

# MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES PUNE PROVINCE



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TO ALL THE MEMBERS

October 24, 2020

Dear Confreres,

With immense joy and gratitude to God, I wish you all a very Happy Foundation Day! Today, as one Fransalian family, we celebrate the 182<sup>nd</sup> Foundation Day of our Congregation. On this day of joy and celebration, we thank God for His innumerable blessings and graces in and through our Congregation.

God, in His infinite wisdom and love, moved the heart of the Servant of God, Fr. Pierre Marie Mermier to found at Annecy, France, a religious community of men, the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, to continue the missionary task of the Church in a unique manner following the way of Saint Francis de Sales, Apostle of Chablais and the Doctor of Love.

Our Congregation was canonically established by Bishop Pierre Joseph Rey of Annecy on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1838, and approved by His Holiness Pope Pius IX on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 1860. Our beloved Founder, Fr. Peter Mermier, presents to us Mary our Mother of Sorrows/Compassion and St. Francis de Sales as the special Patrons of our Congregation, reminding ourselves of the challenges to our missionary commitment under their patronage. Living the spirit and spirituality of Saint Francis de Sales in our mission is the Charism that gives identity to our Congregation and is its distinguishing mark. Therefore, our Founder wants us to become more like Christ after the example of St. Francis de Sales, our Patron. His patient charity, alertness and total surrender to and identification with the will of God, intense love of God and humans, apostolic zeal, profound humility and simplicity, joyful holiness, confident optimism, firm gentleness, welcoming attitude and hospitality, and his open-mindedness and fellow-feeling challenge us to follow his example.

What Bishop Joseph Rey considered important for our religious life as missionaries while approving the Congregation, gives us an insight into how our Charism should unfold itself. He said, "Yours is a triple task: study St. Francis de Sales, imitate his virtues and form your method of guiding people on his: full of gentleness to sinners."

"Our ministry," says our Founder, "demands that we offer ourselves to the people, to society, like another St. Francis de Sales, totally disinterested, burning with zeal for the salvation of all, full of compassion at the sight of evils which make people suffer,

without wasting time in useless oratory, with an authentic mission, irreproachable doctrine and above all a virtuous life.”

This year we mark the 182nd Foundation day as well as 175th year of the arrival of MSFS in India. The Congregation had only 14 Confreres at that time. *Fr. Mermier sent six of the best men to India to proclaim the Gospel. They were Fr. Jacques Martin, Fr. Joseph Lavorel, Fr. Jean Marie Tissot, Fr. Jean Thevenet, Bro. Pierre Carton and Bro. Sulpice Fontanel.* They began their voyage on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1845 and arrived at Pondicherry in the South East of India, on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1845.

On this day, our Superior General Rev. Fr. Superior General has requested us to mark the Foundation Day and the 175<sup>th</sup> Jubilee year of the arrival of MSFS in India in the following manner:

1. **Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary:** During the Holy Mass or during a prayer service, the entire community could make an act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
2. **Planting of six trees in honour of the first missionaries** who came to India 175 years ago, the Superiors of all the communities are requested to arrange to plant six trees to mark the event.
3. **Devotional Renewal of Vows:** All the superiors of communities are requested to organize Devotional Renewal of Vows during a Holy Eucharist or during a prayer service.

Since the Foundation of our Congregation during the last 182 years, God blessed the missionary endeavours in India through the efforts of these hard-working Missionaries from Europe and later through indigenous missionaries. Our Congregation has made substantial contributions to the growth of Christianity in the Central Regions of India. At present there are about 15 dioceses and several thousands of Christians in the area where the MSFS Fathers and Brothers originally preached the Gospel and nurtured the faith of the people.

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## PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

- **October 2020:** “In this month of the Foundation Day of the Congregation, let us pray that the two newly established Provinces of Dibrugarh and Guwahati will take the Congregation to greater heights in pursuing its apostolic and missionary goals as desired by our founder Fr. Peter Mermier” .
- **November 2020:** “That all our departed confreres enjoy eternal peace in heaven and that Fr. Peter Mermier be raised to the saintly status.”

## DELEGATES OF THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER - 2020

On this Foundation day of our Congregation, I am happy to announce the names of elected delegates for the Provincial Chapter 2020 of our Pune Province. I would like to thank all the confreres who participated with seriousness and sincerity and promptly responding to the Electoral process in selecting the delegates for the Provincial Chapter. We also thank the members of the election committee Fr. Mathew Rodrigues, Fr. Daniel Pareste and Fr. Tony Prem Anand along with Fr. Roxy Fernandes who assisted us for the successful election of the delegates to the Provincial Chapter through e-voting under the expert guidance of Fr. J. Stephen the General Councilor cum General Secretary for SAIM.

<b>Ex-officio Members</b>	<b>Elected Delegates</b>	
1. Jayaseelan Selvaraj	1. Alphonse Irudayaraj	8. Lawrence Jayaraj
2. Johnson Gonsalves	2. Daiy Sebastian	9. Mario D'Souza
3. Santosh Salve	3. Edal Kumar	10. Peppin Jayaraj
4. Tony Prem Anand	4. Francis Mullackal	11. Roxy Fernandes
5. Nelson A	5. George Peter S	12. Santow K
6. Vincent Lourduswamy	6. Jerad Sahayaraj	13. Sunny Kulangarath
7. John Robert	7. Juze Fernandes	14. Terrie Pinto
8. Alex Peter		

## DELEGATE OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL TO THE CHAPTER OF OUR PROVINCE

On this day of grace, I am also happy to announce that our Superior General Rt. Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS has appointed Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil MSFS the General Councilor cum General Secretary for Education as the delegate of the Superior General for the Provincial Chapter of our Province. We wholeheartedly welcome Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil MSFS to our Province and for the Provincial Chapter. His presence and timely guidance will certainly be a source of inspiration and encouragement as we have resolved as one Province Family to march ahead with Renewed Life in the Holy Spirit for a Revitalized Community and Missionary Commitment in the Spirit of Our MSFS Charism through this Provincial Chapter 2020.

**FIRST BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF OUR VETERAN  
LATE FR. FRANCIS MOGET MSFS (1920 - 2020)**



The late veteran Fr. Francis Moget's first Birth Centenary was observed on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020. He was the last French- Indian missionary who spent 58 years in India (1947-2005). As the teacher, formator and historian of our Congregation by his life and teaching, he was an inspiration to many of us. This was an occasion for us to remember him and express our gratitude to God for His gratuitous gift of him to the MSFS Congregation, diocese of Belgaum and above all for the Church in India. He is now with the Heavenly Father, so we praised and thanked God by offering solemn thanksgiving Eucharist presided over by Rev. Fr. Philip Kutty Joseph, the Vicar General of the diocese of Belgaum along with apostolic community confreres, other concelebrants and the few guests. Introduction was given by the main celebrant and homily was preached by the Superior Fr. Johnson on the day's Gospel and highlighting some of the vignettes of the late missionary and visionary par excellence. Spontaneous Prayers were expressed by our confreres present and all the books written by him were presented during the offertory. Fr. Austin Joy expressed the vote of thanks on behalf of the community to the invitees present. After the Spiritual banquet cake was cut in front of late Fr. Moget's bust in the garden and garlanded. Before the fellowship meal few our dignitaries like Superior General, Asst. Superior General, Provincials of Pune and Nagpur province had sent the video messages to pay their loving homage to him so Fr. Albert animated the session for the guests present to enrich themselves with the intellectual food.



Fr. Andrew served us sumptuous meal for our physical needs. Around 4.30pm few of our confreres, kitchen staff, the community members visited Fr. Moget's tomb and prayed over in respect on his first birth centenary. As a community we had small scale celebration due to prevalent COVID-19 pandemic situation but during the centenary year 2020-21 we will incorporate all our activities of the community to remember him in a special way. Long live late Fr. Francis Moget in our memories, bloom forever bright in the land of eternal peace and happiness of God (Fr. Johnson Gonsalves MSFS). On behalf of the Province, we thank our confreres at Fransalian Ashram Community namely Fr. Johnson Gonsalves the Superior and Director, Fr. Albert Fernandes, Fr. Austin Joy and Fr. Andrew along with the members of our Apostolic Community of Belagavi for working over a month to make this event a memorable, meaningful and offering it as a spiritual tribute in honour of our veteran missionary late Fr. Francis Moget.

### **NEWS FROM FRANSALIAN SEMINARY, PUNE**

The scholastics have arrived from their respective Provinces/places to the Fransalian Seminary, Pune after having spent about 6 months in lock-down. We have 21 Scholastics this year belonging to 4 provinces. They have been doing their first semester through online classes and having completed their exams of the first term, they are attending their annual retreat in two groups at Carmel Haven, Wagholi. We also had the Salesian programme for the third year scholastics in preparation for their

Perpetual Profession which would probably be in December 2020. On this Foundation Day of our Congregation, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2020, we will be celebrating a special remembrance Mass in honour of the 6 first Missionaries who arrived in India 175 years ago in 1845 and for all the departed confreres in our Congregation. In order to mark this special event, we will be planting 6 coconut saplings followed by community recreation.

The following is a short report on the Salesian Program: “We should never be satisfied with our minimum necessity but, work always towards maximum possibility.” – St. Francis de Sales. Three-day Salesian Programme in preparation for the Scholastics who are going to make their Perpetual Profession was organized from 19-21 October 2020 at Fransalian Seminary, Pune under the guidance of Fr. Noel Rebello. As a resource person Fr. Noel accompanied us throughout the Salesian Programme. On the first day – on 19 Oct- Monday – Fr. Noel initiated us to learn and own the spiritual treasures on the topic ‘the Biography and Spirituality our Patron St. Francis de Sales’, stressing upon the enormous amount of writings available for our spiritual and intellectual growth. On the second day – on 20, October, he further nurtured us on the topic ‘the Life and Spirituality of our Founder Fr. Peter Mary Mermier’, wherein he focused on the dedication and the missionary zeal of our first pioneering missionaries to India. On the last day – 21<sup>st</sup> October, he enriched us with knowledge on “the history of our Congregation from the beginning to the present day and the Social Teachings of our Catholic Church. The three days of Salesian Programme ended with an evaluation and suggestions for further in-depth learning and living the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales in our daily life. (Bro. E. Sathish).

## INFORMATION

1. **Reminder to send the Report of the Study and Reflection Paper:** I request the Superior of every community to send the collated report of the respective community on the study and Reflection Paper in preparation for our forthcoming Chapter 2020 latest by 30 of October 2020 to the Provincial Secretary Fr. Mathew Rodriques.
2. **Annual Province Retreat:** Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this year we cannot organize our Province annual Retreat as usual in one or two groups for the whole Province. However, you are encouraged to organize the Annual Retreat at the Apostolic Community Level wherever it is possible or at the Community level and the Superiors are requested to facilitate the same for the community. We could also join the online Retreats that are being organized in different places in the place of our ministries. I have also requested the Provincial of Nagpur Province that we could also join them in their online Province Retreat and you are requested to register your names at the earliest. We could also organize at our Province level

online Retreat soon after the Christmas or before the Feast of St. Francis de Sales depending on the number of participants and you are requested to give your names to the Provincial Secretary Fr. Mathew Rodrigues for the same.

**HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS  
TO THE NEW PROVINCIAL CURIA IN OUR CONGREGATION**

1. **The Provincial Curia of the East Africa Province:** (1) Fr. Sheejan Kallarackal: Admonitor and PCIC for Education (2) Fr. Zachariah Burefero: PCIC for Mission (3) Fr. Robert Soosai Raj PCIC for SAIM (4) Fr. Japhet Kirimi PCIC for Formation & (5) Fr. Reji Pendanath Provincial Bursar
2. **Provincial Curia of Brazil Province:** (1) Fr. Agnaldo Costa Junior (Councillor and Admonitor), (2) Fr. Stehendass Joseph (Councilor for Mission), (3) Fr. Jose Devasahayam Saviour Pitcahi (Provincial Bursar).

**WE PRAY FOR OUR DEPARTED – God grant them Eternal Rest!**

1. Fr. Martin Griffin (83) of the Province of England, died on August 18, 2020
2. Fr. Mathew Chavely (71) of the East Africa Province died on September 05, 2020.
3. Fr. Thomas Vadkumpadam (74) of the Nagpur Province died on October 06, 2020.
4. Fr. Julian Kodigandala (57) of the Visakh Province died on October 09, 2020.
5. Fr. Pakki Devadas (62) of the Vizakh Province died on October 17, 2020
6. Mrs. Velencia died on October 10, 2020, (Sister of Fr. Agnelo Fernandes)
7. Mr. Peter Lemos (86) died on October 12, 2020 (Father of Fr. Denis Lemos)
8. Mr Jeronimo Da Silva (65) the brother in law of Fr. Jaime Robert Fernandes.

**SALESIAN THOUGHT**

**Our Founder, Father Peter Mermier, presents to us St. Francis de Sales as our Patron and model. Living the spirit and spirituality of Saint Francis de Sales in our mission is the Charism that gives identity to our Congregation and is its distinguishing mark**

Yours fraternally in Christ Jesus,



Fr. Jayaseelan Selvaraj msfs  
Provincial Superior