

MSFS - MISSIONARIES OF ST.FRANCIS DE SALES
SOUTH-WEST INDIA PROVINCE



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SWIP Circular BK/21

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My dear Confreres,

Fraternal greetings from Fr. Benny. As we are beginning the advent season I would like to wish each one of you a grace-filled time of renewal of Christian Hope and Charity. Let us prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus worthily through apt personal and interior preparations.

ADVENT: BELLWETHER TO CHRISTIAN HOPE AND JOY

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel!” This familiar hymn reminds the Church of the season of



Advent, a time traditionally marked for remembering the years of preparation and consecration prior to the coming of the Messiah. *For many centuries, the Church has identified the beginning of the Christmas celebration with a time of reflection and expectation called Advent.*

The word **Advent** means *Coming or Arrival* and when used in conjunction with Christmas, it reminds us of the anticipation and expectation held over hundreds of years by the people of Israel for their Messiah and promised King.

For Centuries before Christ, Hebrew Rabbis methodically and passionately taught the Jewish People that Messiah was coming. They taught that the people should be ready to embrace their King when he appeared. They emphasized the need for holy living and obedience to God's law as a preparation for His coming. This explains how the lowliest shepherds and fisherman of that day were acquainted with the promises of a Messiah. This season of preparation was all by God's design.

***Today we mark Advent in the Church with the display of a Wreath:** *Its circle reminds us of God Himself, eternal and endlessly merciful. It is evergreen, reminding us of the hope of eternal life.*

***The Four Outer Candles incorporated into the Wreath:** *They represent the time of waiting and preparation for the Messiah during the four Sundays of Advent. Many Theologians describe that these candles represent the four hundred years of prophetic silence between Malachi and the angelic visitation of the Gospel.*

***The light of the Candles** reminds us of the Light of the world and the prophetic promise of Jesus' Coming.

***The white central candle, lighted at Christmas,** reminds us of the fulfilment of His first Advent and the pure, humble means by which He came.

My dear Confreres, how are we preparing to celebrate this advent? I wish to exhort you to go beyond the routine practices of certain extra prayers and external abstinences. Not so distant past years, our own parents used to tell us to prepare a cradle for Jesus with twenty-five virtues representing the twenty-five days of advent.

Why don't we once again return to our childhood? Day by day let us practice one each virtue that will distance every shadow of pain and struggle for the little babe in the manger. On the Christmas Day let us welcome Him with the extreme Joy of a simple child, offering to Him our little cradle of virtues. Be assured, the Lord who sees our sincerity will reward us.

My dear Confreres, each of us is undergoing the personal struggle that Jesus is not born in our lives. We need to ask: 'why so?' Perhaps rough experiences of life have made us also rough and wounded. In this advent season we are reminding ourselves of the soft touch of the little babe in the manger who can make us gentle and tender like Him. **I wish each one of you a grace-filled and enriching season of Advent.**

OFFICIAL LOGO FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER 2019

Our Beloved Superior General has presented to the Congregation the Logo for the



General Chapter 2019. My dear fathers we have a LOGO prepared for the next General Chapter 2019. The Logo includes the theme of the 19th General Chapter and its thrust points such as the Community Life, Mission, MSFSness and the Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. Hereafter this Logo will be officially used in reference to the General Chapter 2019. As requested by the Superior General this LOGO shall be displayed in our

Provincial House, Formation Houses and Local Communities.

THE MSFS PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DIRECTORY

The MSFS Personal Spiritual Directory which is an adapted version for the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales and Fransalian Associates is prepared by our former Superior General Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes. It comprises the spirit and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales as he imparted it to those he served as Spiritual Director. In the words of our Superior General Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil “Spiritual Directory is a practical guide to help us ‘Live Jesus’ in the midst of daily life.”

Seeing the size of the book let no one think that the Directory does not contain much doctrine. Many great things do not appear very impressive. In fact, they may seem rather insignificant. This small yet extraordinary book provides us with everything necessary to grow in our spiritual life in a Fransalian way. This book is the seed of virtues; upon reading and digesting we would see the fruits of Fransalian Virtues growing in us. This book is a unique book to grow in MSFSness which our Superior General Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil insists.

Copy of this book is given to all of you. Please read it and live as part of your MSFS way of life. I request all the Rectors and Novice Master to give special instruction to the Seminarrians about the Spiritual Directory. If any of you have not received the copy of the MSFS Personal Spiritual Directory please contact Fr. Santosh Pereira, Provincial Secretary and secure a copy of it.

BLESSING OF THE SILVER JUBILEE MEMORIAL HOUSE

My dear Confreres, it is a great honour that we are able to build and give one more house to a poor family in commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of our province. The newly constructed house was blessed on 4 November 2017. Fr. Jose Viruppel, the Vicar



of Lourdes Forane Church Trivandrum officiated the ceremony. MSFS Fathers in Trivandrum and a good number of Parishioners were present for the blessings ceremony. The house was built for Mrs. Saraswathi who is working in MSFS House Vattiyookavu as cook for past

eighteen years. Our Province together with the SFS Parish Vattiyookavu contributed the amount for the completion of the construction. I thank and congratulate Fr. Regi Narikunnel and the Parishioners of SFS Church Vattiyookavu for availing the fund and materializing this project.

ONGOING FORMATION PROGRAMME AND SEMINAR



Ongoing formation for the priests of South west India province belonging to 2000-2008 batches was held from 16-18 of November 2017 at Vinayalaya, the MSFS Provincial House. The theme of this Ongoing Formation program was centred around priesthood.

Rev. Fr Mathew Kalathungal the superior of the Provincial House welcomed the participants on the first day and Rev. Fr Benny Koottanal, the Provincial, introduced the need and importance of an ongoing formation in the present scenario. The morning sessions were led by Dr Xavier Terrence (VG of Palayamkottai Diocese) on Biblical and Ecclesial understanding of priesthood. He concentrated on the danger of **appearing a priest** and the challenge of **being a priest**. The need of the '*Upper Room Experience*' of Jesus and the disciples challenged the audience to be effective in the exercise of priesthood today. The afternoon session was focussed on "**Alcoholism and its negative impacts: A medical and Christian Perspective.**" In this session Dr Sojan Antony depicted the danger of alcoholism and the ways and means to confront them. The second day began with the sessions on "**Salesian & Spiritual perspectives of Priesthood**", concentrating on the theological, Salesian, Spiritual and historical dimension of priesthood animated by Dr Benny G Koottanal. The afternoon session highlighted the "**Spirit of the New Liturgy and the meaningful involvement of Priests in Liturgy**" by Dr Gilbert Choondal SDB. It was more an eye opener to realize the way liturgical celebrations have to be conducted as ministers of liturgy. On the third day Dr George Manalel VC spoke on "**Priest as a Man: Psychological, Physical & Spiritual Vulnerabilities.**" He spoke on the challenges faced by priests in the society of today and the need to be watchful and authentic about the life and vocation that one has received. The open sessions in the evenings gave more clarity to the various dimensions of priestly life.

The meeting with the Provincial and the administration also was an experience of sharing, togetherness and commitment. The three days of coming together, sharing, liturgical celebrations and the quality input sessions will surely add fervour and zeal to the life and ministry of each one of us as priests.

FORTHCOMING ONGOING FORMATION PROGRAMME

We will be organizing the Ongoing formation for those who have been ordained between 1990 and 1999. It will be held at Vinayalaya from **06th to 08th March 2018**. All those who are enlisted in this program are expected to take note of these dates and make themselves free for it. **It is a mandatory gathering for renewal and study.** The following confreres have to participate in the next ongoing formation program:

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| 1. Fr. Y. Mathias | 17. Fr. Aloysius Kuzhuppallil |
| 2. Fr. Philip Valakodiyil | 18. Fr. Joseph Vechuvettickal |
| 3. Fr. Justin Chirackal | 19. Fr. Benny Koottanal |
| 4. Fr. Johny Puthiyaparampil | 20. Fr. George Vattappara |
| 5. Fr. Tom Pannalakunnel | 21. Fr. Mathew Mamala |
| 6. Fr. Sebastian Kulangarathottiyil | 22. Fr. Cyriac Ummikuzhy |
| 7. Fr. Joseph Kannadom | 23. Fr. E. Erudaya Raja |
| 8. Fr. Tomy Mullasseril | 24. Fr. Jose Karekatt |
| 9. Fr. A. Jerome | 25. Fr. Sebastian Vellaramkunnel |
| 10. Fr. Shajan Manickathan | 26. Fr. Joshy Thazhathukunnel |
| 11. Fr. Tito Puthuparambil | 27. Fr. Jose Kumblolickal |
| 12. Fr. Pulinthanam Tomy | 28. Fr. Kurian Karickal |
| 13. Fr. Joy Vazhappillil | 29. Fr. James Thomas |
| 14. Fr. Saju Vilachirayil | 30. Fr. Sebastian Conrad |
| 15. Fr. Thomas Anchanickal | 31. Fr. Henry Kodikuthiyil |
| 16. Fr. Tomy Chirakapurayidathil | 32. Fr. George Choorapuzha |

SUPERIORS' MEETING

My dear Confreres, the Annual Superiors' Meeting will be held on **March 22, 2018** at Vinayalaya. I request all the Superiors of our Local Communities in India to participate without fail in the upcoming meeting.

BLESSING AND INAUGURATION OF THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING OF SFS KENGERI

SFS Public School, Kengeri has achieved another milestone in its pursuit to educational development. The most awaited grand inauguration and blessing of the new school building together with **Desalite Delight**, the 5th Annual Day celebrations was on 24th November, 2017 at the sprawling campus of SFS Public School, Kengeri. The programme commenced at 5.45 pm with the inauguration of the new school building by Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal, Provincial and General Manager and HH. Bernhard Backovisky, Prelate, Klosterneuburg, Austria, blessed it. Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal lighted the ceremonial lamp and delivered the inaugural address. Among the other dignitaries present were Rev. Fr. Anton Hoestlinger, Klosterneuburg; Ms. Sandrine Destouches,

Florimont, Geneva; Rev. Fr. Roy Plathottathil, Councilor-in-charge of Education; Provincial councillors, Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and other dignitaries.



Rev. Fr. Joy Vazhappillil, Manager reported how the hard work and planning of 14 years has come to fulfilment on that day and that it was a dream come true. The principal Rev. Fr. Subin Puzakkara along with the students presented a brief report of the academic and co-curricular achievement of the school for the academic year. The evening was made more colourful with the Annual Day celebration “Desalite Delight - 2017” with the students showcasing their talents.

PARENTS' DAY CELEBRATION IN SFS SEMINARY, ETTUMANOOR



26th November 2017 was indeed an auspicious day for the staff and students of S.F.S. Seminary as we organized the Parents' Day. The presence of all the parents of our Seminarians showed the love and concern for their children and their role in Formation. Rev. Fr. Kurian Karickal was the resource person who spoke on the topic “The Role of

Parents in forming the children to Priesthood.” He insisted the parents to live the values in their lives that they wish to see in their children. It is important to become a role model than simply advising them. At 11: 00 AM the Holy Eucharist was presided over by Fr. Joby Mattathil, Superior and Rector. From 1:30 PM onwards the staff spent time in meeting the parents individually. At 3:00 PM the staff sat together with parents to evaluate, to suggest and to take necessary steps towards the good formation of the seminarians. The programme was concluded by 4:00 PM.

NEW PROVINCIAL CURIA OF EAST-AFRICA PROVINCE

The Provincial Congress of East-Africa Province has elected the following persons to be in the Provincial Administration. On behalf of South-West India Province I congratulate them and wish them all the very best.

1. Fr. Jacob Thekkekara - Councillor cum Admonitor
2. Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil- Councillor
3. Fr. Kurian Kollapallil- Councillor
4. Fr. Thomas Kochalumchuvatttil- Councillor
5. Fr. Jose Eriyanickal - Provincial Bursar

HEARTY WELCOME

I am very happy to extend a very hearty welcome to **Rev. Fr. Thomas Cherukat** who would be returning to India after commendable services to the Congregation overseas. After the completion of his office as the Provincial of South West India Province, for the past 17 years Fr. Cherukat had been serving the Congregation in various capacities as pioneering Missionary in Chad-Cameroon, as Assistant Superior General and as Mission Procure for the Congregation. He would be returning to India by the end of this month and will take up a new appointment in the province. I extend to Fr. Cherukat a very hearty welcome.

TRANSFERS AND APPOINTMENTS

Fr. Thomas Cherukat is appointed to the De Sales Bhavan Community, Mysore. He will be the Mission Procure for South West India Province.

Fr. Sujith Pallassery is appointed Parish Priest of Sainte Josephine Bakhitha Parish, Superior of the Community and Director of Boy's home at Bero, Chad.

Fr. Francis Ekka is appointed to the MSFS Community at Doba, Chad.

OBITUARY

- **Mrs. Lourdumary** aged 60, Mother of Fr. J.Periyanayagam, died on November 08, 2017.
- **Mr. Mathew Puthussery** aged 83, Brother of Fr. Thomas Puthussery, died on November 15, 2017.
- **Mr. Joseph Luke Punnakuzhiyil** aged 79, Father of Fr. Sunny Punnakuzhiyil, died on November 17, 2017.
- **Mr. Sebastian Vazhaparambil** aged 52, Paternal Uncle of Fr. Riju Vazhaparambil, died on November 26, 2017.

We assure you, dear Confreres, the remembrance of your dear ones in our Holy Mass and Prayers.

MY SCHEDULE

My dear Confreres, please do take note of my program schedule. Different from the previous circular, each new circular would bring in additional changes in my programs as per the need. Please do organize the visitation and other common meetings/programs according to the latest communication.

DECEMBER 2017

December1-2	PIF & Governing Body Meeting at Suvidya College
December 3	Meeting the Brothers of South West India Province in Suvidya
December 5	Core Committee Meeting of the Innovative Ministry Forum
December5-6	Mid-year evaluation of the Regents in Vinayalaya
December 8	Rev. Fr. Gabriel Memorial Lectures in Suvidya College
December 9	Recollection for the Diploma Students of IIS
December 10	Visitation to IIS, Meeting the Associates of Fransalians, Evaluation with the Students and Staff
Dec. 11-12	Meeting of MSFS Formators in Pune on Graded Formation
December 16	School Annual Day – SFS School (State Syllabus), Hebbagodi

December 17	Council Meeting, Apostolic Community Meeting, Bangalore North
December 18	Annual Day & Christmas Celebration – SFS PU College, Tamaka, Kolar
December 19	Keynote Address at the Graduation Day of St. Peter’s Pontifical Institute
December 20	School Annual Day – SFS Public School (ICSE) Hebbagodi
December 21	*Blessing & Inauguration of the New Block of SFS School, Mundargi *School Annual Day & Christmas Celebration – SFS School, Savanur
December 23	Visit to Thavalappara, Meeting with Fr. Francis Kizhakethazhe
Dec. 24-25	Visitation to MSFS House, Kattappana and Christmas with Fr. Jacob Thudipara, Mass at Twenty Acre & Kozhimala Parishes
December 26	Meeting and Holy Eucharist with the Associates of Fransalians at Charis Bhavan
December 27	Ordination of Dn. Sanoj Plamthottathil at Neduvvely, Neyyattinkara
December 28	Ordination of Dn. Noby Kottuppallil at Valiyathovala, Kanjirappally
December 30	Ordination of Dn. Justin Panachickal at Karimannur, Kothamangalam
December 31	Parish Feast & Festal Mass, Veendasserry, Pattikad

JANUARY 2018

January 1	New Year Mass in the Novitiate
January 2	Ordination of Dn. Simil Devasia at Karunapuram, Thalassery
January 3	Ordination of Dn. Jose Simon, Thuruthippally, Palai
January 4	Ordination of Dn. Abhishek Joseph at P.G. Palya, Mysore
January 6	Ordination of Dn. Sijo Kovilparambil at Ambattupalayam, Chittoor
January 8-21	Visitation to Chad-Cameroon Mission
January 22	Bangalore Apostolic Community meeting with the Assistant General
January 23	Council Meeting
January 24	Feast of St. Francis de Sales at Vinayalaya, MSFS Provincial House
January 25	Keynote Address at the Graduation Day of Cluny School Malleswaram
January 27-28	Silver Jubilee Celebrations of SFS Church, Vattiyoorkavu
January 31	School Annual Day – SFS School, Kannur

FEBRUARY 2018

February 2	Graduation Day SFS PU College, Hebbagodi
February 2-3	Recollection for the Diploma Students of IIS
February 3	School Annual Day – De Sales Academy (CBSE), Hebbagodi
February 4	Sunday Mass at Chintamani Church, Blessing and Inauguration of the New Community House
February 5-10	Classes for the Post-Graduate Students of IIS
February 13-15	Visitation to Sannidhi, MSFS Minor Seminary Mysore, Meeting the Brothers, Evaluation of the Academic Year with the Staff, visiting other MSFS communities in Mysore
February 16	Balasangama at FidesIndia, Kengeri
February 18	Council Meeting
February 19	Diaconate Ordination at Tejas
February 21-22	Visitation to SFS Seminary Ettumanoor, Meeting the Brothers, Evaluation of the Academic Year with the Staff
February 27	Goal setting for the Future – IIS Diploma Group

MARCH 2018

March 3	Graduation Day at Suvidya College
March 4	Meeting with Confreres ordained in the year 2016-2017
March 6-8	On-going Formation Program for those ordained between 1990-1999
March 9	Council Meeting
March 12	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2015-2016
March 14	Comprehensive Examination for the Post-graduate students of IIS
March 16	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2014-2015
March 18	Meeting with Confreres Ordained in the year 2013-2014
March 20	Meeting with Confreres ordained in the year 2012-2013
March 22	Superiors' Meeting
March 25	Palm Sunday
March 29	Maundy Thursday Liturgy at Gauribidanur Mission
March 30	Good Friday Liturgy at Gauribidanur Mission
March 31	Holy Saturday at Gauribidanur Mission

APRIL 2018

April 1	Easter Sunday – Mass at Gauribidanur Mission
April 11	Council Meeting
April 21-26	Animating Retreat for the RNDM Congregation, Bangalore Province
April 27	Talk and Mass for the participants of Salesian Seminar at IIS
April 29	Visitation to Adoor

MAY 2018

May 4-5	Keynote address & Mass on the occasion of 'MSFS Education Seminar' at Hyderabad
May 6-11	Preaching Salesian Retreat at Makkiad
May 20	Council Meeting
May 28	Perpetual Profession at Tejas
May 30	Initiation of the Postulants into the Novitiate at Makkiad
May 31	First Profession of the Novices at Makkiad

SALESIAN THOUGHT

“Sometimes we so much occupy ourselves with being good angels that we neglect to be good men and women.” - SFS

Fraternally,



Fr. Benny Koottanal MSFS

Provincial