

Fr. Velikekattel Cyriac's younger sister Sr. Stephen, of St. Joseph of Chambery aged 70, died on 11th Dec 2015

Fr. Peter Paul's brother, Irudhaya, aged 59, passed away in a road accident on 16th Dec 2015

Mrs. Maria Jose, benefactress of Mozambique Mission, aged 101, passed away on 20th Dec 2015

Fr Vincent Chettiar who underwent yet another operation of his hip replacement in Germany and was in rehabilitation center for three weeks. He will be in India in the month of December for rest and holidays and will go back to Germany on 7th January.

Fr Simplicio Rocha is going to be 79 years in January 2016, is keeping good health. He is busy with pastoral services to Parishes and families. He is attached to the Aldona Fransalian Community. It is only a matter of time before he will be back in the Province. He has agreed to see if he could come for the December Province Retreat. However certain pastoral engagement during the Christmas week is making it doubtful.

Fr Jins Devasya who arrived in India on 28th November. He is suffering from certain lungs related ailment causing breathing problem and weakness. He is undergoing treatment at IIS Hospital, Cochin, in Kerala. He is fine and has no major health problems.

Provincial's Itinerary

January 2016

02.01.2016 Nimkheda
06.01.2016 Jalna
08.01.2016 Nanded
10.01.2016 Kinwat
13.01.2016 Nagpur
25.01.2016 Kottayam
27.01.2016 Nagpur
29.01.2016 Latapara
31.01.2016 Panderpalli

February 2016

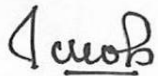
01.02.2016 Ambapani
02.02.2016 Raidihi
03.02.2016 Sini
04.02.2016 Seraikela

Salesian Thought

We must be prepared to see weeds growing in our garden and also have the courage to pull them up.

St. Francis de Sales

Yours Sincerely in Christ



Jacob Karamakuzhyil, MSFS
Provincial Superior

06.02.2016 Nagpur
13.02.2016 Education Forum
21.02.2016 Nimuch
23.02.2016 Mahima
25.02.2016 Jhajjar
27.02.2016 Vinaysadan

March 2016

01.03.2016 Varanasi
03.03.2016 Nagpur
16.03.2016 PCM
17.03.2016 PCM
18.03.2016 PCM