

# MISSIONARIES OF ST FRANCIS DE SALES

## Dibrugarh Region

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-----EMT/02 Circular - June 10, 2016-----

### Dear Confreres,

Fraternal Greetings of Peace and Joy! During the Easter Season, the Liturgy of the word allowed us to reflect more on the powerful guidance and working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the young Church. As members of the newly born Dibrugarh Region of the Northeast India Province of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, we too have had the singular experience of being guided and led by the Holy Spirit throughout the first ever Regional Assembly. As I write this letter, my heart wells up in gratitude to God for all the blessings we have received through the Assembly. Allow me to share more details on the Regional Assembly.

### The First Ordinary Regional Assembly of Dibrugarh Region



The First Ordinary Regional Assembly was held from 13-15 April 2016 at MSFS Provincialate, Guwahati with the theme: 'Frontier Fransalians in Northeast India: Formed in Compassion, United in Mission'. The deliberations of the Regional Assembly reminded us of our unique call to be formed in compassion and united in mission. Being apostles of mercy, we are to bring the compassionate Jesus to the people in our mission, formation, education, social apostolate and innovative ministries (Cf.

Statement of Regional Assembly 2016). In all, 50 confreres (6 Ex-Officio Members, 33 Members of the Region and 11 Special Invitees) participated in the historic spiritual event of the newly established Region within the Northeast India Province:

### Ex-Officio Members

1. Panthanmackel George, Provincial
2. Mappilaparambil Emmanuel, Regional Superior
3. Kuttikottayil John, Rector MSFS Study House
4. Mundoly Jose, Novice Master
5. Vellaramkuzhiyil Augustine, Rector SFS Seminary
6. Kuzhuppil Sebastian, Rector Vinaya Bhavan Seminary

## **Members of the Region**

7. Arackal Thomas
8. Avittapallil Antony (Vintu)
9. Bashena Adani James
10. Belo Francis
11. Chakkalackal Joseph
12. Chottakara Michael
13. Cornelius Bara
14. Daimari Xavier
15. Edakazhickal Thomas
16. Kavungal Lukose
17. Khongsit Priyor
18. KochuparathanathThomas
19. Konthananickal Jiji
20. Manickathan Varghese Paul
21. Mattathil Jacob
22. Muthedathu Roy
23. Ovelil Kurian
24. Ovüing Philip Mhonchumo
25. Panii Paul
26. Parankimalil Peter
27. Pattimackal Kurian
28. Pehasuiding Peter
29. Plathottathil Jojan
30. Pou Stephen
31. Raising Jacob
32. Sangma Bernard
33. Thaikho Simon
34. Thekkel Tomy
35. Thundathil Augustine Joseph
36. Tirkey Solomon
37. Toppo Kusumkant
38. Varapadavil Thomas
39. Vettukattil George

## **Special Invitees**

40. Parampukattil George, Former Provincial & General Councillor
41. Thadathil Francis, Former Provincial
42. Thenganakunnel Jose, Former Provincial
43. Arackathara Babychan, Regional Superior, Southern African Region
44. Manasrayil Sabu Francis, Delegation Superior, NE Delegation Germany-Austria
45. Uppamthadathil Emmanuel, Provincial Admonitor & Councillor for Education
46. Kerketta Athnas, Provincial Councillor for Mission
47. Veliyath Benoy, Provincial Councillor for Formation

48. Kannamangalath Joseph, Provincial Bursar
49. Puthiyakulangara Saji, Director FAsCE India
50. Barman John, Director Fransalian Youth Mission

### **Sincere Gratitude**

At this juncture, I also raise my heart and mind to God in gratitude for the guidance received through a number of persons. We are grateful to our beloved Superior General, Very Reverend Fr Abraham Vettuvellil for his constant guidance and encouragement in matters concerning the newly established Region. A special word of thanks to him for the valuable message sent to the participants of the Regional Assembly, exhorting us to be continually formed in the missionary dynamism of Father Mermier, by reflecting the compassionate approach of St Francis de Sales in our mission and ministries. In his message, we have received the needed orientation and action plan for our life and ministry in the new Region. Further, by proposing a few relevant points, especially dealing with our core identity as Fransalian Missionaries, he exhorted us to discern what is best for the Region as well as for the mission of the Church. Those directions have provided us a framework for the conduct of the first ever Regional Assembly of the newly erected Region. We also thank Rev. Fr. Vincent Lourduswamy and Rev. Fr. P. Chinnappa Reddy, the Provincials of Pune and Visakhapatnam respectively, for forwarding their messages to the Regional Assembly, which has richly contributed to a deeper understanding of the theme of the Assembly. Prior to the start of the Assembly, several persons had sent me notes and messages with the assurance of prayers for the success of the Assembly. We sincerely thank everyone for their prayerful support.

Regional Assembly is a spiritual event in the life of a Region; and it is a time when the members of the Assembly learn to read collectively the signs of the time and discover the plan of God for the Region in the spirit of prayer and recollection. We are grateful to Fr Babychan Arackathara, the Regional Superior of Southern African Region for animating the participants of the Assembly with a well-thought out and inspiring Recollection-talk, particularly inviting us to experience the depth of God's mercy, and radiate this mercy in our daily life. Most Reverend John Thomas, the Bishop of Itanagar, presided over the Inaugural Mass of the Assembly. In his homily, Bishop John appreciated the missionary zeal of the MSFS in 'casting out to the deep' (Lk 5: 4) – to the vast geographical frontiers of Northeast India. At the same time, he invited the members of the Assembly to cast out also into the intellectual, cultural and spiritual frontiers of the Region. It calls for a search of new direction for our lives of commitment, fostered by an intense God experience, which gives the power to renew one's life, and become living memorials of Jesus in everyday life. We place on record our gratitude to Bishop John Thomas for his valuable appreciation and incisive reflection.

During the Inaugural Session, Fr. Francis Thadathil, the former Provincial, delivered the Keynote Address leading the members to an inward journey through his heart-talk, and exhorting them to read the signs of the time and to act accordingly. To enter into this important exercise of Regional Assembly, he invited the members to invest a positive self for a fruitful outcome, ever remaining open to the Spirit of God and to one another, recognising always God's walk with us in the frontier missions of Northeast India. Elucidating further the theme of the Regional Assembly, he dealt upon the sub-themes: i) our identity as frontier missionaries, ii) our call as ministers of compassion, and iii) as a community formed and united in mission. He wished that this Assembly truly becomes a 'Resting Place' for the members of the Region, from where they will receive much needed rest and strength for the journey ahead. He expressed also that the deliberations and decisions of the

Assembly may lead the participants of the assembly to the sincerest conviction of the urgent need of directing all energies for a collective witness to the sublime legacy of Frontier Fransalian Missionaries. We express our sincere, hearty thanks to you dear Fr. Francis for your heart-talk.

The Assembly was assisted to reflect further on the theme through the presentation of many Position Papers and Group Discussions. We are grateful to the members of the Provincial curia for their excellent presentations of Position Papers related to the respective fields: Fr. George Pathanmackel (Provincial, on Religious Life & Status and Vision of the new Region), Fr. Athnas Kerketta (Councillor for Mission, on Mission Apostolate), Fr. Emmanuel Uppamthadathil (Councillor for Education, on Education Apostolate), Fr. Benoy Veliyath (Councillor for Formation, on Ministry of Formation) Fr. Reji Kizhakkethalackel (Councillor for Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries, on Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries) and Fr. Joseph Kannamangalath (Provincial Bursar, on Ministry of Stewardship). Being the first Regional Assembly of the newly established Region, the Assembly also spent qualitative time for discussing and deliberating on many administrative and on some specific concerns. The consensus reached on many administrative decisions, especially on the name of the Region and the probable location of the Regional House, were signs of mature deliberation and responsible decision. Finally, the Assembly drew up the Vision Statement, and an Action Plan for the Region to achieve certain goals within the next three years.

The presence of Fr George Parampukattil, Fr Francis Thadathil, Fr Jose Thenganakunnel, former Provincials; Fr Babychan Arackathara, Regional Superior of Southern African Region; Fr Sabu Francis Manasrayil, Delegation Superior of Germany-Austria NE Delegation; members of the present Provincial Curia; Rectors of all the Formation Houses in the Province; and Directors of FAsCE INDIA as well as FYM provided strength and vigour to the discussions, deliberations, formulations and to the process of discernment- all of which has enriched the destiny of our new Region. We thank Fr Philip Mhonchumo and Fr Vintu Augustine Avittappallil, the secretaries of the Regional Assembly; Fr Augustine Thundathil and Fr Thomas Arackal, the members of the Final Statement Committee; Fr Tomy Thekkel and Fr Peter Parankimalil, the members of the Action Plan Committee, for their generosity and service to the Assembly. If the Assembly could be organised in a fruitful manner, it was also due to the ambience that was offered by MSFS Provincialate Community. We are grateful to the Superior, Fr. Varghese Chettupuzhakaren and all the community members for the venue and accommodation; and all services given to the participants of the Regional Assembly.

If the Regional Assembly had come to a successful conclusion, it is due to the Steering Committee, which played a valuable role through its meticulous planning and timely execution. We express our heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Steering Committee- Fr George Vettukattil (Convenor), Fr Tomy Thekkel, Fr Simon Thaikho, Fr Jiji Konthanancikal and Fr Vipin George Edakazhickal- for their hard work and dedication. Hearty congratulations and sincere appreciation to you dear confreres for the successful conduct of the Regional Assembly!

And finally to you the members of the Region and the participants of the Regional Assembly, I thank you very sincerely for your presence and participation at this historic spiritual event. Together, we have engaged in common prayer, reflection, and discussion. We have also made our discerned deliberations for taking the Region to newer heights more through our committed lives and faithful

ministry. Now it is our time of action! And together, we shall continue the walk to that path we have commonly chosen.

I am grateful to you also for giving me an excellent team of councillors and bursar: Fr Kurian Pattimackel, Fr Philip Mhonchumo, Fr Augustine Thundathil (Regional Councillors) and Fr Peter Parankimalil (Regional Bursar). I hope that with their rich experience in ministry and their dynamism, the Regional Administration would lead the new Region to new levels of growth. Let us continue to remain open to the Spirit of God so that we become agents for unfolding God's plan for us in the Region.



**Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales  
Dibrugarh Region  
The First Ordinary Regional Assembly, 13-15 April, 2016  
MSFS Provincialate, Guwahati, India**

**STATEMENT**

We, the participants of the first Regional Assembly of Dibrugarh Region of the Northeast India Province of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, assembled at MSFS Provincialate, Narengi, Guwahati, from April 13-15, 2016, prayerfully reflected and deliberated on the theme: ***“Frontier Fransalians in Northeast India: Formed in Compassion, United in Mission”***.

The unique call of the Frontier Fransalians has a dual nature of being formed in compassion and united in mission. Being apostles of mercy, we bring the compassionate Jesus to the people in our mission, formation, education, social apostolate and innovative ministries.

**Mission Apostolate:** Our mission today is to bring Jesus to those who need Him most. We resolve to enhance our missionary activities so as to bring more dynamism to the parish mission.

**Formation:** Ours is a holistic formation after the Fransalian way of life based on Salesian spirituality, especially compassion. We resolve to train and qualify our personnel for this responsibility.

**Education:** We resolve to promote integral development of the young as healthy, value-based, credible and transformed individuals. We strive to foster “Excellence with a human touch”.

**Social Apostolate & Innovative Ministries:** We resolve to reach out to “those in periphery” by committing ourselves to various Social Apostolates and Innovative Ministries like counselling, family apostolate, youth and preaching ministry enhanced by media and communication.

**Stewardship:** “The possession that we have are not our own. God has entrusted them to us to develop and wants that we make them useful and profitable and render Him service, by taking care of them” (SFS). We resolve to pool together all the resources at our disposal with complete transparency and commitment to the growth of our new region.

### **ACTION PLAN**

We, the members of Dibrugarh Region of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, gathered at MSFS Provincialate, Guwahati, for the First Ordinary Regional Assembly of the Region of Northeast India Province from April 13-15, 2016, the 40<sup>th</sup> year of the arrival of the MSFS in Northeast India, to reflect on the theme “**Frontier Fransalians in Northeast India: Formed in Compassion, United in Mission**” in consonance with the “Jubilee Year of Mercy 2016” declared by Pope Francis for the universal Church and “the Year of Formation for Mission of Mercy and Compassion” proclaimed by our Superior General Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil for our Congregation, are committed to the following Action Plan:

#### **RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LIFE**

1. Every community should maintain a chronicle. (LC)
2. The members of the community shall come together for meal at least once a day. (LC)
3. Birthdays of the community members shall be celebrated. (LC)
4. Guests in our communities shall be treated with Fransalian hospitality and gentleness. (LC)
5. A formal community meeting shall be held once in every month. (LC)
6. Quarterly campus meeting should be held. (LC)
7. Every Apostolic Community shall come out with a yearly action plan. (ACC)

#### **MISSION APOSTOLATE**

1. Arrange for one-month language courses annually at the regional level. (RA)
2. Establish a good relationship with diocesan fraternity and CRI by participating in their programmes and meetings. (LC)
3. Form Small Human Communities and Small Christian Communities in all our Parishes. (LC)
4. Look into the possibilities of opening new mission centers in the region especially Bogi Nadi, Pasighat, Dhemaji, Dukhawakhana, Senapati in Manipur and in Kohima diocese. (RA & PA)
5. Make use of the available land at Dhemaji and Pasighat for mission activities. (RA & PA)
6. Consolidate the existing missions of Likabali, Pasighat and Aalo with presbyteries. (RA & PA)
7. Newly ordained priests should be assigned with specific pastoral responsibilities at least for three years. (RA)

## **EDUCATIONAL APOSTOLATE**

1. Appoint qualified teachers in our schools as far as possible. (LC)
2. Implement service rules for teachers in all our educational institutions. (LC)
3. Display uniform vision and mission of Fransalian education at prominent places in all our educational institutions. (LC)
4. Implement common moral science text book for all our educational institutions. (LC)
5. Appoint resident counsellors for our urban and semi-urban schools. (LC)
6. Initiate the process of establishing a higher secondary school at Aalo. (RA & PA)
7. Implement 'poor student's fund' in our schools. (LC)
8. Organize leadership and management skill programmes for principals and managers who are involved in education. (RA)
9. Provision for differently-abled and poor children should be made in our schools. (LC)
10. Form Child Rights Club, Peace Club and Eco Clubs in our schools. (LC)

## **SOCIAL APOSTOLATE AND INNOVATIVE MINISTRIES**

1. Look into the possibilities of starting a retreat centre in Manipur. (RA & PA)
2. Strengthen preaching ministry at Kaying retreat center by providing better facilities. (RA & PA)
3. Start a youth centre at Pasighat. (RA & PA)

## **FORMATION**

1. Promote quality vocations at all levels. (RA & PA)
2. Give a specified period of time for learning local language during the diaconate ministry. (PA)

## **STEWARDSHIP**

1. Create corpus fund and budgeting for equitable development. (LC, RA & PA)
2. The money collection of all the educational institutions should be made through banks. (LC)
3. Appoint Local Bursars wherever not done. (RA & PA)
4. Every centre should abide by the approved budget. (LC)
5. Friends of Fransalians, alumni and lay collaborators be organized for raising funds at local levels. (LC)
6. Regional Superior together with Regional Bursar will visit the centers for devising modalities for pooling fund towards the regional corpus fund. (RA)
7. Appoint one auditor for the entire region. (RA & PA)

## **Approval to the Acts of the Regional Assembly 2016**

I am very happy to inform you that Rev. Fr. George Pathanmackel, the Provincial of Northeast India Province, with the consent of the Superior General and in consultation with the Provincial Council, has given us the approval to the Acts of the Regional Assembly and ratified the election of the three Regional Councilors and the Regional Bursar – Fr Kurian Pattimackel, Fr Augustine Thundathil, Philip Mhonchumo (Regional Councilors) and Fr Peter Parankimalil (Regional Bursar). We thank the Provincial Administration for their trust in us and the assurance of their prayers and support.

## **Regional Councillors and their charge of Apostolates**

According to the norms of New Governance of the Congregation and as per the Delegated Administrative Powers received (D.P. IV.1: 09,) the Regional councillors are assigned a specific area of responsibility:

1. Regional Councillor for Mission - Fr. Kurian Pattimackel
2. Regional Councillor for Education - Fr. Philip Mhonchumo
3. Regional Councillor for Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries - Fr. Augustine Thundathil

We express our gratitude to them for saying 'Yes' to the new responsibility of leadership in the Region. On behalf of the Region, I congratulate them and welcome them to the first team of the Regional Administration of Dibrugarh Region.

## **Committee for Provisional Regional Statutes**

The Regional Council met on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 has proposed the following confreres to be the members of the Committee for the formulation of the Provisional Regional Statutes:

1. Fr. Mhonchumo Philip (Convener)
2. Fr. George Vettukattil
3. Fr. Jiji Konthananickal
4. Fr. Thomas Edakazhy

We thank them for accepting this task and wish every success in the preparation of the draft of the Regional Statutes, which would form the basis of our common life in the Region and enhance our life-style as Fransalian Missionaries.

## **Meeting of MSFS Delegation with the Bishop of Dibrugarh**



On 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016, a delegation of the MSFS, comprising representatives of Provincial Curia (Fr George Panthanmackel, Provincial and Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil, Provincial Councillor); Regional Curia (Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, Regional Superior and Fr Kurian Pattimackal, Regional Councillor); and the MSFS working in the Diocese of Dibrugarh (Fr Jose Mundoly, Novice Master and Fr Francis Belo, Parish

Priest, SFS Parish Chabua), met Most Rev. Joseph Aind, Bishop of Dibrugarh and the Diocesan Administration. The Delegation briefed the Bishop regarding the erection of a new Region of the MSFS in Northeast India Province and that the Regional Assembly held from 13-15 April 2016 has named the new Region as 'Dibrugarh Region'. The Delegation also informed the Bishop that the mind of the Regional Assembly was to build the Regional House in the town of Dibrugarh or in the outskirts of the city. Expressing happiness on the new developments, Bishop Aind extended a warm welcome to us to Dibrugarh and also gave the permission to establish the Regional House in Dibrugarh Town or in its neighbourhood. The Delegation also met Rev. Fr Lazar Kakkassery, the

V.G. of the Diocese, who also assured all the possible help to establish the Regional House in Dibrugarh. At this juncture, on behalf of all the MSFS in Northeast India Province and especially the Dibrugarh Region, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Most Rev. Joseph Aind, Rev. Fr Lazar Kakkassery, and all the priests of the Diocese of Dibrugarh for the warm welcome extended to us and the promise of their continued support to us.

### **The way forward...**

During the past one and a half month, we have made several trips to Dibrugarh. The trips, made in view of finding a suitable land for the future Regional House, took us to different locations. As of now, we have narrowed down to a couple of options, which could be pursued and negotiated. Meanwhile, we are also in the process of looking for house on rent, which could serve as a temporary Regional Office, from where the follow up can be intensified. We thank the Provincial Administration for their constant advice and accompaniment regarding this important administrative decision regarding the Region.

The Regional Administration has suggested that till a rented facility is finally acquired, the Regional Superior could have the provisional residence at MSFS Community, Silapathar. Therefore, I plan to move to Silapathar by the third week of June 2016. I sincerely thank you dear confreres for your constant prayerful support, and request you to keep the special intention of the Region in your prayers. Let us remain attuned to God in order to enfold God's plan for our Region.

### **Appointment and Transfers**

- ✓ Fr. Philip Purayidathil is designated to be appointed as the Associate Priest of St Francis de Sales Parish, Telam with effect from 20 June, 2016
- ✓ Fr. Solomon Tirkey is appointed as the Vice-Principal of Marjum Memorial Public School, Hostel Warden of SFS Boys' Hostel, Aalo and designated to be appointed as the Associate Priest of St. Mary's Parish, Aalo with effect from 03 July, 2016

### **Additional Responsibilities**

- ✓ Fr Stephen Pou is appointed as the House Administrator of MSFS Community at Basar with effect from 17 April, 2016
- ✓ Fr Kurian Pattimackel is designated to the Committee for the Promotion and Cause of our Founder from the Region with effect from 06 June, 2016
- ✓ Fr Augustine Thundathil is appointed as the Principal of Marjum Memorial Public School, Aalo with effect from 11 June, 2016

### **Hearty Congratulations and Prayerful Wishes to:**

- ✓ **New Members of the South West India Provincial Curia:** On behalf of the confreres of Dibrugarh Region, I offer heartiest congratulations to the new councillors and Bursar of South West India Province of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales: Fr R. Santhosh Kumar (Admonitor), Fr A. Jerome, Fr Roy Plathottathil, Fr Joy Vazheppillil and Fr Vinod Kanattu (Bursar). I invoke God's abundant blessings on them that their ministry of leadership will take the Province to greater heights in the Mission of the Congregation.

- ✓ **New Vice Provincial of USA Vice-Province:** Our Hearty Congratulations and prayerful best wishes to Fr Tomy Joseph Puliyanampattayil, who has been appointed as the new Vice-Provincial of USA Vice-Province, for a fruitful ministry of leadership in the Vice-Province. At this juncture, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Fr Augustine Tharappel, the outgoing Vice-Provincial, for all the help rendered to us in Northeast India Province.
- ✓ **Franco-Swiss Provincial for a Third Term:** Rev. Fr Yves Carron, the Provincial of Franco-Swiss Province, has been re-appointed Provincial for a third consecutive term of three years by Superior General. Our heartiest felicitations and prayerful wishes as he begins his third mandate.

### **Inauguration and Blessing of the new Primary Block at SFS Hr. Sec. School, Medziphema**

It was a long-felt need and a dream come true, when a new building for Primary section was opened and blessed at St. Francis de Sales Higher Secondary School, Medziphema on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016. It was inaugurated and blessed by Rev. Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil MSFS, the Regional Superior of Dibrugarh Region and Most Rev. Dr. James Thoppil, the Bishop of Kohima, respectively, in the presence of all the students, Staff, Management, Parents and well-wishers. The function began with a welcome song by the students, which was followed by the welcome address by Rev. Fr Kurian Pattimackel, the Manager and Regional Councillor for Mission. After the blessing, Bishop Thoppil addressed the students, exhorting them to imbibe the values of the Gospel and to exhibit a qualitative difference in their lives that they are being educated from a 'Christian' school. The Regional Superior, Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil in his address to the gathering expressed his gratitude to all who contributed to the execution of this project: Bishop Thoppil for his paternal guidance, Provincial Administration for initiating and arranging the necessary fund for the construction, and the Management for the efficient and quick implementation of the plan. He also encouraged the students to make use of the facilities offered in the school in order to grow themselves into responsible citizens of the country, especially by cultivating the attitude of 'self-giving'. Rev. Fr Emmanuel Uppamthadathil MSFS, the Provincial Councillor for Education too addressed the students, encouraging them to be successful by possessing C-A-S-H (Confidence, Acceptance, Sincerity and Honesty). (Report by Fr Roy Muthedath)

### **Commencement of Higher Secondary at SFS School, Dhemaji**

SFS School, Dhemaji, is beginning Higher Secondary from 2016-2017 academic session. Named as SFS Junior College, the institution will be functioning within the school campus. Aimed at the benefit of students who pass out from our schools in Upper Assam, the initiative ensures continuity of quality education to them in their own neighbourhood. All the necessary permissions have been obtained from the civil authorities and the classes are scheduled to begin from June 16, 2016, with Arts, Commerce and Science streams. (Report by Fr Vintu Augustine)

### **Hearty Congrats to:**

- ✓ Silver Jubilarians of 2016 – Fr Lukose Kavungal, Fr Thomas Kollathuvayalil, Fr. Thomas Nirappel and Fr Mathew Pallichankudiyil as they have begun their year of Sacerdotal Jubilee
- ✓ Nine Novices who made their first profession on 31.05.2016 at MSFS Novitiate Chabua and for the handwritten magazine by them: 'The Mercy of God in the Spirit of St Francis de Sales.'

- ✓ The management, staff and students of all our schools for the good results at secondary and higher secondary level.

### Let us pray for the Departed:

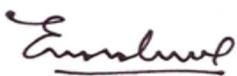
- ✚ Mr Augusthy Vattekkattukandam (83), grandfather of Fr Libin Augustine Vattekkattukandam, who passed away on May 31, 2016

### Concluding Thought - Tune our hearts...

For a concluding thought, I am inspired by the first reading of today's Holy Mass, 1 Kings 19: 9, 11-16. Often it becomes very hard to hear God in the busyness of our life. But how can we listen to Him better? 1 Kings 19: 12b says: "and after the fire came a gentle whisper". There is a moment just before the starting of any performance, when the lights go off and the musicians begin tuning the instruments. What is produced is often a strange, cacophonous sound, nothing at all like the music that will start a few minutes after. I love that sound because it is an anticipation- a sound that tells you that something wonderful is about to happen. Tuning is not a warning bell; it is an alignment. One musician plays a single note, always the same note, and each of the instruments joins in. They play, they listen, and they adjust and play again. They keep going until the sounds blend together, united and aligned in tune.

We need to tune our hearts. We would like our hearts to sound like God's. Did you know that if you put two grand pianos in a room and play a note on one of them the corresponding string in the other piano will start to vibrate? We want the note God is playing to resonate in our hearts. In 1 Kings, God tells Elijah to go and stand on a mountain where He will pass by. There is wind and fire, even an earthquake, but God is not in the wind or the fire or the earthquake. God comes in a gentle whisper. We need to be still and hear that whisper; we need to tune our hearts to it. We cannot do the things God has planned for us, if our hearts are out of tune. No matter how carefully we try to serve God, if our hearts are out of tune it is all just garbage. It is so interesting to note that even professional musicians have to tune every single time they play. We would like our life to be like that, to begin every day by listening for the voice of God and moving our hearts – dragging it along sometimes – until our hearts, our attitudes sound like God's. We would like to go through our days in tune with HIM.

Fraternally yours in the Lord,



Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil MSFS  
Regional Superior, Dibrugarh Region

THREADING THE PATH OF OUR PATRON SFS...

*Where there is less of our will there is more of God's will. Simple and absolute acceptance of God's will renders the suffering extremely pure (IDL, Part III, Ch. 16)*