



NAGPUR PROVINCE

CIRCULAR



Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales

MT-17,2025

To All the Members of the Province

05 March 2025

From the Office of the Provincial



"Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." (Joel 2:12)

Dear Confreres,

The 21st General Chapter of our Congregation, held from 1st to 14th February at Stella Maris, MSFS Provincialate, Visakhapatnam, was a historic and meaningful event. Centered on the theme **"I Chose You" (Jn 15:16) – MSFS, Live Your Charism**, it provided a time of reflection, discernment, and renewal of our commitment to the MSFS mission. The newly elected General Administration, led by Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukkil MSFS as our Superior General, will guide us with renewed focus and direction in living our charism and fulfilling the mission entrusted to us. We invoke God's blessings upon the new leadership team as they take up this responsibility with faith and zeal.

After the conclusion of this historic event in the month of February, we now enter the sacred season of Lent and the Church calls us to embrace prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as means to deepen our faith and grow in holiness. **St. Francis de Sales reminds us: "Lent is the autumn of the spiritual life, during which we gather fruit to keep us going for the rest of the year."** Lent is a sacred season of grace, a time of renewal and conversion as we journey towards the Paschal Mystery of Christ. The Church, through this penitential season, invites us to reflect deeply on our relationship with God and neighbor, embracing prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as spiritual disciplines that lead us to holiness. Lent reminds us of our need for interior renewal. St. Francis de Sales teaches, "A heart given to God must be entirely His" - a call to surrender ourselves completely to the divine will. True prayer is a conversation of the heart with God. Fr. Peter Mermier emphasizes, "We must be men of prayer before being men of action." Lent invites us to rediscover the beauty of silence and contemplation. More than abstaining from food, fasting is a means of self-discipline that detaches us from worldly excesses, creating space for God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1438) reminds us that "fasting expresses conversion and opens the heart to compassion." Lent calls us to live out Christ's love through acts of mercy. Pope Francis reminds us, "Lent is a time to open our hearts to others and share with those in need." The Word of God nourishes our souls, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation restores our brokenness. St. Francis de Sales encourages, "Do not lose courage if you have fallen again; go humbly before God and seek His mercy."

As we enter this holy season, may we truly embrace its significance, allowing Christ to transform our hearts. Let us encourage one another in our Lenten observances so that, renewed in faith and love, we may celebrate the joy of Easter with hearts purified and strengthened in grace. **"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51:10)**

May this Lenten journey bring us closer to Christ, deepen our love for His mission, and strengthen our bond as a community of faith.

MSFS PROVINCIALATE

23,24 Residency Road, Sadar, Nagpur 440001
Ph: +91 9050589925, +91 9448463781

provincialnagpurmsfs@gmail.com; mtmanojmsfs@gmail.com
provincialbursarnagpur@gmail.com; xalxomsfs@gmail.com
secretaryprovincialnagpur@gmail.com; msfsagnelo@gmail.com



THE XXI ORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER 2025

The XXI Ordinary General Chapter, with the theme "...I chose you" (John 15:16): MSFS, Live Your Charism, was held at Stella Maris, Visakhapatnam, from 1st - 14th February 2025. The Chapter brought together 43 capitulants and 4 special invitees including a religious sister and a lay person, thereby reflecting the principle of synodality within the proceedings of the General Chapter. On the evening of 31st January 2025, a warm and formal welcome was extended to the Chapter members by Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu, the Provincial of Visakhapatnam along with the Provincial Curia.

The General Chapter commenced on the morning of 1st February with a recollection preached by Rev. Fr. Angelo Fernandes. The recollection talk primarily focused on the theme of the Chapter, emphasizing three distinct perspectives: What is charism? Why is charism important? How does one need to live it? In the afternoon, His Grace Most Rev. Thomas Tharayil, Archbishop of Changanacherry, delivered the keynote address. It underscored the need to cultivate a sense of mission and identity, as well as a sense of pride in one's faith.

Following the presentations of the reports by the outgoing General Curia, the second day of the Chapter witnessed the election of the new General Curia. The first phase of the Chapter was dedicated to the presentation of the reports from all the Provinces, Regions, Delegations, various forums, common ventures of the Congregation, and common Formation Houses. The second phase focused on discussions and deliberations concerning various matters related to the Congregation.

Upon the successful conclusion of the XXI Ordinary General Chapter on the afternoon of 14th February 2025, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the newly elected Superior General, extended his sincere gratitude to the outgoing General Curia and all the Chapter members for their significant contributions. Then Fr. Thumma Mariadas extended his appreciation to the Stella Maris Provincialate community and all the confreres involved in ensuring the smooth conduct of the General Chapter.

As part of the Chapter proceedings, the members undertook a pilgrimage to Yanam, which proved to be an inspiring and enriching experience. Following the conclusion of the Chapter, a Vizag Heritage Tour was organized, further enhancing the members' cultural and historical understanding of the region.

Those present from Nagpur Province for the Chapter were - Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey, the Provincial Superior, the Delegates were Fr. Domy Thomas, Fr. Benedict De Souza, and Fr. Patras Tirkey. Fr. Jomon Mathew served as one of the Minutes Secretaries of the General Chapter.





Superior General: Rev. Fr. Johnson Michael Kallidukil

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil was born on April 18, 1966 in Kerala, India. After completing primary school, He joined the MSFS formation at SFS Seminary Ettumanoor in 1981. In December 1985, he made his first profession at Salesianum Novitiate in Vizag, followed by Philosophy at Suvidya College, Regency at SFS Ettumanoor, and Theology at St. Peter's, as well as Diaconate Ministry in what was then North East India.



He was ordained on 21 April 1994. Thereafter, he went to East Africa as a missionary. From 1998 to 2002, he pursued doctoral studies in Theology at the University of Würzburg in Germany. He then continued to work in East Africa in various capacities, including pastor, teacher, and formator. He also served as the first Director of Lumen Christi in Arusha, Tanzania, and as the Provincial Superior of East Africa for two terms. From February 2019 to the present, He has been serving the Congregation as General Councillor and General Secretary for Mission. Since November 2023, he has also served as the Assistant Superior General of MSFS. Now he is appointed as the New General Superior of the Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales.

Assistant Superior General: Rev. Fr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara



Fr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara MSFS, was born on 26 February 1975 in Kalluvayal, Kannur District, Kerala. he belongs to St. Antony's Parish in Kalluvayal, Thalassery Archdiocese. After completing his secondary education, he joined the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales at Vinaya Bhavan Minor Seminary in Thamarassery in 1990; he later completed his Novitiate at the MSFS Novitiate in Chabua, Assam; studied Philosophy at Suvidya College in Bangalore and Theology at Oriens Theological College in Shillong, Meghalaya. He made his first profession on 7 June 1994, his perpetual profession was on 30

September 2000, and was ordained a priest on January 7, 2002. As a priest, he has served the congregation in various capacities, including Assistant Priest at SFS Parish and School in Dhemaji, Assam; Vice Rector, Administrator, and Vocation Promoter at SFS Seminary in Medziphema, Nagaland; Assistant Priest at St. Paul's Parish and All Saints School in Peren, Nagaland; Associate Director of the Catholic Bishop Conference of India (CBCI) Medical College Project in Ranchi; and Executive Director of the Fransalian Agency for Social Care and Education in India (FAsCE India) in Guwahati, Assam. He completed his doctoral studies in theology at Paris Lodron University in Salzburg, Austria and served as Associate Priest at Friedburg-Lengau-Schneegattern, Austria, during that period. He served the congregation as the Provincial Councillor for Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries (SAIM) in the Northeast India Province from 2017 to 2020. From 2020 to 2021, he was holding the position of Admonitor and Provincial Councillor for SAIM in the Guwahati Province

.Additionally, from 2018 to 2021, he was the Director of the Mission Development Office and JPIC in both the Northeast and Guwahati Provinces. From 2021 to 2024, he served as General Councillor and General Secretary for Formation. Beginning in 2023, he assumed the role of Director of the Mission Development Office in Rome. Now he is appointed as the Assistant Superior General of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

General Secretary for Mission: Rev. Fr. Thumma Mariadas Reddy

Fr. Thumma Mariadas Reddy, MSFS, was born on 22 July 1966, at Ramachandrapuram, Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh State, India. He is from the Province of Visakhapatnam. Date of First Profession: 15 December 1983; Date of Final Profession: 07 February 1990. Date of priestly ordination: 10 AUGUST 1990; he is fluent in Telugu, English, Italian and Hindi. Educational Qualifications: B.Ed. (Kakatiya University.); Ph.D. in Philosophy; Licentiate in Biblical Theology (Urban University, Rome). Assignment at the time of Election: Director of Philosophy, Morning Star Regional Seminary, Kolkata. His areas of experience include Pastoral, Renewal, Education, Formation, and Administration. He is now appointed as the General Secretary for the Missions.



General Secretary for Education: Rev. Fr. Anthony Swamy

Fr. Anthony Swamy A., MSFS, from Chickaballapur, Karnataka. He was born on 10 June 1966 to his parents, Anthappa and Papamma. He completed his primary and secondary education in Chickaballapur and Bangalore, subsequently joining the SFS Minor Seminary in Ettumanur, Kerala. He made his first profession on 16 July 1988 at Salesianum, Visakhapatnam, and his final commitment on 14 June 1994 at Fransalian Seminary in Pune. He was ordained to the priesthood on 17 October 1995 at his home parish, St. Francis Xavier Church, Chickaballapur, Karnataka.



He holds a doctorate in Folklore from Mysore University. He has served the province and congregation in various capacities, including pastor, educator, formator, provincial councillor, and in innovative ministries. He is the founding principal of SFS College, Bangalore. He has served the Diocese of Harrisburg, USA, for eight years as procurator vicar and pastor, as well as Dean for two years. Currently, he is at Saumya Sadan, Mysore, working to initiate a ministry, Shanthi Dham, a home for the dying destitute and the poor. He is appointed as the General Secretary for Education.

General Secretary for Social and Innovative Ministries: Rev. Fr. A. Christu Raj

Fr. A. Christu Raj MSFS, was born on December 14, 1971 at Vaniyambadi, Tamil Nadu. He made his first profession on June 10, 1993 in Vishakapatnam, and he was ordained on October 27, 2000, in Pudukkottai. He has worked in the following capacities: On the staff in the Minor Seminary Kerala; Superior St. Thomas Mount MSFS House; CRI President of Chenglepattu Diocese; Founder and First Director of Family Animation Centre St. Thomas Mount; Interim Parish Priest, Chennai; Member of the Province Professional Committee.



At the time of election, he was Superior of MSFS Provincialate, Trichy; Director of Fransalian Youth; Director of Fransalian Media and Correspondent of CBSE School, Trichy. He is now appointed as the General Councillor and General Secretary for Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries (SAIM).

General Secretary for Formation: Rev. Fr. Benedict De Souza



Fr. Benedict Pius De Souza, was born on the 21st of March 1962 in Manama, Bahrain, and raised in Goa, India. After completing his 10th at St. Thomas Boys' School, Aldona, Goa, He joined SFS Seminary in Bastora, Goa. He made his First Profession on the 10th of June 1981 at Salesianum in Visakhapatnam. He made his Final Profession on the 31st of May 1986 at Fransalian Seminary in Pune. He was ordained to the priesthood on the 12th of May 1991 at St. Thomas Church, Aldona, Goa, India. He has served the province/congregation in various capacities and in different apostolates. He was a formator for the minor seminarians and scholastics, and was a novice master for nine years. He has pastoral experience in Germany for 14 years. At the time of the election, he was the parish priest at Sacred Heart Church in Bhusawal, Maharashtra, India. He is now appointed as the General Secretary for Formation.

General Bursar: Rev. Fr. Jose Karickal

Fr. Jose Thomas Karickal MSFS, was born on April 25, 1959, in Paravanthuruth (Kottayam, Kerala). He completed his early education in my hometown before joining the MSFS Minor Seminary in Ettumanoor in 1975. After finishing his intermediate studies at Trivandrum University, he pursued philosophy and a B.A. at St. Charles Seminary in Nagpur. This was followed by his novitiate in Visakhapatnam, where he made his first profession in 1982. He completed the B.Ed. in Mannanam, Kerala, which prepared him for his regency in the Tanuku mission, where he was actively engaged in educational and parish work. His theological studies at St. Peter's Pontifical Seminary in Bangalore culminated in his final profession in 1987, the diaconate, and his priestly ordination in 1988. His first assignment was in Parachur, Nellore Diocese, as Principal of SFS School and assistant pastor. In 1992, he was transferred to Shantinagar, Secunderabad, before pursuing doctoral studies in pastoral theology at Julius Maximilian University in Würzburg, Germany. While in Germany, he served as a parish priest and held leadership roles in the Diocese of Würzburg and MSFS, GAH. Upon returning to India in 2016, he took on the role of Rector and Superior of the MSFS Seminary in Vadakkencherry. Now he is appointed as the General Bursar of the MSFS.



SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THE PREVIOUS GENERAL CURIA

We sincerely express our thanks and gratitude to Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, MSFS, for his guidance for the past 12 years in leading the Congregation to the greater heights. We also thank the members of the General Curia, Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhiyil, Rev. Fr. Jose Stephen and Rev. Fr. Jose Cheriyantharayil for their selfless contribution to the growth of the Congregation. May the good Lord bless them in their future ministry.

Education Forum Meeting

Fr. Albin Joseph M&F8



The best mentors are the people in your life who push you just a little bit outside your comfort zone.

The Education Forum meeting was held on 4th & 5th January 2025 at the MSFS Provincial House, Nagpur. The meeting began with a short welcome and the lighting of the lamp by the dignitaries of the day, that is, Fr. Praveen D'Souza, the resource person, Fr. Manoj Tirkey the Provincial Superior, Fr. Allan Gonsalves the Councillor in charge of Education, Fr. Viswas and Fr. Ignati.

First Day: Fr. Praveen enlightened the participants through various topics, highlighting the qualities which are required for an educator as a mentor. He spoke about mentoring by citing the example of the greatest teacher, Jesus Christ Himself. He also dealt in detail by focussing on the definition of mentoring, mentor care programme (MNP), mentor's profile, the seven competencies required for effective mentoring, and the mentoring process.

He also emphasized on soft skills which are absolutely necessary for the world of today. Soft skills and hard skills lead one to core skills. Questions were placed before the participants and the discussions that followed motivated the participants to face the problems and challenges that will ultimately lead to an effective mentoring.

Second Day: Input sessions were given by Advocate Satish Francis on the Functioning and Management of Societies and Trusts. He meticulously and elaborately explained details on the matter. A number of areas were covered like the Society and Trust Act, importance of writing the Minutes of the Governing Body and General Body Meetings, etc. There was also a session on the relevance of School Management Committee (SMC) meetings, and the relevance of Parents Teachers Meeting (PTM).

The two days meeting was organized well, to update and upgrade those involved in the Education Apostolate of our Province. The purpose was to enable them to cope up with the very important challenges of today's world, as educators and more as followers of Jesus Christ, in the Institutions they serve.

SAIM Forum Meeting

Fr. Anto Thomas MSFS



The meeting was held **on 9th & 10th January 2025** at the Provincialate at Nagpur. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss, evaluate and make deliberations on the social and innovative activities of Nagpur Province. Twenty-One members participated.

First Day: The inaugural session was at 9.00 am. Fr. Roby Kannamchira, the resource person and Fr. Manoj Tirkey the Provincial Superior were welcomed and asked to light the lamp. Fr. Roby K. is a CMI priest and an international figure in peace building and inter-religious dialogues in India. He also represents various peace committees from India at the United Nations.

Fr. Roby began by introducing the issues, priorities and resources that religious organizations have for building peace and brotherhood in the society. He explained about the 17 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs), its general objectives and its relation to Pope Francis' encyclical "Laudato Si" and the progressive goals of the United Nations. He also explained about the need of global collaborations between Congregations and other agencies. The second session began at 11.00 am. The topic was "Vision Mission and Passion to Embrace the Horizon." This session was about identifying the challenges, understanding them, compromising or confronting them, discerning the need to meet the challenges. He suggested that we need to be with the Church and move with the Congregation, network with likeminded people in the ministry and build alliances to amplify the impact.

Takeaways:

- Social workers should have no self-agenda
- Need to give others their space
- Need to overcome loneliness
- Need to create something new and pursue it.

Fr. Roby explained the notion of 'passion to embrace the horizon' with the ideas from the acclaimed book, "Who Moved My Cheese?" by Dr. Spencer Johnson.

The third session began at 2.30. Fr. Provincial thanked all for their active participation and shared some important Province Matters.

1. He exhorted to expand the social initiative of MDO to the entire Province. We need to explore the possibilities of taping government projects. What we are doing now is not enough.
2. Need to plan for a scholarship fund for students and teachers in the missions.

3. Need to empower our youth. Have a computer lab and training programs and make possible employment opportunities for the youth.
4. Pay just salaries to the staff working in the mission schools. Need to create a fund to support them.
5. Need to identify confreres to work together in teams.
6. Keep detailed records and reports of all programs and accounts of the activities.

The fourth session began at 3.50 pm. Fr. Roby shared his experience of Inter-Religious Dialogue in India and abroad. He shared some points on how to have inter-religious celebrations in our own institutions for Christmas, Onam, Ed-ul-Fitar, Easter, Rakshabhanan, etc. On the question of how to start a dialogue with those who oppose us, he said that we need to see them as equals and not impose our faith as something superior. There must be mutual respect, equality, prudence and correct dynamism. Every school is a cultural centre where ideas of peace and harmony can be cultivated in the students thus promoting a new generation with border understanding and concern for others in society. Then questions were given for discussion and the members were divided into 3 groups. Fr. Peter Thomas thanked Fr. Roby Kannamchira on behalf of the Provincial and the participants for animating the forum meeting.

Second Day: The first session began at 9.00 am. Fr. Lalji was the moderator. The details of the group discussions were presented.

During the second session activities in different communities were shared.

- Fr. Kalyan spoke of support to the poor for medical purposes, distribution of food grains, entering into the lives of people of Badnera by Nukad Natak.
- Fr. Ramesh spoke of taking care of the youth and celebration of Christmas with members of other faiths in Seraikela.
- Fr. Anil Pandit spoke of the work done in Jalna, and the good work done by Fr. John Ruptake in Ambad
- Fr. Anto Thomas then presented the MDO's report of Nagpur Province. He spoke of its achievements, activities, and future plans.
- Fr. Joseph Kailamangalam then presented a comprehensive report of Baradurgapur Mission.

The third session was chaired by Fr. Joseph Kailamangalam the PCI of SAIM. A common discussion was held on different topics and the following proposals were made.

1. Difficulties in its continuation of Fransalian Technical Institute, Aurangabad.
2. Support from the communities for social activities or outreach programs of SAIM.
3. Schools could support social work programs by giving monetary, material or human resource support needed for Mission Development. For e.g. clothes, note books, study materials, etc. Schools could begin supervised studies for the poor children when the classrooms are not being used.
4. The possibility of starting prison ministry could be looked into.
5. Need to study the locality and do the needed assessment. This will be helpful for social engagement. Community members are exhorted to see what can be done in their locality to make the lives of people better.
6. Need to write projects for the developmental activities for the missions and for the people in need.

At the end Fr. Anto Thomas proposed the vote of thanks and wished the participants the very best in their social and innovative ministry.

Ordination to the Priesthood at St. Joseph's Church, Ambapani



On 12th January 2025 Deacon Amrit Lakra and Deacon Sainjin Benny were ordained to the priesthood by Rt. Rev. Kishore Kumar Kujur, Bishop Diocese of Rourkela, at St. Joseph's Church, Ambapani. The ceremony was a solemn and grace-filled occasion, marking the culmination of years of formation. Present on the occasion was a very big gathering of the faithful, priests and religious.

13th January 2025 was a significant event for the people of Pindapathar, Beratoli. The great day began with Holy Mass. It was a proud and joyful moment for Fr. Amrit Lakra, his family members, and for the villagers. The faithful had gathered in large numbers along with the family members and relatives of Fr. Amrit, MSFS confreres, and priests and religious from nearby communities. The purpose was to thank the Lord for the gift of one of their very own to God as a priest, who would work for his entire life in the vineyard of the Lord. After the Holy Mass, there was a felicitation program followed by a fellowship meal.

On 18th January 2025 Fr. Sainjin Benny, celebrated his First Holy Qurbana in the Syro-Malabar Rite at Lourdes Matha Church, Koodathai. This celebration was a deeply personal and meaningful experience. It helped him to be connected to the roots and the heritage of the Syro-Malabar Church. It was followed by a felicitation program and a fellowship meal. The presence of family members, friends, and loved ones enriched this already momentous occasion, making it truly an unforgettable experience.

We are deeply grateful for all the prayers and support we have received.

Ordination to the Priesthood of Fr. Bimal Tirkey

**“Before I Formed You In The Womb I Knew You, And Before You Were Born I Consecrated You”
(Jer. 1:5)**

The sun had just risen over the horizon on **January 19th 2025**, casting a warm glow over Rajgangpur Parish, Rourkela Diocese. I, along with two fellow deacons, prepared to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The ordination ceremony was conferred by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Telesphor Bilung SVD, Bishop of Jamshedpur.

The day began with great fervour of thanksgiving to God. The atmosphere was filled with joy, gratitude, and a sense of reverence as we embarked on this significant milestone in our spiritual journey. The concelebrants were around hundred and six; this made the atmosphere more spiritual. The Church was packed with family members, friends, and faithful from different parishes.



The solemn dance procession towards the altar made the congregation more vibrant and joyful.

Bishop Telesphor Bilung SVD in his homily emphasized the importance of servant-leadership and the need for priests to be shepherds who smell like their sheep. His words of wisdom and encouragement inspired us to embrace our new role with humility, compassion, and dedication. The recessional procession was led by different groups from the parish. They danced in front leading the Bishop, priests, deacons and newly ordained priests to unvest. I walked behind them together with my parents wearing my new priestly vestments. The congregation sang a joyful hymn as we proceeded out of the sanctuary. It symbolized our new role as priests and our commitment to serve the Lord and His people.

The ordination ceremony was followed by a felicitation program, where we were greeted with warm words of appreciation and blessings from the Bishop, priests, and parishioners. Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS, Provincial Superior of Nagpur Province and all other MSFS priests who were present added joy to the celebration. I am immensely grateful for their support and blessing.

First Thanksgiving Mass

On January 20th 2025, I celebrated my first Thanksgiving Mass, which was a moment of immense gratitude and joy. It was also the Thanksgiving Mass of my brother, Bro. Manoj Tirkey MOP, making it a double celebration for our family. The Church was decorated with beautiful flowers and balloons adding to the festive atmosphere. I was joined at the altar by my brother, Bro. Manoj Tirkey MOP, MSFS confreres and other priests.

The Mass was attended by our family members, friends, and well-wishers, who had gathered to share in our happiness. It was a beautiful expression of praise, gratitude, and devotion. I felt deeply blessed to share this special moment with my loved ones. The Mass was followed by a fellowship meal, where we shared stories, laughter, and blessings.

My ordination ceremony and First Thanksgiving Mass were truly unforgettable experiences that I will always treasure. I am deeply grateful to Bishop Telesphor Bilung SVD, Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS Provincial Superior of Nagpur Province, the Parish Priest and other priests, HM sisters, and the faithful of Rajgangpur Parish for their love, support, and prayers. May God continue to guide and bless me as I embark on this new chapter in my life as a priest. Thanks be to God!

Ordination to the Priesthood of Fr. Anup Pillai



On 01st February 2025 Deacon Anup Pillai was ordained a priest. This significant liturgical celebration was held in the auditorium of Gyan Mata Vidya Vihar, Nanded, in the presence of thirty-eight MSFS priests, priests of other dioceses, a large number of Religious Sisters and faithful. The sacred ceremony was presided over by Emeritus Bishop Edwin Colaco of Aurangabad Diocese. Bishop Edwin Colaco in his homily advised Deacon Anup on the profound commitment required of a priest. He asked him to embrace a life of unwavering dedication to his priestly ministry. He also highlighted the importance of service, compassion, and faithfulness in fulfilling ones priestly vocation. The ordination ceremony was a spiritual experience. This is another milestone in the history of St. Francis de Sales Parish, Nanded, as Fr. Anup is the second priest from the parish.

Soon after the Mass the new priest and his family members were felicitated. Fr. K.V. Joseph, the Delegate of the Provincial conveyed fraternal greetings of the MSFS Congregation and Nagpur Province. He also congratulated him on behalf of the Major Superiors and confreres and warmly welcomed him and wished him God's blessings in his priestly ministry.

On 02nd February 2025 at 9:00 am Fr. Anup Pillai celebrated his first Thanksgiving Eucharist at St. Francis de Sales Church, Nanded in the presence of MSFS confreres, other diocesan priests and parishioners. He offered the Eucharist for various personal intentions. After Mass he expressed his heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Provincial Administration, the confreres of Nagpur Province, and especially the MSFS community members of Nanded, for their unwavering support, guidance, and prayers. He especially acknowledged their role in his formation journey to this special day.

Ordination to the Priesthood of Fr. Lambert Ekka



“Take Heart, it is I: Do not be Afraid.” (Mk 6:50)

It is good to sing and praise the name of the Lord, for He has done mighty works in my life. He has lifted me up, unworthy though I am, to be his priest, and has given me the grace to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice, bless and forgive sins. By anointing me as a priest he has made me meek, humble, obedient, and has called me to be a devoted servant, to love him and to serve His people in the best way possible. I express my heartfelt gratitude to my MSFS family where I grew up in the love of St. Francis de Sales.

On 12th January 2025 God anointed me to be his servant. I was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev. Michael Akasius Toppo, Bishop of Tezpur. It was a joy to have my parents, dear ones, MSFS confreres, priests, religious and faithful present on the occasion and praying for me. On 13th January 2025 I offered my first mass in my village. I prayed for all the faithful and thanked the Lord for all the blessings He has been showering upon me. I am ever grateful to all of you for your prayers and good wishes. Kindly continue to pray for me so that I may serve the Lord and His people with zeal and dedication, after the example of our patron St. Francis de Sales and our Founder, Fr. Peter Mermier.

Laying of the Foundation Stone at Bamra, Odisha

Fr. Anut Tirkey MSFS



14th January 2025 was indeed a significant day in the history of Bamra mission. On this day the ceremony of laying of the Foundation Stone for the Sisters' Convent, Teachers' Quarters and Girls' Hostel took place at 10.30 am. Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS, Provincial Superior Nagpur Province, Rev. Fr. Sandeep Tirkey MSFS, Provincial Counsellor in charge of Formation, Rev. Fr. Peter Kujur MSFS, Principal of SFS School, Bamra, Mr. Amit Patre, Architect, the Contractor, MSFS confreres, Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery, a few guests domestic staff, and all the hostel students were present. During the prayer service, Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey prayed for the God's blessings on this new project. Then he blessed the area and the foundation stone. It was then laid by him in the place prepared for it. He was followed by Fr. Sandeep Tirkey and Fr. Peter Kujur. After the laying of the foundation stone ceremony a short program was held to wish our Provincial as it was his 18th Ordination Anniversary. Sweets were distributed to all who were present for the program.

Multipurpose Hall at Gundewadi, Ambad, Jalna



Fr. John Ruptake MSFS

Every mission starts from zero and gradually progresses. In the process new developments are envisioned and so the progress goes on. Old structures get dilapidated and new structures have to be erected. Same is the case of our mission in Ambad. The old church had developed cracks and has become dangerous for use, so it has been decided to demolish it and construct a community hall in its place. This hall will serve as a multi-purpose hall, which will be used for celebration of mass, prayer services and other developmental/social service activities like tuition classes, supervised studies, tailoring, etc. Besides this a self-contained living room for the priest will also be built. The financial support for these works is given by the Provincial Administration through the FCRA bank account of Shanti Niketan, Khamgoan.

Activities at Ambad:

Spiritual: For the spiritual growth of the people, regular catechism classes are conducted, especially for youngsters. Five candidates are being prepared to receive first Holy Communion and Confirmation.

Educational: Every day tuition classes are held in two batches – juniors and seniors. At present two girls are writing the 10th Board exams and two girls are writing the 12th Board exams.

The mission is extending financial help to two girls to do the General Nursing and Midwifery (GNM) course. They are progressing well in their studies. One boy is studying ITI at FTI, Aurangabad. This year three boys are getting ready to do the ITI next year.

Future Plans: There is a plan to start some social service activities like tailoring courses for girls and boys, as well as some short training courses with the help of experts in various fields. For e.g. goat farming and poultry.

We are getting quite good cooperation from the locals as well as Government officials as they see that the activities we are conducting are for the benefit of the students and the financial stability of the villagers.

Final Vows of Bros. Febin Tom and Abhijeet Bhengra

Bro. Febin Tom MSFS



On 15 January 2025, nine brothers from Nagpur, Pune and South-East India Provinces made their Final Commitment to the Lord during the Eucharistic celebration at Fransalian Seminary, Pune. Rev. Fr. Johnson Gonsalves, the Provincial of Pune Province, presided over the Eucharistic celebration and received the vows of the brothers. As delegated by Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey, Provincial Superior of Nagpur Province, Fr. Johnson Gonsalves also received the vows of Bro. Abhijit Bhengra and Bro. Febin Tom of Nagpur Province.

The event was graced by the presence of many Fransalians, priests, religious, spiritual directors, benefactors, and well-wishers. During the homily, Fr. Johnson Gonsalves emphasized the importance of being a faithful witness of Jesus based on the theme **"To be His Faithful Witness"**. He urged the brothers to dedicate their lives completely to the service of the Lord. After the Mass, a photo session was held to capture the memorable moments of the event. Fr. Johnson Gonsalves expressed his **Heartiest Congratulations** to the newly finally professed brothers and officially welcomed them as permanent members of the MSFS family. After the short felicitation program all partook of the fellowship meal.

Sealed With The Gift of The Holy Spirit Given the Power to Witness the Faith in Public

Fr. Melroy Almeida MSFS

23rd February 2025 was indeed a joyous day for the Catholic community of St. Mary's Church, Jalna. After nearly six years once again the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to seven young parishioners during the mass. After months of preparations with special classes taken by Fr. Melroy, the candidates were well prepared to receive the Sacrament. The parishioners extended a warm welcome to Bishop Bernard Lancy Pinto on his arrival.

The Mass began at 9:00 am with an introduction based on the Sacrament of Confirmation. During the entrance hymn the candidates, their parents and the sponsors Mr. Shaji and Mrs. Shiny Abraham moved in procession to the altar, followed by the Priests and the Bishop. After the Gospel the Parish Priest read the names of the candidates and requested the Bishop to confirm them. In his homily the Bishop stressed on the importance of following Jesus Christ and being His witness wherever we go. His inspiring homily set a strong spiritual tone for the day. This was followed by the administering of the Sacrament of Confirmation to the seven candidates.



After the Eucharistic celebration a short felicitation program was held to thank and wish Bishop Bernard Lancy Pinto and the newly confirmed parishioners. They were handed their Confirmation certificates by the Bishop. This was followed by the prize distribution for the Diocesan Bible Quiz Competition held in December. Six students participated and the winners were given certificates and mementoes by the Bishop. He said that the purpose of this competition was to encourage students to read the Bible.

Fr. Melroy Almeida, the Parish Priest expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Bishop for his presence and for administering the Sacrament of Confirmation to our parishioners. He also thanked the parents, the sponsors and all those who assisted to make the liturgical service a meaningful one. After clicking of photos with the Bishop and the family members, the entire parish family partook of some refreshments arranged by the candidates and their families. It provided an opportunity for the parishioners to connect and have a joyful fellowship. The Confirmation liturgical ceremony at St. Mary's Church, Jalna was indeed a joyous and a spiritually enriching occasion, fostering a sense of community and growth among the parishioners.

Maria-Hilf Pilgrimage Centre in Vilsbiburg, Germany.



Fr. Manu MSFS

A New Chapter Begins: MSFS Fathers Take Charge at Maria-Hilf Pilgrimage Centre and begins a new Community of MSFS in Vilsbiburg, Germany.

Vilsbiburg, February 23, 2025 – A momentous occasion unfolded at the historic pilgrimage church of Maria Hilf in Vilsbiburg as the newly appointed Pilgrimage Director, Fr. Robin Xavier MSFS, along with his confrere, Fr. Manu Joseph, was solemnly installed during a grand Pontifical Mass, presided over by His Excellency, Bishop Dr. Rudolf Voderholzer of Regensburg. The event was graced by the presence of fortyfive priests, including Dean Alfred Wöfl, City Parish Priest Fr. Peter König, and MSFS Provincial of Nagpur Province Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey. A large congregation of faithful, fellow religious, and honored guests filled the church to capacity, witnessing the historic transition of pastoral leadership at the Shrine.



Bishop Voderholzer expressed his deep joy in welcoming the MSFS fathers, emphasizing that pilgrimage sites such as Maria Hilf play an invaluable role in the diocese's pastoral care. He highlighted how such sacred places lead people to a deeper friendship with Christ and provide opportunities for confession, spiritual guidance, and counseling.

He encouraged the new pilgrimage ministers to help pilgrims encounter Jesus just as the Virgin Mary presents Him to humanity. The bishop urged the faithful to continue praying for Maria Hilf to remain a beacon of faith, reconciliation, and hope.

During the Mass, the bishop officially read out the decree of appointment, declaring that as of February 1, 2025, Fr. Robin Xavier MSFS assumes the role of Rector Ecclesiae and Pilgrimage Director of Maria Hilf Pilgrimage Church, within the Deanery of Landshut, Diocese of Regensburg. He blessed the new ministers and wished them God's abundant grace in their mission. The Mayor of Vilsbiburg, Mrs. Sybille Entwistle, extended her warm greetings, acknowledging the extensive responsibilities of the new pilgrimage ministers. She remarked, "You will not only be spiritual guides but also caretakers, organizers, and social workers. Your role will encompass pastoral care, crisis support, administration, and even construction management." On behalf of the city, she assured them of a heartfelt welcome and support in their new mission. In his address, Fr. Robin Xavier MSFS expressed his immense gratitude and humility at being entrusted with this sacred mission. "This is a special day—not only for me personally but for our religious congregation, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. As we take charge of the pastoral care at Maria Hilf, we embark on a new chapter of faith and service." He extended heartfelt thanks to Bishop Voderholzer, the Diocese of Regensburg, his Provincial, and all the priests, religious, and lay faithful who had gathered for the occasion. He also paid tribute to his predecessors, particularly Fr. Berger and the Salesians of Don Bosco, who had served the pilgrimage church for the last two decades with dedication and zeal. A special note of gratitude was given to the First Mayor, the church administration, sacristan and caretaker Günther Lenz, altar servers, and all who contributed to the dignified organization of the ceremony.

Fr. Robin also lauded the Vilsbiburg Chamber Choir, led by Ms. Martina Strobl, for their outstanding musical contribution, which added solemnity to the celebration. Provincial Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS in his speech highlighted the great honor and responsibility entrusted to the fathers of the MSFS Nagpur Province. He assured that they would serve with humility, love, and unwavering commitment, recognizing the rich spiritual legacy of the pilgrimage church. As a token of appreciation, he presented the bishop with a traditional Indian Shawl and a symbolic gift from India. "We, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, are here with joy and wish to serve with open hearts—for you, for all pilgrims, for the sick in hospitals and palliative care centers, and for all who seek comfort and strength in faith. Our founder, St. Francis de Sales, gave us the motto: 'All by love and nothing by force.' In this spirit, we will continue the pilgrimage ministry and pastoral care here," affirmed Fr. Robin Xavier MSFS.

Concluding the celebration, the entire congregation joined Bishop Rudolf in singing "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name," followed by a grand procession of clergy and altar servers, marking the beginning of a new era in the pastoral care of Maria Hilf Pilgrimage Church. With faith and dedication, the MSFS fathers now embark on their mission, ready to serve and guide all who seek solace, hope, and spiritual renewal at the holy site of Maria Hilf.

Jubilarians



Fr. Charles John Porimattathil - Twenty-Five Years of Priestly Service



Fr. Charles John Porimattathil was born on 30th May 1972, in Panamkutty, Kerala. He was baptized on 14th February 1972, at St. Joseph's Church, Panamkutty. He belongs to the Syro-Malabar Diocese of Kothamangalam. He had his primary education at St. Joseph's UP School, Panamkutty, and secondary education at St. George's High School, Parathodu, Kerala.

Responding to God's call, he joined the SFS Institute, Bastora, Goa, in 1988 for his minor seminary formation. After completing his Novitiate he made his **First Profession on 31st May 1992 at Belgaum**. He did his studies in Philosophy at St. Charles Seminary, Nagpur from 1992-1995 and studies in Theology at JD, Pune from 1997-2001. He made his **Perpetual Profession on 14th June 1999**, at Fransalian Seminary, Pune. He was ordained a Deacon on 12th February 2000 at Fransalian Seminary, Pune, and was ordained a **Priest on 18th April 2001, at St. Joseph's Church, Panamkutty, Kerala**.

Appointments:

2001-2003: Pastoral Service, Our Lady of Nativity Church, Sini

2003-2004: Pastoral Service, St. Killian, Sihesslitz, Germany

2004-2006: Pastoral Service, St. Hedwig, Kulmbach, Germany

2006-2008: Pastoral Service, St. Marien's, Coburg, Germany

2008-2014: Parish Priest, St. Peter and Paul, Zapfendorf, Germany

2014-2017: Rector, Prakash Bhavan, Palakkad, Kerala

2017-2019: Pastoral Service, St. Mary Immaculate Conception, Schmidmühlen, Germany

2019-2022: Pastoral Service, St. Michael, Wiesau-Falkenberg, Germany
2022 to the Present: Pastoral Service, St. Mary Assumption, Deggendorf, Germany

Fr. Charles' twenty-five years of priestly service reflect his deep faith, dedication, and love for the people entrusted to his care. We thank God for his selfless service and pray for God's continued blessings on him and his priestly ministry. May his journey ahead be filled with divine grace and strength as he continues to shepherd God's people with love and wisdom in his unwavering commitment to the Church.

Fr. Vishwas Torne Celebrates 25 Years of Priestly Ministry

Fr. Vishwas Torne was born on 4th December 1970, in Padhegaon, Maharashtra. He was baptized on 1st January 1971 at Loyola Church, Shrirampur, and was confirmed on 13th July 1982. His deep faith and commitment to Christ led him to pursue his vocation, and he entered SFS Institute, Bastora, Goa, in 1988 to begin his priestly formation.



He made his **First Profession on 31st May 1996**, in Belgaum, and his **Perpetual Profession on 21st April 2015**, at SFS Church, Shaanwadi, Pune. He received the ministries of Lector on 19th August 1998, at Fransalian Seminary, Pune, and Acolyte on 12th February 2000, at Papal Seminary, Pune. He was ordained a **Priest on 28th April 2001**, at Loyola Hall, Srirampur, M.S.

Fr. Vishwas did his ITI at St. Joseph Technical Institute, Nagpur from 1991-1993. He did his studies in Philosophy at St. Charles Seminary, Nagpur from 1993-1995, and his studies in Theology at J.D. Pune from 1997-2001. He did his B.A. from Dr. Babasaheb Marathwada University, Aurangabad; also M.A. and B.Ed. from 2007-2008.

Appointments:

2001-2005: Vice Principal, FTI Aurangabad

2005-2008: Director, Non-Formal Technical Institute, Dharuhera, Haryana

2008-2009: Assistant Parish Priest, St. John's Church, CIDCO, Aurangabad

2009-2010: Teacher, St. Mary's High School, Jalna

2010-2015: Principal, SFS School, and Parish Priest, Holy Family Church, Nimkheda, Nagpur

2015-2018: Parish Priest, Holy Redeemer Church, Manager, SFS School, Neemuch, MP

2018-2023: Assistant Headmaster, St. John's High School, Nagpur

2023 to the Present: Headmaster, St. John's High School, Nagpur

Fr. Vishwas' journey has been one of faith, commitment, and service, balancing his pastoral and educational roles with great dedication. His contribution to spiritual formation, technical education, and parish ministry have left a lasting impact on numerous students and parishioners. We thank God for his selfless dedication and missionary zeal. May he continue to inspire and lead many more in the years to come.

Silver Jubilee of Priesthood of Fr. R. Kulandairaj

Fr. R. Kulandairaj was born on 14th September 1953 in Sowripalayam, Tamil Nadu. He was baptized on 24th September 1953, and confirmed on 1st June 1964 at St. Francis Xavier's Church, Sowripalayam. He is the youngest of four siblings.

He did his primary education at St. Joseph Elementary School, Sowripalayam, from 1961-1968. He continued his education at Municipal Boys' High School, Ramnathapur, from 1971-72. He joined the SFS Institute, Bastora, Goa, in 1975 for his minor seminary. He pursued PUC at Aurangabad from 1991-92 and did B.A. from Ambedkar University, Aurangabad.

He made his **First Profession on 10th June 1979** at Vishakhapatnam and his Perpetual Profession on 25th May 1984 at Coimbatore. **He served as a Religious Brother from 1979-1997** at SFS Institute, Bastora, FTI, Aurangabad and NFC Farm, Bidkin, Aurangabad.

Later he decided to become a priest and so did his Philosophy in Bengaluru in 1997 and Theology at St. Charles Seminary, Nagpur. He was installed as Lector on 15th August 1999 and as Acolyte on 14th November 1999. He was ordained **a Deacon on 6th February 2000** and was ordained **a Priest on 6th May 2001** at St. Michael's Cathedral, Coimbatore. Fr. Kulandairaj completed ITI in 1989 at Aurangabad; a Formators' Course and a Catechism Course

Appointments as a Priest:

2001-2003: Hartmanpur, Gazipur, U.P.

2003-2004: In charge of St. Joseph's Technical Institute, Nagpur, M.S.

2004-2005: Assistant Parish Priest, Panderpalli, Odisha

2005-2009: Parish Priest in Raidhi, Odisha

2009-2012: Parish Priest, Ambapani, Odisha

2012-2014: Parish Priest, Kandore, Baji, Chhattisgarh

2014-2015: Rector at Lattapara, Odisha

2015-2019: In charge of St. John's Mass Center, Nagpur

2019-2023: Parish Priest, St. Mary's Church, Jalna; Manager, St. Mary's High School, Jalna; Superior of the Community

2023-Till the Present: Service at Mermier Sadan, Nagpur; Manager, St. John Public School, Nagpur; In charge of St. John's Mass Center, Nagpur

We thank God for his twenty-five years of tireless pastoral service, his zeal for missionary work, and his deep love for the people he serves. May he continue to be a beacon of faith and inspiration, leading many to Christ in his unwavering dedication to the Church and its mission.

Fr. Lalit Tigga Celebrates Twenty-Five Years as a Priest

Fr. Lalit Tigga was born on 16th August 1967, in Aonrajar, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh. He was baptized on 6th September 1967 at St. Joseph's Church, Ginabhar, Raigarh, and confirmed on 6th May 1978. He did his primary education at Prathmic Shala, Churitoli, and high school and PUC at Loyola Higher Secondary School, Kunkuri, Raigarh. In 1988, he joined the Minor Seminary at Bastora, Goa. He did his studies in Philosophy at St. Charles Seminary, Nagpur from 1993-1995, and his studies in Theology at Fransalian Seminary, Pune from 1997-2001.



He made his **First Profession on 31st May 1996** at Fransalian Ashram, Uchgaon, Belgaum, and his **Perpetual Profession on 9th November 1999** at Fransalian Seminary, Pune. He was ordained a Deacon on 10th November 1999, and was **ordained a Priest on 30th May 2001** at Catholic Ashram, Jumaikela.

Fr. Lalit completed his B.Sc. at SFS College, Nagpur from 1991-1993, B.A. from Nagpur University in 1995, Postgraduate Diploma in Rural Development in 2005, and a Masters in Rural Development from IGNOU in 2015. He did his German language course in 2007 at Pune.

Appointments:

2001-2005: Vice-Rector, Divya Jyoti Ashram, Latapara and Assistant Parish Priest and Parish Priest at SFS Church, Panderpali, Odisha

2005-2006: Socius, Dhyan Ashram, Varanasi, U.P.

2007-2009: Assistant Parish Priest, St. Magdalena Church, Herzogenaurach, Germany

2009-2010: Assistant Parish Priest, Mariae Himmelfahrt, Hollfeld, Germany

2010-2016: Parish Priest, St. Joseph Church, Rehau, Germany

2017-2020: Rector, Divya Jyoti Ashram, Latapara, Odisha

2020-2023: Assistant Parish Priest, SFS Church, Janakpuri, Delhi 2023 to the Present: Principal and Parish Priest at Fransalian House, Darkona, Chhattisgarh

We express our heartfelt gratitude to God for his unwavering dedication, pastoral zeal and commitment to the mission of Christ. May the Lord continue to bless him abundantly in his ministry, granting him strength, wisdom, and grace for many more years of dedicated service to the Church and the faithful.

Appointments:

Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil's Continued Service in Hyderabad

Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil, having completed his tenure as the General Councillor in charge of Education, is now a full-fledged member of the Province. However, at the request of the Superior General, he will continue to serve at the MSFS General Secretariat Community in Hyderabad for the next three years, overseeing the publication of Moral Science books. We extend our gratitude for his dedicated service and wish him God's blessings in this new responsibility.

Let Us Pray for the Departed

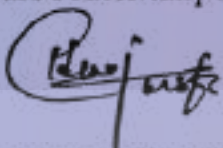
Fr. Jean- Paul Fournier, 83 years, of Franco-Switz Province. who passed away on 26th February 2025

Salesian Thought

**"JUST AS WHAT POISONS THE BODY ENTERS THROUGH THE MOUTH
SO TOO WHAT POISONS THE HEART ENTERS THROUGH THE EAR."**

-ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

Yours Fraternally in Christ



Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS
Provincial Superior
Nagpur Province