

MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

DIBRUGARH PROVINCE

MSFS Provincial House, SFS Campus, Likabali Road,
Silapathar (P.O) - 787059, Dhemaji (Dt.), Assam
Mob: +917086046455/+919436301324
Email: provincialdibrugarhmsfs@gmail.com



EMT/02 Circular – April 12, 2020

My dear Confreres,

I wish you all a blessings-filled Easter! May the Risen Lord strengthen us with his presence and fill us with the hope of a new way of living, which he has won for us through his passion, death and resurrection at this challenging time of Covid-19 pandemic!

Easter at Covid-19 times...

“Early on the first day of the week while it was still dark...” (Jn. 20:1). The Easter story begins in darkness, in a time of great fear, sorrow, and despair. The disciples were nowhere to be seen but were hidden away behind locked doors fearing for their lives. That description could very easily describe the world we have been living in for the last number of weeks as the covid-19 pandemic has taken hold. What once was familiar has become unfamiliar and we are now in so many ways cut off from our normal routine and way of living. Community and friends are isolated and kept apart, with doors closed to keep out an unseen enemy. Every day we search for good news and some sort of light upon the horizon.



The Easter story may begin in the darkness, but it ends in the light. When Jesus rose from the dead on that first Easter morning, the Risen Christ brought the light of hope into the darkness of despair. The stone was rolled away from the entrance to the tomb and the Risen Lord appeared to Mary.... Through closed doors, Jesus entered the place where the disciples were and said to them “peace be with you.” “Be not be afraid! Jesus is truly risen!” That’s the message announced by the angel at the Easter morning. And that is the message for us too, at this moment. By

his resurrection Jesus has overcome sin and death and thus opened the door of salvation for each one of us. Therefore, we can say that resurrection is both 'a promise given to us' and resurrection is 'our hope'.

It is a promise that, if we go the way of Jesus, if we live according to the teachings of Jesus, especially, his teaching on 'love' and imitate Jesus in fulfilling the plan of God by doing the will of God always in our lives, then God will raise each one of us to a glory like that of Jesus - to a life with God, which is our resurrection. That's why Jesus says: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will live even though he dies" (Jn. 11: 25-26). Yes dear friends, the resurrection of Jesus is thus the promise that God gives us that one day we will also be with God. And this hope gives us a meaning for our life, a reason to live, a cause to commit ourselves to in different ministries that we engage ourselves to. Even when we face the effects of this pandemic Coronavirus, when we are shattered at the face of our difficulties, trials and problems in life, the resurrection of Jesus tells us that these are not the end of the story of our lives. There is one more chapter - there is the resurrection; there is the new life with God, a life without problems, trials, temptations and difficulties, provided we live according to Jesus' ways. That will help us to go forward in our life with courage and strength. That will help us to tide over all our difficulties, failures, frustrations and disappointments that we may face in our personal lives, in our families, in our communities and in our world. You might have heard the story of a man whose hobby was growing roses. When he worked in his rose garden, he always whistled. It seemed to everyone that he was whistling much louder than was needed for his own enjoyment. One day a neighbour asked him why he did so; why he always whistled so loudly. The man then took the neighbour into his home to meet his wife. The woman was not only an invalid, but was completely blind as well. The man, you see, was whistling, not for his benefit, but rather for the benefit of his wife. He wanted his blind wife to know that he was nearby, and that she was not alone. This story is a wonderful illustration of the significance of Jesus' resurrection: Jesus through his resurrection tells us that he is nearby, that he is present with us, and that we are not left alone. And the experience of his presence will strengthen us in us in our daily life, giving us hope and a reason to live.

The Resurrection of Jesus urges on... The love of Christ urges us on (2 Cor. 5: 14)...

In John's version of the account of the empty tomb, we see that John, after Peter entered the tomb and saw the empty tomb and he believed. Now, for our time, the proof of Jesus' resurrection is not the empty tomb alone, but rather each one of us. We must witness through our lives that Jesus is risen, that he is present with us. We proclaim that Jesus is risen, when we live a life of love and joy. In Jesus we have become brothers and sisters and when we to love each other, we do proclaim that Jesus is risen. We also need to be joyful people. There is no reason to be sad, because Jesus is risen and that he is present with us with his graces, till the end of times. Thus we are called to be signs of Jesus resurrection in today's world, giving hope and meaning to people who are around us and to resurrect people through our lives. When we make ourselves consciously present to others, when we are sensitive and attentive to others, we resurrect them; we give them new life, just as Jesus gave it to you and me. Jesus' resurrection gives us hope, meaning and strength to live our Christian life. And we, in turn, through a genuine Christian life of faith, love and joy – through a life transformed by the Risen Christ – must give witness to Jesus' resurrection by giving hope, meaning and strength to others and help them to experience resurrection in their lives. Only then our celebration of Easter will be meaningful for us.

Pope Francis, on 27th March 2020, in his *Urbi et Orbi* blessing he said: "The storm (Covid19) exposes our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities... In this storm, the façade of those stereotypes with which we camouflaged our egos, always worrying about our image, has fallen away, uncovering once more that (blessed) common belonging, of which we cannot be deprived: our belonging as brothers and sisters... We need to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing. ...a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others."

In the context of the global spread of Covid-19, through my letters on 24th of March and 3rd of April 2020, I had instructed you to follow the instructions of both the respective Ecclesiastical and Civil Authorities regarding the precautions to be taken to curtail the global spread of the pandemic Covid-19. I had also exhorted you: "Let this time of 'social distancing' be a time of 'attaching oneself' to the Lord of our Life, and to our brothers and sisters in distress (24.03.20)...(As I had written you earlier), let this 'locked-down' period in our country, be an opportunity for us to 'attach ourselves' to the Lord of our Life and to the suffering people around us. We will be responding to the Lord himself in this challenging time, (if possible), if we can join with others/Govt. machinery to alleviate the suffering of the 'people in distress' in our own localities (03.04.20)..."

I am happy to note that many of you have responded to my call by conducting special 'Eucharistic Adorations' and some of you also intervening in the lives of the suffering people around, due to pandemic Coronavirus, by distributing dry ration and hygiene-promoting materials. At this juncture let me congratulate and thank Fr. Sunny Panthanazhivadakethil, the Associate Director of FAsCE India (Silapathar) for urging all of you through a letter to respond to the need of the time and now initiating also the relief work among the affected tea garden villages of Chabua area (of Dibrugarh) in collaboration with SFS Parish Chabua, the Local and the Provincial Administrations. Let me reiterate that if you really want to help the affected people around, but have no money for doing it, do let me know, we shall find together the needed financial resources.

"The love of Christ urges us on (2 Cor. 5:14). This love, seen in small and large gestures of hope and solidarity, is calling us to a new future and a new way of living. As people around the world face Easter without the possibility of physical communion, without the possibility of celebrating the Eucharist physically together, we have a time of slow down where we can reflect deeply on what "Body of Christ" means for each of us. In the darkness of this crisis, the light of Christ will shine. Jesus is truly risen! He will not die again. May Jesus rise for people around the world through our love! ..." (Cardinal Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle on 06.04.20)

Let us pray for the grace to find the deeper meaning of this challenge that is facing the whole of humanity and which is calling us to faith and to resurrection. May the Risen Lord fill our hearts with peace, courage and hope to overcome Covid-19 pandemic!

Re-scheduling of Dibrugarh Provincial Congress 2020

As I had already informed you through my letter on 03.04.2020, in the context of the whole country locked down till the 14th of April 2020 due to the pandemic COVID-19 and the arrival of it in the Northeast India, following the instructions of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and at the recommendation of the Steering Committee for D PC 2020 as well as with the unanimous consent of the Provincial Council, along with the approval of Rev. Fr. Superior General and his Council (Approval Letter dated on 01.04.2020), we have decided to postpone our Provincial Congress scheduled from April 14 - 17, 2020 to another earliest convenient date. In the course of time, after having assessed the emerging situation and in consultation with you and the respective responsible people, you will be informed about the new schedule for the Provincial Congress 2020. We regret the inconveniences caused! Thank you for your kind understanding!

Approval of the Budget Proposals of the Centres

As you are aware, as a newly established Province, it is imperative that we have a good and judicious fiscal management for the proper development and growth of our Province. In order to aid this process, I am happy to note that you all have submitted the Annual Budget Proposal for 2020-2021 on time, and I sincerely thank you dear confreres for collaborating with the Provincial Administration as well as for taking the troubles to prepare it for a good financial planning of our Center and Community in your own respective centres. Thanks to the painstaking work of the Finance Committee, headed by Rev. Fr. Santhosh Chavaranal, the Provincial Bursar of the erstwhile Northeast India Province, all the budget proposals are scrutinized and the Finance Committee had forwarded them

to the Provincial Administration for the follow up, with their recommendations. Accordingly the interim Provincial Council, which met on 11.03.2020, has studied them and approved them with their suggestions/remarks. Most of the centres might have already received the hard copy of these approval letters already. Others will receive soon by e-mail in pdf format due the 'lock down' situation in the country. Let me remind you that any expense that incurs outside the approved budget require an explicit permission from the Provincial. Please adhere to a strict following up of this approved budget sent to you, willingly, lovingly and without coercion so that we become 'responsible stewards' of our material resources.

The Inauguration and Blessing of the Multi-Facility Centre at SFS College, Aalo



The blessing and inauguration of the multi-facility centre at SFS College, Aalo was held on 17th March 2020. It was inaugurated by Shri. Tumke Bagra, Minister for Industries and Skill Development, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh and blessed by Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, Provincial of MSFS Dibrugarh Province. This special occasion also was graced by the presence of Ms. Swetika Sachan, IAS, DC of West Siang District and also Shri. Jummar Basar, SP of West Siang District. There were also many officers, fathers and other dignitaries present for the function. This newly constructed building includes Canteen, Fitness Centre, and also facilities for indoor games. SFS College expresses its profound sense of gratitude and appreciation to the Provincial Administration for their interest in getting this project completed. The College also expresses its gratitude to the Provincial Administration of the erstwhile Northeast India Province, headed by Rev. Fr. George Panthanmackal, for all the support given to this project. (Report by Fr. Vipin George, Principal SFS College, Aalo)

Hearty Congratulations to:

- **Most Rev. Joseph Aind, SDB, D.D**, the Bishop of Dibrugarh on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of his Episcopal Ordination on the 19th of March 2020
- **Rev. Fr. Jose Chirackal**, (of the clergy of the Diocese Tura) on his appointment as the Auxiliary Bishop of Tura, Meghalaya by His Holiness Pope Francis on Monday, 24th February, 2020
- **Rev. Fr. Sabu Francis Manasrayil**, the Provincial of MSFS Guwahati Province, on his appointment as the 'first' Chairman and Major Superior of the Formation Houses of both Guwahati and Dibrugarh Provinces that come under the jurisdiction of a Governing Body consisting of both the Provincial Councils, by Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our beloved Superior General, for a term of three years with effect from January 24, 2020.

- **Fr. Ajimon (John) Cherian** on his successful completion of his M.Th (Spiritual Theology) with distinction from St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, Bangalore with his Dissertation - Spiritual Direction, A Guide for Spiritual Journey in the Light of the Charisms of the Holy Spirit: A Biblical Psycho-Spiritual Approach
- **Bro. Albin Antony Ottackal** on his successful completion of his L.Ph (Islam and Sufism) from DharmaramVidyaKshetram, Bangalore with his Dissertation – Integration between God and Humans: A Philosophical Approach towards the Understanding of KHWAJA MOINUDDIN CHISHTI
- **Fr. Joy Velickakath, Local Superior and Community**, (Fr. Vipin George, Fr. Augustine Thundathil and Fr. Solomon Tirkey) for the implementation of the project and the well-arranged programme of the blessing and inauguration of the multi-facility centre at SFS College, Aalo, held on 17th March 2020
- **Bro. JamesK. Kachipoumaia and Bro. Albin Antony Ottackal** on their election to be Representatives of the Scholastics in the forthcoming Provincial Congress 2020 of Dibrugarh Province

Prayer Intention of the Superior General for the Month of April 2020

“That we remain faithful to our missionary charism and that many more confreres will be drawn by the Lord to go out of their native lands and make disciples in countries where Christ is not known and loved.”

New Provincial Curia of South East India Province

The Provincial Congress of South East India Province elected the following confreres to Provincial Curia: **Fr. C. Sebastianraj** - Admonitor cum PCIC for Mission, **Fr. A. Luckas** - PCIC for Education, **Fr. P. S. Joseph** - PCIC for Formation, **Fr. K. Joseph Xavier** - PCIC for SAIM and **Fr. Sahaya Wilson** – Provincial Bursar. On behalf of MSFS Dibrugarh Province, I congratulate **Rev. Fr. Ignaci Muthu**, the Provincial and his new Curia and I assure our collaboration and support.

Obituary

Fr. Daniel Alphonso MSFS (58), of Pune Province, died in a road accident on 15.03.2020.

Mr. Thole T.D (38), Brother-in-Law of Fr. Jacob T.H, died on 08.03.2020

Mr. Chacko Kanicheril (59), Uncle of Fr. Biju Kanicheril, died on 25.03.2020

Mrs. Salomie (45), Sister-in-law of Fr. Simon Thaikho, died on 30.03.2020

May they rest in peace!

My dear confreres, I wish you all once again the peace, joy, courage and hope of Easter!

Fraternally yours in the Risen Lord,



Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil MSFS
(Provincial, MSFS Dibrugarh Province)

TREADING THE PATH OF OUR PATRON SFS...

Our life is no longer ours but belongs to the one who gained it for us by his death. We should live no longer for ourselves but to him; not in ourselves, but in him; nor for ourselves but for him. (TLG, VII-8)