



SG-AB-09

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## **SUPERIOR GENERAL TO ALL THE MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES**

My dear Confreres:

I greet you in the joy of the Lord who has called each one of us to live the joy of being MSFS. The words pronounced by Pope Francis **'wake up the world'** shall continue **to wake us up** to live joyfully our consecrated life for mission. We will make every effort to evaluate our Year of Consecrated Life for Mission 2015 on the basis of the decisions we have taken in the Local Community level, Province level, and Congregational level as a sign of commitment to our Consecrated life.

### **1. RADIATE JOY AND BEAUTY OF LIVING THE GOSPEL**

Be reminded that consecrated life will not flourish as a result of our brilliant vocation/formation programs and action plans. The young people should find us attractive and happy. The apostolic effectiveness of consecrated life does not depend on the efficiency of its methods but on the eloquence of our lives that radiate joy and beauty of living the Gospel and following Christ to the full (Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis to Consecrated people). Do others see me living the beauty of the Gospel and following Christ to the full? Do others see in me the spirit of Father Mermier and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales?

### **2. DO WE KNOW WHO WE ARE APART FROM OUR ROLES?**

Our roles often become our trap. We over identify with image, with what we think we are, with what we would like to be, with our reputation, with our educational qualifications and positions, with the sweet and high words of appreciation showered upon us, and with who others expect we should be. We need to get out of our fixation to our ROLES AND POSITIONS and over identified IMAGE. We need to get back to the substance and essence. God is there. Can I be a joyful religious when I am stripped off all my roles? Truth is not acquired and meaning is not created but revealed and discovered when we become humble and poor. A humble person is an honest person. 'The only honest response to life is a humble one'. This is 'Jesus Hermeneutic' of how to see and what to emphasize in life.

### 3. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STAGES AND STATES

To understand our consecrated life in communities, I would like to use a helpful distinction between **stages and states** made by Ken Wilber, an American writer and philosopher. Our **stage** of human development has to do with our location in time, our culture, our education, our level of intellectual maturity, and our thought patterns. We have all grown through different **stages** of our formation, our education, ministries, lived experiences, and roles. Our **stage** of development is something external and it is our outer awareness of who and what we are.

Our **state** of consciousness is about our inner awakening or inner aliveness. How much do I live connected to self, others, and God? How much do I live in communion with God? Have I moved beyond reacting to situations and people? Positive answers to these questions determine my **state**.

### 4. WE NEED BOTH STAGE AND STATE IN COMMUNITY LIFE

Applying this principle to our community life, many of us are stronger in one area than the other. For example, I can be a high level thinker, quite intelligent and smart in theology, scripture, philosophy, psychology, spirituality, pastoral ministry, preaching, history, computer, communications, education, and administration. This is **high stage**. But if I use it all from a perspective of individualism and arrogance about my qualification, skills and information, I am in a **low state** because it is all about me. **Or** I can be quite unified, enlightened, and composed within and with others and consequently in a **high state** of consciousness but lacking in knowledge and information and community relationship. This is **low stage**.

In religious communities, we have members with **high stages** of intellectual exposure but low **state** of communion with God and with others. We have very smart people but without humility and love. We have members with **high states** of consciousness but **low stages** of capability and productivity. We also have compassionate and loving people but less engaged and with prejudicial attitudes.

Our goal is to be on both **high stage** and **high state**. But it is rare. However, we need to appreciate confreres for their **high stages** and not hate them for their **low state**. We also need to enjoy confreres for their **high state** but do not hate them for their **low stage**. This will help us understand and respect people as they are and move on to **higher stage and higher state**.

## 5. 'LAUDATO SI' ('PRAISE BE TO YOU')

**Pope Francis**, in his new encyclical, opens our doors and hearts to fullness of creation and our responsibilities toward it. The uniqueness of this encyclical is that it is not addressed to the Bishops or any particular group or people of good will but it is addressed to every person on the planet.

- Pope does not expect all to accept his views because of his teaching authority but he says: 'In this encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home'.
- He makes it clear that the Church does not presume 'to settle scientific questions or replace politics' but exercises her task of 'guiding discussions toward the deeper realities of issues and crises and to offer prudent and timely advice'.
- The encyclical underscores that human person is not an aberration or threat to the environment but the center of visible creation. It is from that center that any good can come should we choose to be good stewards.

I invite us all to study this encyclical and inform our conscience on the moral dimension of human relationship with the environment.

## 6. DO YOU STAY BEFORE THE TABERNACLE EVERY DAY?

The question that **Pope Francis** asked in his meditation during the third World Retreat for Priests on June 12, 2015 at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, Rome:

"And I will ask you a question, but don't answer out loud. When you are alone, when you are tired, when you are overwhelmed by temptations, when some of you fall in love, are you able to go to the Tabernacle and sing it to the Lord? Do not answer, but don't forget the worst moments, when you have even fought with the Lord, or when you were unfaithful to the Lord, don't be afraid, approach the Tabernacle and sing it to him again. In all those moments say to the Lord I am rubbish, look what I did, see what I suffer, see what I'm going through and say to him, but you had consideration, and let the tears fall. That will be a moment of great holiness even if you are in mortal sin, because he forgives you there because it is a dialogue of love. And then you go to the poor priest confessor to have your chimney cleaned, isn't that right? But to be able to sing to the Lord who never forgets, since the day he said to you, you aren't blind men, you are friends, you said I was your friend; what a beautiful gesture, Lord".

**'The Tabernacle can be boring and dry; it's not a television (internet/smart phone), but love is there. Stay in front of the Lord in the tabernacle and let him look at you and let the Holy Spirit pray for you from within.** That is the dialogue of love, without words. To evangelize implies this love, it implies being enamoured and letting oneself fall in love'. How much time do I spend every day before the tabernacle?

**7. Rev. Fr. CHINNAPA REDDY, THE NEW PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR**

After having consulted the confreres of Visakhapatnam Province and with the consent of the General Council, I am glad to appoint Fr. Pentareddy Chinnapa Reddy as the Provincial Superior of the Province with effect from July 03, 2015 for a term of three years.

**8. Rev. Fr. SIMON PAICATT**

On behalf of the General Administration, I sincerely thank Fr. Simon for his leadership, commitment, and able guidance to the growth, expansion, and dynamism of the Province and Confreres during the past 6 years.

**9. THANK YOU DEAR FR. MOREL**

I am delighted, during the course of the MSFS Year of Consecrated Life for Mission 2015 that coincides with the Jubilee of **Fr. Claude Morel** (80 years), to offer him my gratitude, and express appreciation of so many readers in and beyond the MSFS fold, for the **Salesian Capsules and Mission tit-bits** that he has regularly been offering, over the years through the "*Lettre aux Amis*" circulated by the MSFS Franco-Swiss Province. His presentation stems from his deep insight into the life and writings of St. Francis de Sales and concern for the life and struggles of our Missionaries serving in 25 countries – especially in the frontier missions of India and Africa. Besides, providing information, the tenor of his communication has served to open hearts to Salesian Inspiration and to offer avenues of solidarity with and support for the missions. Thank you Fr. Morel!

**10. MERMIER HERITAGE WEEK**

**Fr. Noel Rebello**, General Secretary for Formation, - in collaboration with the Inter Province Team of Animators from the Indian Provinces, is organizing **Mermier Heritage Week** at the Inter Province Level in Visakhapatnam. I request all the PIF and Animators of the Provinces to make use of the Heritage Week for a midterm evaluation of the Mission Year and for on-going formation and animation of our missionary life, charism and mission of the Congregation extended to all the Provinces.

**11. MSFS CODE OF CONDUCT: NORMS FOR DEALING WITH CASES INVOLVING OFFENCES AGAINST VOWS BY MSFS CONFRERES OF INDIAN PROVINCES**

With the consent of the General Council, I have approved the Norms for dealing with cases of offences against vows by confreres of Indian Provinces prepared by the Provincials of India Forum in consultation with Fr. K. Ignacimuthu MSFS, our Legal Consultant. The Code comes into effect with

the suggested clarifications from July 03, 2015. I request all the Provincials of India to ensure that the document is signed by confreres and signed copy is preserved in the Province archives. I also invite all Major Superiors in other Countries to have similar NORMS and CODE, taking into consideration the context of the country. The objective of the Norms is safety of those entrusted to our pastoral care and transparency and accountability to our Consecrated Life.

## **12. REVISED STATUTES OF SUVIDYA COLLEGE APPROVED**

With the consent of the General Council, the revised Statutes of Suvidya College is approved for implementation. I thank the Suvidya team that worked on the STATUTES that comes into effect, with the suggested modifications, from July 25, 2015

## **13. MISSION-SPIRITUALITY CENTER IN ANNECY**

At the Congregational level, MSFS Mission Spirituality Center is envisaged in Annecy (close to the tombs of St. Francis de Sales and of Father Peter Mermier) as a base for ongoing formation in the mission and Salesian spirituality of the Congregation. This Congregational venture is in consultation and collaboration with the Franco – Swiss Province for animation of confreres in the history of the Congregation, spirituality of the Patron, and the spirit of the Founder.

## **14. LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE, ARUSHA**

**Fr. Jayseelan Rajesh MSFS** from Nagpur Province is appointed as Assistant Administrator of LCI and on the Formation and Teaching staff with effect from February 1, 2015.

**Fr. Manalel Devasia MSFS** from Northeast India Province is appointed on the Formation and Teaching staff with special focus on animating the Formators Training Programs and Retreat Programs at LCI with effect from June 1, 2015.

**Fr. Perumanoor Tomychan MSFS** from East Africa Province is appointed as the Administrator of LCI and is on the Formation and Teaching staff with effect from September 1, 2015.

**Fr. Thazhathukunnel Mathew MSFS** from East Africa Province, as he continues to be the Director of LCI, is also appointed as the Local Superior of the Local Community of LCI Arusha with effect from September 1, 2015.

## **15. WORDS OF APPRECAITON TO Fr. THOMAS KOCHUPARAMPIL**

I sincerely thank Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil, one of the pioneering missionaries to the continent of Africa, who was serving LCI Arusha from its very inception. As the Administrator and Superior of LCI, Fr. Thomas

applied his heart and mind to bring LCI to its present level of growth and development. As he is taking up his new appointment in the Province as Rector of the Theologate, I gratefully wish him all the best.

## **16. NEW APPOINTMENTS IN THE GENERALATE COMMUNITY**

**Fr. Augustine Mangatt** is appointed the Local Superior of the MSFS Local Community at Via del Mascherino, 46/2 in Rome with effect from July 01, 2015. His residence and General Bursar's Office will be in the MSFS Vatican House. Please contact him for your accommodation and stay while you are in Rome

**Fr. Varghese Chettupuzhakaren** is relieved of his responsibility as the Local Superior of the Community in Rome at the completion of his second term of office. I sincerely thank Fr. Varghese for being the Local Superior, Administrator, Hospitality Manager, contact person for Offices in Vatican, and other manifold services at the request of the community members. Your self-less service and exemplary religious spirit will always be remembered and cherished by the Community and the entire Congregation. Sincere thanks to the Northeast India Provincial for the services of Fr Varghese to the Congregation!

**Fr. Jose Cherianthara** is appointed - the new House Superior, Administrator, Office Secretary to the Superior General, and Chaplain to the VDT faith community - to the Generalate Community at Via delle Testugini 21, with effect from July 01, 2015. Hearty welcome and best wishes for the new ministry!

**Fr. Ebin Christopher** is relieved of his responsibilities in the Generalate as the Administrator, Office Secretary, and Chaplain at the completion of his second term. On behalf of the Generalate community, I thank Fr. Ebin for his outstanding service to the Community and to me personally. His commitment hard work and expertise in the administration, maintenance, and in secretarial work will always be valued by all. I wish Fr. Ebin all the best in the remaining part of his studies at the Gregorian University. Special thanks to the Southeast India Provincial for placing the services of Fr. Ebin to the Congregation

## **17. VISIT OF THE ASSISTANT GENERAL**

**Fr. Thumma Mariadas**, the Assistant General, will be visiting **Southeast India Province (October 07 – 15, 2015) and Southwest Indian Province (November 03 – November 11, 2015)**. The objectives of the visit of ASG are: evaluation, animation, and monitoring of the implementation of action

plan of the Provincial Congress, the orientations of the General Curia and Provincial Curia Meeting after the visitation of the Superior General, and the decisions of the Year of Consecrated Life for Mission.

## **18. VISITATION OF SUPERIOR GENERAL**

Visitation of the Superior General to the Southwest Province is scheduled from September 04 – 12 and again from October 17 – November 07, 2015

Visitation to Pune Province is scheduled from September 17 – October 12, 2015

Visitation to Suvidya College is scheduled from November 08 – November 10, 2015

## **19. MISSION SECRETARIAT**

**Fr. Agnelo Fernandes**, the General Secretary for Mission will be offering a Pastoral Animation Program for the confreres of the Northeast India Province at the request of the Provincial. Mission Secretary will be visiting 2 missions from each Province in consultation with the Provincial and PCIC for Mission.

**Follow up Retreat to Congregational retreat 2014 – 2015** is in the plan and is proposed to be presented during the second half of six year period after General Chapter 2013. Triennial Mandatory Meeting (TMM) scheduled in LCI Arusha, in May 2016 will finalize on the retreat.

## **20. EDUCATION SECRETARIAT**

Education Secretariat plans to bring out a Directory of all MSFS Schools/Colleges. The General Council proposes 2 areas for consideration:

**How can we present our educational apostolate in an MSFS way?**

**What unique contribution we can offer to the society/Church through our Apostolate of Education in the context of Fr. Mermier's philosophy of education?**

## **21. FORMATION SECRETARIAT**

**With the consent of the General Council, I gladly declare Year 2016 as Year for Formation in our Congregation.** We will continue to make efforts to make our formation program relevant, mission oriented, and salesian in agreement with the directives of the General Chapter 2013. We plan to organize ON-GOING FORMATION Program for all our confreres in the Year for Formation.

## **22. SOCIAL APOSTOLATE AND INNOVATIVE MINISTRIES**

The upcoming activities of the Secretariat are: presentation of a website for the social forum, establishing a MSFS National Social Forum/Justice & Peace Commission in India, publishing a Directory of all our Institutions of Social Apostolate, finalizing the Mission-Vision Plan of all Local Communities, and publishing the new STATUS of the Congregation.

## **23. STEWARDSHIP**

General Bursar, with the help of the Provincials, Provincial Bursars and Stewardship Forum, is in the process of developing **Financial Accountability System for Transparency (FAST)** with pro forma for different account headings: **Local Community Category, School/Institution Category, Pastoral Category, Formation Category, and Social Institution Category.**

## **24. WELCOME TO NEWLY PROFESSED MEMBERS**

With great joy and gratitude to the Lord, I welcome **our 65 newly professed confreres from different Provinces** to Religious Life in the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales during this year of Consecrated Life for Mission.

## **25. MSFS HOUSE, SECUNDERABAD**

We now have a permanent base for the General Secretaries and Secretariat in India named as **MSFS House**. Congratulations to **Fr. George Parampukattil, the Local Superior, and our Confreres and friends in Hyderabad** for your successful transaction!

## **26. WUG MEETING AT LA ROCHE, FRANCE**

The objective of the three day meeting of the Units of WUG was to study, to reflect, to discern and to articulate the challenges and possibilities of different MSFS units in Europe, Brazil, and USA.

Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz inspired and motivated the participants on the theme, **“Our Founder, Father Mermier, a Renovator of the Pastoral Mission in Savoy; therefore, to be renovators is even part of the very nature of our MSFS Congregation”**. A copy of the same will be made available to you.

The meeting touched upon different areas like Vision-Mission Plan of short term and long-term nature, Vocation promotion, Visibility and Fransalian identity, Implanting of Fransalian Charism, Insistence on religious life and religious values, Spirituality Centers, Community-based ministry, Global mission, Accountability, Transparency, management and financial mobility, Inter-provincial collaboration, Formation for team-work, Liturgy and Sacramental Theology, Ongoing formation, Expansion of Fransalian Presence to new countries, To be part of the call of the Church for New Evangelization, Salesian Spirituality Center in Annecy, Innovative



ministries, Formation of a preaching-team and inter-provincial sharing of human resources, Adequate cultural and linguistic preparation before undertaking foreign mission, Sharing our mission through communication-media, and Networking with other Salesian families.

### **27. RETREAT FOR THE GENERAL CURIA IN ROME**

General Curia Members were blessed to have a retreat on Consecrated Life directed by Fr. John Martin of the Work of the Church from June 02 – 06, 2015. A great time for prayer, quietness, and self-evaluation and time for deepening our love for religious life and the Church

### **28. JUBILEE CELEBRATION IN ST. PETER'S BASILICA**

The MSFS Community of Rome celebrated the Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee of Fr. Francis Poovelil, Fr. Thumma Mariadas and I in the adoration chapel inside Basilica on June 07, 2015. The Eucharistic celebration and fellowship meal attended by MSFS confreres, friends, and benefactors remained the highlight of the celebration.

### **29. JOY OF THE GOSPEL: BIBLE DIARY 2016**

Our efforts to publish the Bible Diary every year is a long term project of disseminating Salesian spirituality. I congratulate and thank the IIS Bangalore Team for the early preparation of the Diary for 2016. I request all of us to collaborate with our charism of disseminating Salesian spirituality through this common venture. BD2016 is ready for distribution.

### **30. PRAYERFUL TRIBUTE TO BRO. BONIFACE LOPEZ (81) WHO HAS GONE TO HIS ETERNAL REWARD ON JUNE 15, 2015**

#### **CONCLUSION**

The reports of my visitation to Franco-Swiss Province, Germany – Austria – and Holland (GAH) and German –speaking Switzerland (GSS) will be sent to you as supplement to SG-AB-09. I thank you for your patient reading and let us be united in prayer and in our common vision for the Congregation.

Yours Fraternally in Christ,



Father Abraham Vettuvellil, MSFS  
Superior General, Rome

**LIVE JESUS!**

Dated July 01, 2015

**“THERE IS NO BETTER WAY OF GROWING  
TOWARD PERFECTION IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE  
THAN TO B ALWAYS STARTING OVER AGAIN AND  
NEVER THINKING THAT WE HAVE DONE ENOUGH”**

**St. Francis de Sales**