

# MSFS

CONGREGATION OF THE MISSIONARIES OF  
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES



*I Chose You:*  
(JOHN 15:16)

MSFS,  
LIVE YOUR  
CHARISM

SUPERIOR GENERAL TO ALL THE MEMBERS  
OF THE CONGREGATION

*Benedictus Deus!*

With this circular, in this Year of St. Francis de Sales  
and on this feast day of our heavenly patron,  
with the consent of the General Council,  
I officially convoke **XXI Ordinary General Chapter (OGC)**  
of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales  
following Article 193 of the MSFS constitutions.

Theme:

*"...I CHOSE YOU" (John 15:16): MSFS, LIVE YOUR CHARISM*

Date: February 01 – 14, 2025

The venue: STELLA MARIS, Visakhapatnam, India

JANUARY 24, 2023 | SG AB2 11

We arrived at the formulation of the theme after an intense process of discernment, prayer, and sharing, keeping in mind the suggestions that emerged from the Extraordinary General Chapter, Provincials' Meeting with General Curia, and after listening to the reality of the congregation from the canonical visitation, animation, and the journey of our consecrated life in the present time. Having spent six years in an in-depth study of our charism and *'Waking up to our Basics'*, we renew our resolve *to live our charism*.

"General Chapter is the supreme legislative and teaching authority in the Congregation" (Art. 91). Our celebration of the General Chapter is a key moment to preserve the fidelity of the Congregation to its spiritual heritage (Cf. Can. 631/1) to collegially read the signs of the times and discern the working of the Holy Spirit.

The objective is to awaken the original freshness of our charism and to generate fidelity to consecrated life and mission. We will focus on the prophetic dimension of our CHARISM, putting special emphasis on the community and mission dimensions of it.

Almost all religious congregations have a charism. The charism of a religious order is a particular gift or spirituality (gifted by the Founder/Foundress to the members) that they present to those they serve and to the Church. Each charism is unique and it serves as an identifying characteristic or identity of the congregation.

What is our MSFS Charism?

***"Our charism is to continue the mission of Christ and His Church by living the spirit and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales in a religious community as missionaries, lived and envisioned by our Founder".***

We are chosen. We are consecrated as religious. Our religious life should not be eclipsed by our priestly ordination, clericalism, and priestly ministry in parishes/institutions. Our MSFS vocation is essentially a call to be a religious (mystic) and a missionary (prophet) living in a community. We are called to be a synodal MSFS in today's world. It is said: *If you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far go together*. We want to go far as missionaries. We want to go together as a community. We want to live our charism for the mission of the Church. We will be witnesses to Christ only when we live our charism. We can still go farther in our missionary journey as Father Mermier wants us to.

# **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR XXI GENERAL CHAPTER**

(February 01 – 14, 2025)

Most Holy Trinity,

Father – Son – and Holy Spirit,

We thank you for all the blessings showered on our Congregation.

We thank you for our Charism gifted to us  
through our Founder Father Peter Mermier

Our hearts are filled with hope

as we prepare for our XXI General Chapter.

Our desire is to live our charism in our communities  
for the mission of the church

Strengthen our resolve to be in communion with you,  
with one another, and with our broken world.

Open our eyes,

To discern the deeper meaning of our charism to which you call us.

Open our ears,

To hear the voices of those who suffer on the peripheries of society.

Open our hearts

To discover our joy in loving

Open our lips

To proclaim your love and mercy to all people

Send your Holy Spirit

To all the participants of the 21st General Chapter and  
guide them in their deliberations and  
implementation of decisions.

We offer this prayer to you, the One and Triune God,  
through the intercession of Mary, the mother of Compassion,  
St. Francis de Sales, and Fr. Peter Mermier, Amen

(1 Our Father, 1 Hail Mary, and 1 Glory be)

(Kindly pray this prayer in all our communities  
for a fruitful 21st General Chapter)



With the consent of the General Council, I declare this year from April 16, 2023 (Divine Mercy Sunday) through March 31, 2024 (Easter Sunday) as the

## **YEAR OF FRANSALIAN YOUTH**

for the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

Fr. J. Stephen, General Secretary for Social Apostolates and Innovative Ministries will work with Youth Coordinators of all the Provinces to celebrate the Year with various animation programs for the Youth.

*Whenever a young person falls, in some sense all humanity falls. Yet it is also true that when a young person rises, it is as if the whole world rises as well. Young people, what great potential you have in your hands! What great strength you have in your hearts! (From the message of Pope Francis for the XXXVI World Youth Day).*

Keeping in mind the Pope's Apostolic Exhortation **Christus Vivit** and the motto of the World Youth Day, "Mary arose and went with haste" (Lk 1:39),

THE YEAR OF FRANSALIAN YOUTH aims to provide all the Fransalian Youth with a universal Church experience, fostering a personal encounter with Jesus Christ in and through the spirit and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and the missionary zeal of Father Mermier.

It is an intense moment of evangelization for the Fransalians to enable the youth to realize their potential in their hands and strength in their hearts to promote peace, unity, and fraternity.

# **YEAR OF FRANSALIAN YOUTH**

April 16, 2023 -  
March 31, 2024

# DECISIONS, NEWS, AND EVENTS

**1. Fr. PATRICK JAYARAJ ANTONY** is appointed the Provincial of Southeast India Province for a term of three years with effect from January 24, 2023. Congratulations and prayerful wishes to your ministry of leadership to the Province.

**2. Fr. K. IGNACIMUTHU**  
On behalf of the Congregation, I express sentiments of gratitude and appreciation to Fr. Ignacimuthu for serving the Province as Provincial Superior during the past 6 years. Thank you!

**3. Fr. THOMAS KALARIPARAMBIL** is appointed the Chairman of the Provincials of India Forum for a term of three years with immediate effect from January 10, 2023, with the understanding that the term automatically expires at the end of his term as Provincial.

**4. Fr. TOMSON AERATHEDATHU** is appointed the Major Superior and Chairman of the Governing Body of Formation Houses of Guwahati and Dibrugarh Provinces with effect from January 24, 2023.

**5. Fr. PHILIP THOMAS** is appointed the PRESIDENT, RECTOR, and LOCAL SUPERIOR of Suvidya College for a second term of three years with effect from January 24, 2023.

## **6. De SALES AND MERMIER HERITAGE RETREAT**

**(DSM – RETREAT)** is a guided retreat program focused on the heritage, legacy, and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and Father Mermier. We will hold this 8 Day-retreat every year in Annecy starting from May 10 – 18, 2023. We will have two programs (SPA and DSM Heritage Retreat) in Annecy every year. Thanks to the Franco-Swiss Province!

**7. Fr. SAMUEL DEVARAJ** is appointed Director of the SPA and DSM-HERITAGE RETREAT for a term of three years with effect from January 24, 2023

**8. Fr. JOHN HEPUNI** is appointed Assistant Director of SPA and DSM – HERITAGE RETREAT for a term of three years with effect from January 24, 2023.

**9. Fr. THOMAS KULANDAISAMY** is appointed POSTULATOR for the cause of Father Mermier with effect from January 24, 2023.

**10. Fr. SAMUEL DEVARAJ** is appointed VICE-POSTULATOR for the cause of Father Mermier with effect from January 24, 2023.

## 11. MSFS COMMUNITY IN SPAIN

At the invitation of Most Rev. Atilano Rodriguez, the bishop of Sigüenza – Guadalajara, Spain, we will be opening a new community with a parish in the diocese. The new mission will be under the care of the Pune Province.

## 12. MSFS COMMUNITY IN TURIN, ITALY

At the invitation of the Archbishop of Torino, we will be opening a new community with a parish in the Archdiocese. Torino is an important diocese for the MSFS as SFS is part of its history as the capital of Savoy. It is the birthplace of St. John Bosco and a new Salesian family joins the diocese. The new mission will be under the care of Southeast India Province.

## 13. Fr. BENEDICT A. J. R. and Fr. ELDIN BARNADU S.

After the due procedures, Fr. Benedict and Fr. Eldin are now fully detached from Southeast India Province and affiliated to Brazil Province with rights and obligations in the Province of Brazil with effect from January 01, 2023.

## 14. Fr. YVES CARRON

We are sorry that Fr. Yves Carron has decided to leave us. We understand the reasons leading to his decision. He was so important to the Congregation and Franco-Swiss Province. We acknowledge his contributions to the Province and MSFS Congregation especially working for the Cause of the Founder and Spirituality Program Ancecy. We respect his will and wish him all the best in

his future career. It is always difficult to replace a gifted confrere like Fr. Carron. On behalf of the entire Congregation, the General Administration, and my behalf, I thank and appreciate Fr. Carron for his years of service with commitment. We assure him of our prayers.

## 15. A COMPENDIUM OF SALESIAN SPIRITUALITY

*LOVE, BE – ALL and END – ALL: A Compendium of Salesian Spirituality* is a monumental work published on the auspicious occasion of the 400th death anniversary of St. Francis de Sales. Authored by 40 scholars and edited by Fr. Dr. ANTONY KOLENCHERRY, MSFS, the book offers us an abundance of literature from SFS' writings. Congratulations to Fr. KOLENCHERRY and the team!

## 16. SEPARATION FROM THE CONGREGATION

Fr. Darline Joseph MARIANATHAN and Fr. Navin GEORGE cease to be members of the Congregation. We thank and wish them God's blessings in their new undertakings.



# **LOVE IS EVERYTHING (TOTUM AMORIS EST)**


*Test your desires through the exercise of discernment (SFS)*

*By experience, Francis had come to realize that desire is at the root of all true spiritual life, but also the cause of its debasement. Drawing abundantly from the spiritual tradition that had preceded him, he recognized the importance of constantly testing desire through the exercise of discernment. He found the ultimate criterion for this assessment in love. In that final conference in Lyon, on the feast of Saint Stephen, two days before his death, he had said: "It is love that grants perfection to our works. I will tell you much more. **Take a person who suffers martyrdom for God with an ounce of love; that person merits much since he could give nothing greater than his own life. Yet another person who has only suffered a scratch with two ounces of love will have much more merit because it is charity and love that give value to our works**".*

I wish you a happy Feast of our heavenly Patron!

St. Francis de Sales, pray for us!

Live JESUS!



**Father Abraham VETTUVELIL, MSFS  
Superior General**



HAPPY FEAST OF OUR HEAVENLY PATRON  
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES