

MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

DIBRUGARH PROVINCE

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EMT/10 Circular – May 21, 2021

My dear Confreres,

I wish you all in advance a blessings-filled Pentecost! May the Risen Lord, through His Holy Spirit, strengthen us with His Gifts that we, as a Province Community, become bearers of the fruits of the Spirit and thus, may overcome this trying time of the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic with our unfailing faith and trust in the Lord!

Our response to the Second Wave of Covid-19 Pandemic



After the arrival of Covid-19 pandemic last year and the resultant ordeals and sufferings people went through, our life seems to have returned to normalcy with the regular activities being carried on. Suddenly we are now experiencing an unexpected increase in covid-19 infection that is becoming very critical all over India and the country is not prepared to deal with it adequately. This second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, with its new virulent variants seems to be more dangerous, fatal and frightening! In the last few weeks, we had been experiencing the pain of the loss of some of our MSFS confreres, Priests and Religious in our neighbourhood Parishes/Dioceses, Collaborators in our Missions, Friends, Benefactors, Relatives and even some of our dear ones at home. As I had written to you on the 6th of this month, we need to continue to take utmost care and preventive measures as we are exposed to multiple contacts, especially in our taking care of the people entrusted to our care. Once again, I urge earnestly every confrere and community to **follow the guidelines (SOPs) issued by both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities**, from time to time, for our life and ministry. Please **adopt a Covid-19 appropriate behaviour, restrict your movements and visits only to emergency, and take vaccine when possible**, for one's own safety and for the safety of others.

One of the effects of this second wave of Covid-19 pandemic with its alarming rate of infection and death is that a lot of fear, anxiety, uncertainty and confusion have gripped the people, including Priests and Religious. The Coronavirus has brought the whole world to its knees. No matter how advanced our Science and Technology is, we find that at this moment we are helpless. Now how do we respond with faith in the situation in which we find ourselves?

Positive Thinking and Actions: One important response is to think positively, creatively and constructively. These positive thoughts will express themselves in positive feelings and actions. These positive responses will not only improve the atmosphere in one's home/community, but will also go beyond

one's home/community to others. The way to do this is to start each day with a positive affirmation of oneself, others and the world. We need to keep telling ourselves that things will get better and that God is still in control. We continue to focus on the little things, no matter how small they are and thank God for everything. It is also an opportunity for us to update ourselves, learning a new language or a skill to be effective in our ministry. Or we can spend qualitative time with the members of our community by being at the service of one another.

Live the Present: Another response is to live one of the characteristics of the Salesian Spirituality, i.e., to live the present moment. It is a great challenge. We often have regrets about the past or are obsessed with the future. Consequently, we do not live in the present moment and it passes us by. We only have the present moment, the here and now, in which to respond to God. If we are unduly preoccupied with either the past or the future, we may miss how God is calling us to be with Him or one another in a particular moment.

Exercise... Work: In order for our minds to be fresh our bodies must also be fresh. So another response is to find time for regular and dedicated exercise. One does not need to have too much space for exercise. Depending on one's age and health, one can choose that exercise that suits one best. Or one can also spend qualitative time in doing some manual labour, so that our bodies, be relaxed and fresh.

Reconnect...Reach out: This is also a time to renew our old friendships, reach out to the needy within our own limited situations in our own small way, and to strengthen our relationships, especially with the members of the community by being helpful to them.

Anchor ourselves in God by growing in Faith: Above all, the ultimate response is to continue to have faith and to continue to believe that God is in control and that He will make a way for us. This can be expressed in our daily Prayer and Meditation that can also relieve our stress greatly and find meaning in our communion with God and with one another.

During this terrible time of great pandemic Pope Francis urges Catholics and Marian Shrines around the world to dedicate the month of May to a marathon prayer for an end to the Covid-19 pandemic, recalling the verse in the Book of Acts, 12:5, "The whole Church was fervently praying to God". Now, the Pope and the Church around the world are once again leading the way in imploring God for an end to the suffering which so many people are forced to bear. In the present grim situation, I would like to propose you to encourage our parishioners to have rosary and prayer in their own families for the respite of the Covid-19 pandemic in the world. Thank you, dear confreres, for responding also to the call of Cardinal Oswald Gracias, the President of CBCI, for observing Friday, May 7, 2021 as a Day of Prayer and Fasting for relief from Covid-19 pandemic!

Daily Eucharistic Adoration and Prayer for Protection from Covid-19

As a Province Community too, we shall join in the fervent prayer of the Church to God to put an end to this pandemic. Therefore, I would like to urge you dear confreres to continue with our daily morning Eucharistic adorations in the communities. I am pretty convinced of the fact that if we are protected till now, it is because of our continued fidelity to our Eucharistic/Risen Lord, who has promised us to be with us till the end of our times. So, we shall pray for an end to the pandemic, healing for those infected, comfort for those in mourning, courage and consolation for our frontline workers and success to the efforts of those involved in research and production of medicine and vaccines. We shall end the daily morning Eucharistic adoration with the following prayer, proposed by MSFS Southwest India Province, for the protection from the pandemic Covid-19:

Prayer for the Protection from the Pandemic Covid-19

O, Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Healer of the Sick and Comforter of the Distressed, extend your loving and divine hand to bless, touch and heal our brothers and sisters all over the world suffering from the pandemic covid-19. We surrender ourselves to your Holy Will and entrust the entire world to your loving care. We pray, God of Love and Compassion, that all who are affected by this virus and all who are in fear, anxiety and despair, may experience your healing touch through all the health-workers, doctors and nurses and all who reach out to them in this time of their suffering.

Be the comforter of the families who lost their beloved ones through this pandemic and give eternal rest to the departed. With firm faith and sure hope we trust in you, Lord God, as we pray in the words of the Psalmist: *Even though I walk through the darkest valley I will fear no evil, for you are with me.* Receive, O Lord, we pray, our humble supplication and in your great mercy spare us and the whole humanity from the pandemic covid-19. Amen! (Courtesy: MSFS SWI Province)

Prayer of Devotion in Honour of Servant of God, Fr. Peter Mary Mermier against Covid-19 Pandemic

As the youngest Province of the Congregation, we are entrusted with the mission to live the Charism of the Congregation in the context of MSFS Dibrugarh Province. Since the establishment of this province on the 24th of January, 2020, we do meet with different challenging situations and administrative hurdles, including Covid-19 pandemic and its resultant effects. We shall seek the intercession of our beloved Founder, Fr. Peter Mary Mermier, especially by saying the Prayer of Devotion in honour of him, to put an end to this pandemic Covid-19. As I had instructed earlier, particularly, after last year's annual province retreat, please continue to seek the intercession of our Founder, Servant of God, Fr Peter Mary Mermier, immediately after the daily Eucharistic Celebration, at this time for the relief from the pandemic Covid-19.

CONGREGATIONAL MATTERS

Year of Mission 2021 - 2022

Taking into account the Year of St. Joseph, the Year of Family, the Devotion to Holy Family, and the directive of the General Chapter XX to initiate more ministries directed to families, with the consent of the General Council, the Superior General has formally declared **the year 2021-2022 as Year of Mission in our Congregation** starting from Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021, and concluding on Divine Mercy Sunday, April 24, 2022.

Objectives of the Mission Year 2021 - 2022:

- Bring to the forefront the apostolate of Missions in the Congregation
- For the renewal of the individuals and communities so that we can function more effectively with credibility as agents of renewal
- To impart to our young Formees and Scholastics the correct orientation regarding the nature and purpose of being a member of a missionary congregation
- For the renewal and rejuvenation of our parishes through PMP (Parish Mission Preaching)
- Focused implementation of the directives of the General Chapter 2019 on MISSION
- To initiate ministries directed to families, to promote devotion to Holy Family, and to celebrate the Year of Family and Year of St. Joseph

The Opening of the Year of the Missions in the Province

I am sure, by this time you are all in receipt of the special newsletter (SG-AB2 21-54) from our beloved Superior General, Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS, (which was forwarded to you by email on the 19th of this month from the Provincial Office) regarding the celebration of the Year of Missions 2021-2022. Taking into consideration the present grim situation of Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to the prohibition of religious gatherings in all the States (of the geographical area of our Province), I would suggest that please have the opening of the Year of the Missions, as suggested by SG in the newsletter, now at every community level during the Holy Eucharist on Pentecost Sunday i.e., on 23rd May 2021. Once the situation improves, please have the announcement and opening of the same at parish level. I am also forwarding to you a message from Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the General Councillor for Mission, to the MSFS Dibrugarh Province, explaining the rationale and objectives of the celebration of the Year of Missions. This note will help everyone also for a meaningful opening of the Year of Missions at various levels on the coming Sunday. I would also request every Community Superior to send to the Provincial Office a brief report of the opening of the Year of Missions with photos/videos at the respective community level. Meanwhile all the Province

Forums could take up in their meetings and propose how they would like to celebrate the Year of the Missions and come out with an action plan for the Province to achieve the desired fruits.

Prayer Intention of the Superior General for June and July 2021

June: “For our own families and the families that we serve in our pastoral ministry, that they will be patient in their struggles and not become embittered by their hardship but receive God’s grace offered to them, we pray: R/ Lord graciously hear us!

July: “For fraternal unity and peace in our communities through the power of the Precious Blood of Jesus, that we may witness to the gospel values and ‘little virtues’ in our community life, we pray: R/Lord graciously hear us!

PROVINCE MATTERS

Annual Retreat 2021

We have two retreats available in the months of July and October 2021. The first retreat will be from July 5 to 10, 2021 at MSFS Study House which is organised by Guwahati Province. The second retreat will be from October 04 to 09, 2021 in *Christashram* (Pastoral Centre of the Diocese of Dibrugarh), Mancotta, Dibrugarh. Fr Devasia Vazhayil SDB will be the preacher for both retreats. The participation in the annual retreat is obligatory (GD Art. 80). Therefore, please opt for one of the retreats and register your name in advance with the provincial secretary as soon as possible.

Formation Forum Meeting

On the 11th of May 2021 from 9.00 to 11:10 p.m. a meeting of the Core Team of the Formation Forum of the Dibrugarh Province was held availing the Google-Meet platform. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate and plan each stage of the formation and to formulate a plan for an effective on-going formation. All the nine members were present for the same. Fr. Francis Poovelil, the convenor and secretary of the forum, presided over the meeting and Fr. Anthony Baruah assumed the responsibility as the secretary to take down the minutes. Fr. Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, the provincial, in his orientation talk laid emphasis on the consultative nature of this body which facilitates the administration to take appropriate and timely decisions. The minutes of the earlier meeting of the vocation promoters was read out. Fr. Benjamin Ngade Nakho apprised all the members of the initiatives taken by the vocation promoters despite the constraints caused by the present pandemic. In different stages of formation, the graded formation syllabus is being implemented. As regards on-going formation the need for personal touch with all the confreres and listening to them were emphasized as the need of the hour. In addition, there is also the need of theological update program and courses that promote personal growth and maturity. It was perceived that the Christian understanding of Truth has to permeate more and more the Fransalian Formation program at all stages. (Report by Fr. Tomson Aerathedathu, DP PCIC for Formation)

Education Forum Meeting

Education Forum of the Dibrugarh Province came together for the First Online Meeting of all its members on 14th May, 2021 at 10 a.m., presided and moderated by Rev.Fr. George Vadakkeperincherimannil, the Councilor in charge of Education. This first Online meeting of the forum was a follow up of the online meeting of the core team of the Dibrugarh Province Education Forum held on 6th May, which had prepared a tentative agenda for the education forum meeting. After the initial prayer of invocation by Rev. Fr. Jacob Raising, one of the core committee members, Rev. Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil the provincial in his welcome address quoting an African adage “*If you want to walk quickly, walk alone; but if you want to walk far, walk together*” exhorted the members of the education forum to ‘walk together both in words and action’ so as to bring an integral growth of the educational ministry of the whole province. A key note address by Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil, general councilor for education followed it, in which he enlightened the members on the theme, ‘MSFS Schools and MSFS Educators today.’ After reminding the members of the vision of Fr. Peter Mary Mermier which considered education as something that would promote evangelization, Fr. Jacob spoke at length about the Mermerian spirit in education and the indicators of Mermerian spirit and vision among MSFS Educators.

The Business Session of the Forum Meeting began with a short sharing of the existential situation of each of the educational institution by respective members, after which various items of the agenda was taken up for discussions. There were 16 members including the provincial for the meeting, and after a constructive discussion on the topics that were prepared for the meeting, the provincial in his concluding remark exhorted the members to cooperate in the execution of all the programs discussed. The meeting came to an end with Rev. Fr. Jose Karipadathu reading out a draft report of the meeting. Rev. Fr. Augustine Thundathil, one of the core committee members proposed the vote of thanks. (Report by Fr. George V., DP PCIC for Education with input from Fr. Jose K. Convenor & Secretary, DP EF)

SAIM Forum Meeting

The first meeting of SAIM Core Team of Dibrugarh Province SAIM Forum was held virtually on 18th May, 2021 from 9.00 to 10.45 a.m. All the core team members were present except one who could not join due to some technical snag. The meeting began with the prayer and welcome address by Fr. Milkus Tirkey, the Councillor for SAIM, Dibrugarh Province. The meeting was moderated by Fr. Jose Chettaniyil, the Convenor and Secretary of the Forum. Fr. Emmanuel Mappilaparambil, the Provincial in his orientation talk explained the role of the Forum in the New MSFS Governance of the Congregation and exhorted them to be at the service of the Provincial Administration being a consultative body that studies, evaluates, makes proposals and implements once the decisions are made. He also requested them to evaluate the implementation of the SAIM orientations of the General Chapter 2019 and the Provincial Congress 2020 in the Province. Fr. Provincial also exhorted them to plan out for a SAIM Forum meeting in which they are to make proposals for a meaningful celebration of the Year of Missions, which would be opened on the coming Pentecost Sunday. It was followed by the sharing of the members especially of their involvement in the Social Apostolate and Innovative Ministries of the Province. Fr. Sunny P., the Director of the Social Work and the Mission Development Office (MDO) in the Province shared the difficulties faced in registering the proposed Society for the social work (FIID India) and to execute the social services because of the delay in registering the Society as an NGO. At the same time he expressed the possibilities of rendering support to the people who are affected by the pandemic, finance being routed through FAsCE India. Fr. Carlus Barowa, the Director of Fransalian Youth Mission and Coordinator of the Fransalian Associates in the Province, stated that he has begun initiating both FYM and FA in the different parishes, but now held up due to the arrival of the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic in the Northeast. Other members too shared their thoughts and made some clarifications. After the discussions it was decided to hold the proposed SAIM Forum Meeting at the earliest with prepared agenda. Fr. Jose Chettaniyil proposed the vote of thanks and the meeting came to an end with a concluding prayer said by Fr. Joy Velickakathu. (Report prepared at Provincial Office with inputs from Fr. Jose Chettaniyil, Convenor & Secretary, DP SAIM F)

Fransalian Youth Convention at Yingkiong



Fransalian Youth Mission (FYM), Dibrugarh Province organized a three-day Youth Convention in Divine Mercy Parish Yingkiong, Arunachal Pradesh from 11th to 13th April 2021. The program was animated by its Director, Fr Carlos Barowa MSFS, Asst. Director, Fr Luke Tanti MSFS, Fr. K. Wanlambore (Asst. Priest Yingkiong) and Sr Justina Sangma SCC from Aalo Parish. There were forty-seven youth from different villages from the parish, who participated in the convention. The programme consisted of various animation talks given on several relevant topics such as Growth in Faith Life, Importance of Sacraments, Youth Leadership and Challenges, etc. During the three days they were also animated through the lively participation of the Holy Eucharist and the praying of Rosary. The programme was made lively and dynamic by conducting group games and participating in the action songs. A cultural competition was conducted on the last day of the programme and the winners were awarded with prizes. Congratulations to Divine Mercy Parish

Yingkiong and to the Fransalian Youth Mission for their initiatives and commitment! (Report prepared at Provincial Office with input from Divine Mercy Parish Yingkiong)

Approval of the Budget Proposals of the Centres for FY 2021-2022

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 (except one centre) have submitted the Annual Budget Proposal for 2021-2022 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 Fr. Peter Parankimalil, the Provincial Bursar, 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 Provincial Council, which met on 24th and 29th of April 2021, has studied them and approved them with their suggestions/remarks/clarifications. Some centres might have already received the approval letters already and others are on the way. 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.

Financial Matters

As a follow up to the orientations of the Provincial Congress 2020, the Provincial Council has decided the following:

- **Personal and Holiday Allowances:** Monthly Personal Allowance is fixed as Rupees 4000/- (four thousand only) and Annual Holiday Allowance including ticket fare is fixed as Rupees 15000/- (fifteen thousand only) with effect from April 2021.
- **Province Funds:** The amount to be contributed for the Priest Welfare Fund and Healthcare Fund is raised from Rupees 5000/- (five thousand only) to 10000/- (ten thousand only) with effect from this FY 2021-2022
- **Either or Survivor Account:** As a follow up to the action plan of Provincial Congress 2020, the process of opening personal account (either or Survivor), which will be under audit, is to be initiated by every confrere as soon as possible. Please do contact the Provincial Bursar for the specifics to be followed.

Thanks/Congratulations to...

- ✓ Congratulations to **Fr. Jacob Mattathil** for successfully defending his Licentiate Thesis ("Discernment Process for the Contemporary Youth Amidst the Chaos of Digital World: An Attempt to Develop a Spirituality for the Youth of Today.") and completing his M.Th Studies with distinction from St. Peter's Pontifical Institute of Theology, Bangalore.
- ✓ **Fr. George Parampukattil, Fr. Jose Mundoly** and **Fr. Kurian Pattimackel**, who have completed their Golden Jubilee Year of their Religious Profession on 04.05.2021!
- ✓ **Fr. Tomy Olickamalayil** and **Fr. Samuel Patton**, who will complete their Silver Jubilee Year of their Religious Profession on 07.06.2021!
- ✓ **Fr. Sudhir John Kullu**, who has completed his Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee celebration on 18.05.2021!
- ✓ **Fr. Jaimon Thadathil**, the Provincial Secretary for getting the website of the Province ready to be launched and the ID Cards of the members of the Province ready to be distributed!
- ✓ **To all our confreres**, who have followed the proposed schedule of the transfer and have taken charge in their respective places of appointments!

Transfers and Appointments

- ✓ **Fr. Jacob Mattathil:** Local Bursar of SFS College Campus Community, on the Staff of SFS College and as the Hostel Warden of Mermier Hostel, Aalo, with effect from 10th May 2021
- ✓ **Fr. Rojin Pullattuvaliyaparambil:** Vice Principal of SFS School, Hostel Warden of De Sales Hostel and designated to be appointed as Asst. Priest, Holy Rosary Parish, Basar, with effect from 20th June 2021

Promotion of our Seminarians

Formation is a sacred duty of a Province/Congregation for the future of our Congregation. In the present-day situation, it is really a challenging task, especially for our confreres who are engaged in the ministry of Formation. We would like to thank all our Formators for their sincere commitment and total availability in accompanying our Formees at different stages of their formation. Normally during the month of May, the evaluation reports of the Postulants/Novices/Scholastics by their respective Formators, in view of their promotion to their next stage of formation/renewal of vows/conferring of Ministry are taken up in the Provincial Council. The following promotions are approved by the Provincial Administration:

Promotion to Fourth Year Theology and Diaconate

Chithung Horam Joel and (2) Pakon Narzary

Promotion to Third Year Theology, Renewal of Vows and Ministry of Acolyte

Kachiipomai James and (2) Ngaoveinii Hiinii Bosco

Promotion to Second Year Theology, Renewal of Vows and Ministry of Lector

Sangma Sanjuel, (2) Korungin Maring John, (3) Ottackal Albin Antony, and (4) Souvei Dominic

Promotion to First Year Theology and Renewal of Vows

Nongrum David

Promotion to Regency and Renewal of Vows

Minj Ateet, (2) Thekkekkutt Bibin, and (3) Wanphrangngi Soshang,

Promotion to Third Year Philosophy and Renewal of Vows

Miasalhou Zhavirietuo James, (2) Shimray Michael H. and (3) Toppo Jibrus

Promotion to Second Year Philosophy and Renewal of Vows

Marbaniang Biljakson (SCC Nagaon) and (2) Tigga Bimal (MSC Barackpore/Kolkata)

Promotion to First Profession and First Year of Philosophy

Sangma Chesrang, (2) Tada Michael (Badak) (3) Marak Wilbert and (4) Reivei Abraham

Promotion to Novitiate

Abhishek Soreng (2) Ashish Tom Cyriac Kuzhimattam (3) G. Bosco Suanlamthang (4) James Kerketta (5) Jerome B Marak (6) Junason Indwar, (7) Jwngshar Narzary (8) Nowash Khalkho (9) Philimon Hasda (10) Prasann Khess (11) Pynshaibor Wartde and (12) Sengsrang Sangma

Obituary

- † **Mrs. Annie Joseph**, Niece of Fr. George Parampukattil, died on 08.04.2021
- † **Mr. K.J Thomas**, the Father of Fr Jobin Kallakulam, died on 23.04.2021
- † **Mrs. Beena Kunjumon Valiyaplackil** (45), Cousin of Fr. Emmanuel M., died on 30.04.2021
- † **Mrs. Elizabeth** (71), the Paternal Aunt of Fr. Vintu Avittapallil, died on 07.05.2021
- † **Mr. Joy** (71), Uncle of Fr. Francis Poovelil, died on 08.05.2021

- † **Fr. Rijo Francis Mecheril MSFS** (34) of Nagpur Province, died on 12.05.2021
- † **Mr. Thomas** (68), Uncle of Fr. Libin Vattekkattukandam, died on 15.05.2021
- † **Sr. Leela Kulamkuthiyil SAS** (70), First Cousin of Fr. Sebastian Kuzhuppil, died on 16.05.2021
- † **Fr. Joseph Edacherry Pauvath MSFS** (93) of Visakhapatnam Province and Uncle of Fr. John Edacherry Pauvath, died on 17.05.2021
- † **Mrs. Mariamma Puthenpurackal** (99), the Maternal Grandmother of Fr. Jobins Vengathadathil, died on 19.05.2021



Rev. Fr Rijo Francis Mecheril MSFS



Rev. Fr. Joseph Edacherry Pauvath MSFS

May they rest in peace!

My dear confreres, I wish you all once again the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit!

Live Jesus!

Fraternally yours in Christ Jesus,

Fr Emmanuel Mappilaparambil MSFS
(Provincial, MSFS Dibrugarh Province)

TREADING THE PATH OF OUR PATRON SFS...

Bees detest all artificial smells; and the delights of the Holy Spirit are incompatible with the artificial delights of the world. (IDL, Part IV, Chapter 14)