

Vol 2

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I  
WANT

# MISSIONS



MISSIONARY INSPIRATIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FRANSALIANS



**WE ARE HARD-PRESSED ON EVERY SIDE, BUT NOT CRUSHED;  
PERPLEXED, BUT NOT IN DESPAIR; PERSECUTED, BUT NOT  
ABANDONED; STRUCK DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED. 2 COR 4:8-9.**

Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales – Global Mission Bulletin



***Dear Respected Reader,***

As you hold this magazine, as you read these lines, it is an honour for the entire Fransalian Family.

Maybe you are a member of the MSFS Family. Maybe you are not. Maybe you are a Fransalian Associate, maybe you are not. It does not matter. We wish you the blessings of God today and the days to come.

Thanks for the support and encouragement

***The Mission Magazine Team***

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*“We pray that all Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales be renewed in our missionary call and consecrated life to be at the service of a COVID-stricken and wounded world in this Year of Missions.”*





# Editorial

**Why is this page so dark?**

**Why the Editor has no name and no photo?**

**Why this Editorial has very few words?**

*Perhaps these are the questions that come to your mind as you read this page.*

During this Covid 19 challenge, we have come across many persons in **Personal Protective Equipment Kit** – (PPE Kit). We see them in the hospitals, at the social services, at funeral homes etc. We do not know who they are. But we care for what they are to us. Amidst us, there are many who exercise their silent presence like St. Joseph (ref. Patris Corde by Pope Francis)

I invite you to say small prayer for those who make sacrifices for us in this time of challenge.

..... Amen.

*Let us move forward, and one day we will reach the other end of the tunnel.*

**REMEMBER:**

Even the strongest hurricane vanishes after some hours or days.

Even the incessant rain stops one day.

Now, do you see the white dots towards the end of this page?

**There is hope.**

Soon, we will have a pandemic free world. I wish you good time with the brighter pages of this MISSION MAGAZINE.

In this **Year of Missions**, I entrust you and me to the Holy Will of God.

*The Editor  
God bless this venture!  
God bless every missionary!*



## **Our beloved Superior General speaks:**

No one can imagine what a post-COVID-19 Church with missionary life will look like. The end is not seen in our sight. Different countries in the world resort to even stricter lockdowns to get the pandemic under control. We are at a time marked by sufferings and challenges created by the pandemic. The world's demographics are changing, pushing toward more deaths than births. We are challenged to use every possible and available means to ensure that the closure of church buildings does not mean that the Church no longer exists. Our missionary journey should not stop when the world needs us most. We shall continue in the light of the words of Prophet Isaiah "Here am I, send me" (6:8). This is the time to stimulate our missionary conversion as we celebrate the "Year of Missions" in our Congregation.

Pope Francis uses an image from the Gospel to teach us what is the mission that God entrusts to us in the current world crisis. "Like the disciples in the Gospel, we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying 'We are perishing' (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this".

The call to missions, during the pandemic, is an invitation to step out of our world for the love of God and neighbor. This is a time for sharing, serving, and intercessory prayer. We find ourselves only when we give ourselves to others. Jesus fully accomplished his mission in the sacrifice of the cross when he gave himself to us. Jesus is the Father's missionary. He makes us missionary

disciples and sends us on a mission to the world and his people.

Like Jesus, we have been sent to seek and save those who are perishing. As missionaries, we cannot sit at a safe distance more concerned about our needs and comforts. The Church exists for mission. Since his election, Pope Francis calls the church to go out: "I want people to go out! I want the Church to go out to the street. ... The parishes, the schools, the institutions, exist to go out! If they don't go out, they become NGOs and the Church can't be an NGO"



The Year of Missions is not a mere program or event to be implemented or performed by sheer force of will. It is a free and conscious response to God's call to each one of us as Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. We go out of ourselves as Christ makes the Church go out of herself. Our primary task is to move from a maintenance culture to a missionary culture and to overcome any self-referential tendency. The Holy Spirit pushes us and carries us to the missions.

The Year of Missions is another way of responding to the Call of General Chapter 2019: "MSFS, WAKE UP TO THE BASICS." May the 'Year of Missions' send us to be at the service of our wounded and broken brothers and sisters!

**Good wishes to MSFS Global Mission Bulletin! Live JESUS!**

**Father Abraham VETTUVELIL, MSFS  
Superior General**

# Our Homage to the Covid Victims

To the thousands who lost their lives.

Among them are also our family members, relatives and friends  
and above all our fellow priests and religious.



Pain presses us hard,  
Hope pushes us forward,  
Eternal life will be your reward,  
We also journey with you homeward.

**When we see you vanishing from our sight, it pains us,  
But when we see you shining for all, it brightens us.**



**Eternal Rest, grant unto them O Lord,  
May your Perpetual Light shine upon them!**

# Inspirations

## from Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz MSFS

### for the Year of Missions

### Devotion to the Holy Family

*Excerpts from the letter of Rev. Fr. Emile MAYORAZ MSFS addressed to Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvelil our Superior General*

“... In view of your next meetings, I would like to send you one of my proposals. I think that the Lord is particularly waiting from us the MSFS for a deep devotion to the Holy Family, to Jesus as the Love of God incarnated, given to us; to the Holy Mary, through whom the Love of God is given to humanity; to the very humble holy Joseph, so that the incarnation of the Love of God could be actualized. All is grace. There is only the Love. Once again, I assure you of my fraternal affection and my prayer” (Fr. Emile MAYORAZ MSFS).



Fr. Emile Mayoraz was in the leadership of our Congregation for 24 years. It was during these years MSFS experienced the highest rate of growth and missionary expansion. On March 1, 2021, Fr. Emile Mayoraz turned 93 years. Even at this age, he holds the Fransalian Family close to his heart. In his letter, he expresses his wish that we have a deeper devotion to the Holy Family.

# OUR HOLY FOUNDER

Our

Inspiration for the





# Year of Missions

## Our Holy Founder is our Inspiration and Role Model

**Servant of God Father Peter Marie Mermier** was born on August 28, 1790 at Vouray in the parish of Chaumont en Genevois, in Savoy. The French Revolution (1787 – 1799) had badly affected the Church in Savoy and many priests left the country while a few went in hiding. Peter's parents, who were fervent Christians, risked their lives and property by welcoming the priests. Between the age of four and ten Peter had the rare privilege of assisting at the Mass celebrated secretly in the house. The faith and courage of his mother and of those daring priests motivated him to make a decisive choice for the Lord.

The revolutionaries had closed Churches and schools. So, Peter Mermier had his primary education by his own mother. Peace returned to Savoy in 1800. He did his secondary school studies as a boarder in Melan. In 1807 he was received at the major Seminary of Chambéry. He was fervent at prayer, a hard worker and with thoughtful regard for his fellow students. He was ordained priest on 21 March 1813 at the age of twenty-three and a half. His first appointment was at Magland as Assistant Parish Priest to Canon Desjacques. As a young priest he was a tireless worker. He taught the little ones by day and continued his theological studies by night. After three years he was asked to teach at the college of Melan and be Prefect of Discipline. The Arch Bishop of Chambéry appointed him Parish Priest

*Fr. Peter Marie Mermier was an austere priest of unbounded zeal.*

*As regards education Fr. Mermier opines that one has to be a mother to the pupil by one's tenderness and a father by one's prudence.*

of Le Chaterlard in 1819, at the age of thirty.

Fr. Peter Marie Mermier was an austere priest of unbounded zeal. But most of the people were indifferent to Catholic Faith and practices due to the influence of Jansenism, Gallicanism and French Revolution. With a view to enliven the people in true faith he contacted Joseph-Marie Favre who gave missions in the diocese of Chambéry with great success. They met in 1821 and it was very significant for Fr. Mermier as he fell in love with the apostolate of Parish Mission. In the same year they, with the help of a few diocesan priests, dedicated themselves exclusively for this task. They went from parish to parish staying from 4 to 6 weeks in each parish. They prayed, preached and motivated the people to build up their faith. It was a wonderful opportunity for solid religious instruction and reconciliation.

Mgr. de Thiollez, Bishop of Annecy, appointed him spiritual director at the major Seminary in 1823. But in 1826 the Bishop permitted him to dedicate himself entirely to the mission. Gradually a small group of missionaries were formed. In the meantime, Fr. Peter Marie Mermier sensed the irreplaceable role of the parish missions, the necessity of a religious Congregation of Missioners and the meaning of the patronage of St. Francis de Sales.

Peter Joseph Rey became the new Bishop of

Anney in 1832. He allowed the missionaries, at that time six in all, to move to a house in La Roche in June 1834. On September 29, 1836 Bishop Rey gave provisional approval for their rule and they were known as Missionaries of Anney. They set up a motherhouse in Anney at a place called La Feuillette on August 8, 1837. It became a house of prayer and study. It was the house where the young religious received their formation in the apostolic and Salesian life. The civil approval to the new religious society from the Duke of Savoy came on October 15, 1838. It stated that the Missionaries were approved under the title of St. Francis de Sales. On October 24, 1838 Bishop Rey issued an official document giving canonical approval to the Congregation founded by Father Peter Mermier known as the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

Fr. Peter Marie Mermier founded the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales for parish mission, foreign mission and education of the youth. His missionary zeal impelled him to ask the Holy Father for a mission abroad and accept a vast mission territory in India when the Congregation was in its infancy with just eleven professed members. As regards education he opines that one has to be a mother to the pupil by one's tenderness and a father by one's prudence. He accepted the management of the college of Avian in 1856 and the college of Melan in 1857. In Chavanod he came into contact with Claudine Echernier who wanted to live a humble recollected life devoted to the apostolate of the poor in 1837. This resulted

in the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod for the education of the needy girls. They had to work in the poorest and lowliest circles in the country.

*Between 1828 and 1857 Fr. Mermier himself conducted 90 missions.*

Between 1828 and 1857 Fr. Mermier himself conducted ninety missions. He considered sermon as the chief means of proclaiming the word of God. He adopted carefully prepared simple preaching. He spoke with faith and conviction using a fatherly tone of voice marked with a kindly understanding of sinners like St. Francis de Sales. He guided the missionaries to live a life of pleasing and kindly charity in their apostolic ministry and daily relationship. He considered devotion to Our Lady of Seven Sorrows to be an eminent Salesian devotion.

In spite of his old age Fr. Mermier took over the Parish of Pougny as priest-in-charge on 26 June 1857. Even in his old age he retained a lively and curious mind.

His last years were a time of purification and edification. He fell seriously sick in Pougny and was taken to La Feuillette. His eye-sight and thinking capacity weakened. As he was a little better he took up a pilgrimage to Our Lady of La Salette in July 1859. He suffered a fierce attack on June 6, 1860 and became fully blind. Meanwhile the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars

approved the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales as a congregation with simple vows.

On 10 August 1862 Fr. Peter Marie Mermier had a fall, which caused a double fracture of his right leg. He left for his heavenly abode on 30 September 1862.

*Fr. Mermier considered sermon as the chief means of proclaiming the Word of God. He adopted carefully prepared simple preaching. He spoke with faith and conviction using a fatherly tone of voice marked with a kindly understanding of sinners like St. Francis de Sales.*

# THE QUALITIES REQUIRED OF A MISSIONARY TODAY:

## Inspirations from St. Francis de Sales

Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS

**B**ased on the life and teachings of St. Francis de Sales, the author presents, in a series of articles, various qualities needed for a missionary. **In this issue, he begins with HUMILITY.**

To be a missionary is a privileged vocation. It is a call within the call to religious life and priesthood. It gives the picture of some one who is always active, ever on the move, at the same time someone always submissive. A Missionary is someone who stands in the middle. He or she is not the beginning of the mission, nor the end of the mission. Does that sound strange? In fact, that is the reality. He or she is someone who is sent to be part of a great MISSION. It signifies that he is accountable to the one who has sent him and also to those whom he is sent. Once he has accepted this reality, i.e. the nature of his call that he is sent by someone to someone else, he will be ready to accomplish his mission. This dual accountability is sometimes so much

demanding.

A **Missionary** after the example of St. Francis de Sales: it should be the dream and goal of every Fransalian. The very title every confrere bears after

his name demands it of him. The title *Missionary of St. Francis de Sales*. When someone is sent to a mission, he must always have in mind the fact that he is an intermediary. He is between God and the people. He is between his congregation the people whom

he serves. This awareness should enable him to cultivate certain qualities which would, in turn, make him an effective missionary.

This seventeenth - century missionary and visionary is still the outstanding model for a Fransalian. What makes him special even today, after about 425 years? Has not the Church found any new saint to inspire the new generation missionaries? The main reason why St. Francis de Sales is unique in the field of mission or



evangelization is that he possessed certain qualities extraordinarily, compared to his contemporaries. These qualities of him have inspired very many people to become great missionaries and saints in the Church.

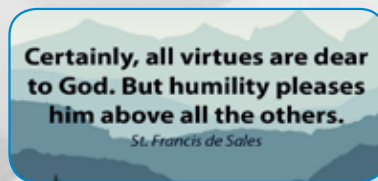
## Humility

Among all the qualities that he possessed, the first and foremost would be humility. If the Chablais mission was a success, it was due to his humility. The Chablais experience was the most trying one of his life. He could choose to abandon the mission, (in fact, he was persuaded many times by his father and also by his close friends who saw that there were no signs of any conversions in the initial period). According to Pope Francis, Jesus' way was of humility. Every missionary, every shepherd is to follow this example of Jesus. If not, "he is a climber in a cassock." Francis de Sales faced the highest forms of humiliation during his mission in Chablais. He was chased away from the streets. Some would even haul curses and abuses at him. They even called him a sorcerer. Nevertheless, he endured all types of humiliation for the sake of the mission. He embraced humility because according to him, "Humility drives away Satan and keeps the graces and the gifts of the Holy Spirit safe within

us" (IDL III. Ch 3). Besides, among all other moral virtues, humility is the precious virtue which was lived by all the saints particularly, the 'King of Saints' and His Mother. Perhaps this is the reason, he writes prodigiously about the virtue of humility in the *Introduction*.



One of the challenges the missionaries face today is this lack of humility. It is a big challenge to everyone who is sent to a mission. A stark reality is that one merely feels superior to those whom one is sent (an exception may be missionaries from the so called third world countries to the first world countries). This feeling is certainly against the Salesian concept of the spirit of humility. Francis de Sales had this great challenge before him. He was not sent to a foreign country, nor was he to learn a foreign language to preach the mission. He was sent to a people of his own culture as if to fulfil the words of Jesus; he was not honoured among his own people.



A missionary is sent to be at the service of the people whom he is sent. He is not sent to exploit them, he is not sent to look down upon them, nor is he sent to engage in the mission with a superiority complex to content himself to feel that he is much better than them in all the ways. This attitude will be the beginning of the failure of any mission. Perhaps from his part he

might feel himself satisfied because people are submissive to him and he has the command over the people. But it does not go in tune with the Gospel values. Only Jesus' preaching was authoritative, he taught with authority but his life was submissive: submissive to the mockeries and scorns of the people, submissive to persecution and finally, death on the cross.

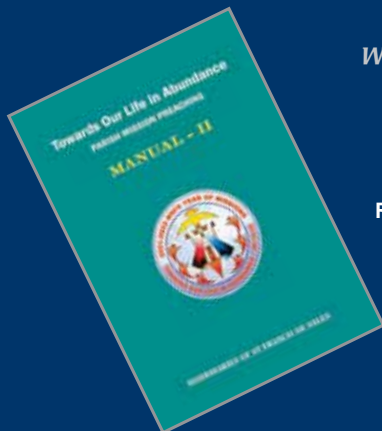
At this point, the words of Pope Benedict XV would be fitting for further evaluation of our missionary activities today. "Like his model, the Lord Jesus, the good missionary burns with charity, and he numbers even the most abandoned unbelievers among God's children, redeemed like everyone else with the ransom of the divine blood. Their lowly difference does not exasperate him; their immorality does not dishearten him. His bearing toward them is neither scornful nor fastidious; his treatment of them is neither harsh nor rough.

Instead, he makes use of all the arts of Christian kindness to attract them to himself, so that he may eventually lead them into the arms of Christ, into the embrace of the Good Shepherd" (*Maximum illud.* no. 28). Although these beautiful words are a century old, they still sound relevant to our times. It is a time to evaluate our style of missionary activity in the respective areas where Fransalians are engaged in various missionary activities.

To be sent is an act of humility, to be at the service of others is an act of humility. To feel rejected too is an act of humility. Humility was the way of life for Christ and all his apostles and saints. It was humility, the virtue most loved and cherished by St. Francis de Sales, our Patron. Humility drives away Satan and keeps the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit safe within us" (IDL III. Ch 4). A missionary can win souls only by being humble and being humiliated for the sake of the Gospel.

**Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

*James 4:10*



*We are very glad to present to you the Parish Mission Preaching Manual 2*

## **Towards our Life in Abundance**

**Our sincere thanks and appreciation to Rev. Fr. Agnelo Fernandes MSFS and all the PMP team for their initiatives and contributions.**

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desalesmermier@gmail.com**



## Oh My Priest ... My Chosen one...

Oh, Priest of Christ! Be aware  
of the noblest task entrusted  
to you here on earth.



But ye are ...

A Royal  
Priesthood

1 Peter 2:9



## Oh Priest!

Think! How fortunate you are. Your call is a priceless gift obtained in exchange for the blood of Jesus. Your responsibilities are great. Your obligation to lead a life of holiness is greater than that of an ordinary layperson. You are specially chosen as a servant of God. A small scratch of sin in you will be more displeasing in the sight of God than great wounds of evil in the life of an ordinary person.

The king is not bothered about the stain on the dress of his horseman. But if the garment of his prince, princess or queen is stained, he would never tolerate it.

It is the same way in which God would respond to the sins of his chosen ones. The garment is the grace of God given to us all at the baptism. This garment for a priest is to be adorned with precious stones of love and compassion. Passion for the souls should be the delightful fragrance emanating from the garment. God would be more tolerant with the ordinary laypersons rather than the priests who are to be holy and who have taken upon themselves the obligation to lead others to holiness.

Let us listen to St. Dionysius.

The priests in the Old Testament offered animals as sacrifices. At times God was not pleased with their way of life and ministry even though they were offering only animals for the expiation of the sins. Some of those priests were punished in fire, and others were devoured by the earth. In such a case, think about the greatness of the Holy Mass that you offer every day. You are not offering animals. You are offering the body and blood of your creator and master.



Let every priest ask:

**Why am I a priest?  
Why am I anointed?**

# Unfolding the LUMINOUS MYSTERIES in Preaching Ministry *Fr. Austin Joy MSFS*

Holy Rosary of our Blessed Mother is the “Compendium of the Gospel” which focuses on the life of Christ more deeply. Luminous/ Mystery of light were added to the rosary on October 16, 2002, by then Holy Father and now St. John Paul II. He explained the fittingness of these mysteries of light in the Apostolic Letter “*Rosarium Virginis Mariae*”. All teachings of Christ are for life and *life in its fullness (Jn10:10)*. Therefore, in the light of these mysteries, I would like to share some insights which we can grab for our preaching ministry. As we Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales have opened the year of mission it is fitting that we reflect on the foundational Charism of our Congregation and efficacy now. Unfolding the **luminous mysteries** in preaching ministry will be a cross check to realize who we really

are as missionaries.

## Baptism of The Lord

In the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism we come across this acclamation “you call those who have been baptized to announce the Good news of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.” Preaching the Gospel is not the monopoly of a chosen few but it is a mandate laid on everyone by the virtue of Baptism who shares in the common priesthood of Christ. Our MSFS Constitutions give us a clear picture of the same. “We deepen our baptismal incorporation into Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through







our religious consecration. **Moreover, we commit ourselves to fulfill more radically the mandate to proclaim the Gospel** (MSFS Constitutions #19). Besides, the mystery of Baptism is a call to be aware of who we really are. “I am the Child of God”, the experience of Jesus at Jordan during his baptism is ours too. “This is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Mt 3:17). Being aware of my foundation and responsibility as child of God is a must in the ministry of proclamation. Lacking this awareness can flush us out of the mandate laid on us.

### **The Wedding at Cana**

It is call for us to do “Whatever He tells you”. Jesus performed his first

miracle. He changed water into wine. Water symbolizes **Humanity** and Wine symbolizes **Divinity**. The whole of the miracle is a sign of Divinity merging with humanity. We as Priests/ Deacons say this prayer quietly before raising the chalice in offertory during our celebration of Holy Mass. “By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.” When divinity of Jesus enters into mortality of our being we are led into eternity. This happens when the Word enters into a person where one become a changed person.

In the ministry of proclamation, it is important to do “What HE tells” and not what others tell. Today many have desire and passion to preach but are afraid of comments, remarks, being bullied, mocked etc. we become prisoner of others’ words and not of God’s Word and as a result many back up in this ministry. To battle this out we need to answer a question, Which Spirit is leading me- Human Spirit or Holy Spirit? “United with Christ and





LED BY HIS SPIRIT we continue the mission of Jesus who proclaimed His Father's unconditional love for all" (MSFS Constitutions #19).

### **Proclamation of Kingdom of God**

Jesus went about preaching the kingdom of God passionately and courageously. He also performed extraordinary wonders among them and many believed and followed him. Let us recall those powerful words when we were ordained Deacons- when the book of the Gospels was presented to us ***"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are. BELIEVE what you read, TEACH what you believe and PRACTICE what you teach."*** Let us also call to mind the promise made during our Ordinations to Priesthood when we were questioned by the ordaining minister- ***"Do you resolve to exercise***

***the ministry of the word worthily and wisely, preaching the Gospel and teaching the Catholic faith?"*** for which we said "I DO".

Today there is a lethargic and complacent spirit gripping us. Many worldly allurements do distract us from our real focus. Truth is diluted and many sugarcoated preaching which supplies to our head and not to one's heart. Preachers become more pleasers. Our prophetic call, which we choose as a theme for our respective Provincial and General Chapters are remaining idle. Prophets are made puppets through power and threats from various sources and many more. Why such things do happen? "Because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold"(Mt-24:12). It is the need of the hour to rekindle the Holy Spirit within

us. Let us not shun the Gifts of the Holy Spirit given to each one of us by laying on of hands as word of God instructs us **“Do not neglect the gift that is in you,** which was given to you through prophecy with laying on of hands by the council of elders”(1Timothy 4:14).

### **A Very Personal Note**

*In my early priesthood I had a strong passion and desire to preach and launched into this ministry relying on my own talents and strength. I was a failure. It was with much disappointment and almost wanting to give up this mission I went to attend a retreat to Sehion Retreat Centre, Attappady, Kerala, India. There I met a powerful priest in the person of Rev. Fr. Xavier Khan Vattayil. I went to him for counseling; there I discerned my call to preach for Priests. One thing which struck me deep inside my being is his final message as I was leaving his office after counseling, as he said “Fr. Austin you can choose whatever you want in your priestly ministry as you wish but without Holy Spirit you will be utter failure.” To confirm this message, I got the Word of God from Mark 16:20*

*“They went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.” With this conviction I coined my ministry in this way “Do your best and leave the rest to God”. The results were amazing. Having preached thirty six (36) retreats for priests and twenty(20) retreats for religious sisters and many retreats for different groups of people in my seven years of priesthood, I am convinced that humanity is THIRSTY FOR WORD. We need more prophetic proclaimers of the Word. Therefore, it is a call to be convinced to convince the world through HIS WORD. Dear reader, I have shared this personal note as a testimony as to what God can do in human life. Unworthy as I am, it is not my intention to present myself as a great preacher.*

### **Transfiguration**

*“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to my childish ways” (1Cor 13:11). As our body goes through the process of change as we grow;*





likewise, the preacher of Word goes through change in his/her preaching style, content, sense of reflections etc. as days and years roll by. In the proclamation ministry the Word first pierces the proclaimer and then his/her listeners. Therefore it is highly recommended besides the anecdotes, stories, scientific facts etc. to use more Word of God, incidents and stories from Bible, personal testimonies of life which is more powerful and creates lasting impact. "Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb4:12). Sword would mean the power of God. Therefore, when preacher prepares his/her content with Word of God, he/she is empowered by it to empower others with convincing soul stirring proclamations.

A transformed/changed person is not easily accepted in his/her circle. It is a real struggle and suffering. **When the Word comes in, the world moves out.** World accepted Saul but it did not accept Paul. Therefore, the process of one's transformation/transfiguration is a constant struggle that the proclaimer of the Word goes through. It is an invitation of God **'to grow through what you go through'**. In other words, anointing and suffering are two sides of the same coin, one cannot be without the other.

### **Institution of Eucharist**

St. John Mary Vianney said "Priest is known by the way he celebrates the Eucharist". We the sons of the Doctor of the Church St. Francis De Sales already have a culture in our congregation for half an hour adoration which has its origin from SFS himself who said "Half an hour Adoration each day is essential

except when you are busy. Then a full hour is needed.” We are consecrated to consecrate, sanctified to sanctify the world by the virtue of our priesthood. Preacher of the Word brings alive Jesus by his/her pious participation and reverential celebration of the Holy Eucharist. He/she leads Adoration to encounter living Christ in the Eucharist, while priests do deliverance prayers and give priestly blessings and anoint the participants. By this we institute Eucharist in the heart of the faithful by the virtue of common and ministerial priesthood. These precious moments harvest many souls for Christ through signs and miraculous healings and deliverances, for it is Jesus who said in Jn 14:12 “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.”

### **CONCLUSION**

How can I unfold these mysteries of light in my life as a Preacher of the Word?

# To recall the mandate laid on me to proclaim Christ by the virtue of Baptism and to be aware that I am Child of God.  
- **BAPTISM.**

# To Do whatever He tells and not to be carried away by cynical and sarcastic remarks and comments. Divinity in Humanity- **WEDDING AT CANA.**

# To believe what I read, teach what I believe and practice what I teach. To be convinced to convince the world by His Word. - **PROCLAMATION OF KINGDOM OF GOD.**

# To allow the Word to reshape, and renew us. Changed to Change-  
**TRANSFIGURATION**

# To institute Eucharist in the heart of everyone who listens to me. Consecrated to consecrate, sanctified to sanctify- **INSTITUTION OF THE EUCHARIST**

Thus, I am able to unfold these ministries by my life with the grace of God and become light to the world as Jesus wanted me to be. It is also dire need of the hour that we pray for each other and support one another as the pandemic Covid 19 is sweeping the world. Many Priests have become victims and martyrs of covid due to various reasons and pastoral concerns. Many religious sisters and lay brethren have lost lives and their beloved ones and are at deep grief. May we as ministers of God continue to nourish the drooping souls of our people and support one another with our prayers and reach out to the needy as Missionaries in our own little way by safe guarding ourselves and others.

*May the good God who has begun the good work is us bring it to completion.*



**LIVE JESUS**



*Catch for us the foxes,*

the little foxes  
that ruin the vineyards,  
our vineyards that are in  
bloom (Song. 2:15).



# Catch for us the Little Foxes

Those who ruin the vineyards are not robbers or elephants. When the robbers come, they make their presence felt. They overpower the watchman; they might attack the owner; they plunder the harvest. When elephants or similar animals come, they ravage the vineyard; make a big scene and leave the place in bad shape.

If the vineyard is not spoiled by robbers or big animals, who destroys the vineyard? The little foxes: Who are these little foxes? How do they spoil the vineyards?

The robbers and big animals are the grave sins that we try our best to avoid. Obviously, we take care that we keep the commandments. We take extreme care not to commit grievous sins like murder and adultery. However, we ignore the venial sins, and we justify many things as human weaknesses.

The little foxes of venial sins are around us. They do not steal our grapes; they do not ravage the vineyards and bring down the walls. We let them be there around us, as their presence is apparently harmless. We get used to their presence so much so, sometimes their playful gestures and movements, provide us

entertainments.

But the little foxes make holes in the ground and cut the roots, starting from the tender ones. In the course of time, the plants fade.

When the plans fade, we dig them around, put manure and pour more water. Instantly the plans begin to show signs of rejuvenation. At this moment, the little foxes get more enthusiastic. When the ground is wet, their work of digging becomes easier. In a few weeks, the plants fade further and dry up beyond redemption.

In fact, no enemies are seen. That which is seen is not a big enemy either. Yet the enemy overpowers the situation. This can happen in our lives too. Those allurements and inclinations which are considered to be OK are the ones often slowly deactivating our spiritual roots. At a particular time, we may realize that some of our roots are cut. Yet we go ahead confidently in the same manner because there are other roots.

Before we turn this page, let us ask ourselves:

***What are the little foxes around me in the vineyard of my life?***

# Aspirations and Actions leading to Inspirations



An Interview with *Rev. Fr. Thomas Anikala MSFS*

## A Nonagenarian

### 1. *Shalom! Father Thomas! Could you please share something about your vocation history and background?*

At home my parents and myself were alone as my three sisters were married and my three brothers were away. I am speaking about my early life at Pravithaanam, Pala around the years 1939 onwards.

Every day in the morning my father would wake me up at 5.30 and send me to the parish church to attend the Syriac mass. One of the priests of the parish taught me to read the Syriac mass-serving book in Malayalam. So every day I used to go to the church to serve the mass. While studying in the school I had the desire to go to seminary and become a priest in the missions outside Kerala. But I did not know where to go. I never heard any priest preaching in the church about missions or about any religious congregation. A friend of mine studying in the school two years behind me, was recruited by the Salesian Fathers of Thirupattur. I thought of joining them after I complete my secondary school



**Fr. Thomas Anikala MSFS** was born on May 23, 1931. He made his first profession in the year 1953 and was ordained to priesthood on April 27, 1957. He served the Congregation and the Church at large in various capacities. In him we experience a veteran missionary, a vibrant preacher and a good teacher, an efficient administrator and a compassionate formator.

At present he is in Suvidya College, Bengaluru, India, serving as teacher and spiritual director.

**The purpose of this interview is to bring to lime light the missionary dynamism of his times as a source of inspiration the young generation. In this Year of Missions may this fan into flame the missionary zeal in each one of us.**



studies. When I told my headmaster priest about my going to the missions, he told me to join the C.S.T. local congregation. But, my desire was to go outside Kerala.

I passed SSLC in the year 1947. That was the independence year and India got freedom from British rule. My eldest brother was having a business concern in Bombay. Then I thought that I shall go to Bombay and find a job. After the declaration of independence there were big riots and fights in Bombay between Hindus and Muslims. They were killing each other in the city. In that tragic situation my eldest brother and family decided to come off to Kerala and my plan to go to Bombay ended there.

I saw the plan of God clearly. My third brother who was teaching in a school away from our house came home. I told him about my desire to go to seminary. He took me to St. Joseph's Mission Home in Kottayam where Fr. Jacob Velleringhatt was admitting students going to missions. So I joined there without deciding which mission to go. Meanwhile Fr. George Vayalil, the first missionary from a Syro-Malabar Diocese to join the MSFS Latin Diocese of Visakhapatnam, because of ill health, had joined the Mission Home to help Fr. Jacob Velleringhatt in the seminary for some time. He used to tell me often, "You



are my 'anatharavan' i.e. successor." Thus after one year I decided to join Visakhapatnam mission. After two years of Latin study my companions and myself were sent to Madras Poonamalle Seminary where we did our Philosophy and Theology studies. In the year 1952-1953 I did the canonical novitiate and got ordained priest in the year 1957.

## ***2. Now you are more than 60 years priest. What is priesthood for you personally?***

It is true that I have completed 64 years of priestly life. The great desire of becoming a priest that time, was to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the numerous non-Christians in the missions. Many non-Christians were willing to accept Jesus as their Savior. Thousands I baptized during my priestly life. I was ready to make any sacrifice for them. My ordination motto was, "I will most gladly spend

and be spent myself for souls (St. Paul).”

**3. *You worked for many years in Andhra Pradesh. Any unique experience you like to share from your missionary life?***

In June 1976 I received a letter from Very Rev. Fr. Adrien Duval, the MSFS Superior General, appointing me as the new Provincial. Immediately I wrote back that I was unworthy and would not accept the post. It was the time there was no phone and no easy contact with Europe. Almost after a month I received again a letter from the Superior General asking me to accept the appointment as the Provincial, as it was the will of God. I wrote again accepting the office as God’s will. Sincerely I did not want to take up that office.

Of my 64 years of priestly life, I spent 29 years in the missions, in five parishes, in the administrative field, two years as Provincial Bursar and six years as Provincial for two terms. 27 years in the formation field, in four seminaries both minor and major.

If you ask me which of these areas of life, I liked most and found joy and contentment, I would say that pastoral life was very demanding and challenging. However, the life as missionary lived among the people, mostly the poor and the marginalized,

sharing in their joys and sorrows was indeed exciting. What lovely, beautiful and thrilling experiences, baptizing thousands!

**4. *It seems once you had opted to work in Tanzania. Can you please explain the context?***

It is true that I opted twice to go to Tanzania. In 1977, Fr. Devasia Kuzhupil as delegate and myself as Provincial went to Geneva in Switzerland for the General Chapter.

The Archbishop Marko Mihayo of Tabora in Tanzania, had come to India searching for priests to work in his diocese. With the Superior general’s permission, the Archbishop Marko Mihayo wrote his first letter to the Provincial of Visakhapatnam on January 3, 1977, requesting for priests. I had just taken charge as Provincial of Visakhapatnam and I replied on April 5, 1977, saying that myself and another father might visit Tabora in August or September of that year. We thought we could visit Tabora on our way back from the General Chapter.

Before the General Chapter was concluded, during discussions the Provincial of England and the Provincial of Brazil expressed their desire to have some MSFS priests from Visakhapatnam to help in their provinces. The Congregation considered it as a priority than

sending the confreres to Tanzania. So, Fr. Kuzhupil and myself cancelled our trip to Tanzania. Unfortunately, after our return to India neither the Provincial of England nor the Provincial of Brazil did write to me to requesting for priests each for their provinces. Involved in many other things of the province I did not think of Africa.

In the last Provincial Chapter of my second term, in the last line of my Provincial report, I said "I hereby volunteer to go to Tanzania." Tears were trickling down my cheek, because I felt that I will not see my mother anymore as she was old and sick.

Fr. Anotny Mookkenthottam was the new Provincial of Visakhapatnam. He often talked about African mission. But he did not send me to Tanzania. Instead he sent me to Ettumanoor Minor Seminary as Rector in 1984.

It was only in 1987 the first batch of Fathers from Visakhapatnam went to Tanzania. **God has his own timing!**

### ***5. How do you see the missionary fervour of our Congregation today as a whole?***

I feel that the missionary fervor of our Congregation today as a whole, is quite different from the past. As young missionaries we were full of

zeal and enthusiasm and were ready to make any sacrifice for the people. In my first mission we had 25 or more villages for regular visit and celebration of Holy Mass. Our only transport was a bicycle. There were no proper roads too. We had only thatched sheds for chapel and we had very little money too. Still we did our best in the evangelization work.

In the present situation our missionaries have better churches and better vehicles like car or motorcycle. Now many young priests have very little zeal for souls and not much is done for the conversion of people and their spiritual welfare. Look at our Founding Missionaries from Europe, who sacrificed their life for the church and the Christian community. They would travel days and months by bullock carts.

The mission of Visakhapatnam entrusted by Rome to the MSFS in 1846 was a large territory of 4,35,000 square Kilometers. Our founding fathers – four Priests and two Brothers were in Yanam, Visakhapatnam, Aurangabad, and Kamptee in Central India, hundreds of kilometers away from each other.

In spite of all these and many other difficulties encountered by our Fathers, if our Congregation survived in India, it is a miracle.

**6. What do you like to tell the young Confreres today?**

Our young Confreres should read and study the history of our Founding Fathers and learn to be men of deeper commitment and sacrifice. Fr. Francis Moget MSFS has written four books worth reading: 'Vagabonds for God', 'Early days of Visakhapatnam Mission', 'Shepherds for Christ', 'The Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales' – Monsieur Mermier by Fr. Adrien Duval. The history of our Founding Fathers and Bishops will inspire us to be Christ like missionaries.

**With St. Paul I can say: I can do all things in him who gives me strength (Phil.4:13).**

Wherever we are let us learn the language of the people well and let us love the people entrusted to us and serve them. Let us appreciate their culture and customs, and become one with them.

**7. Even at this age, God has blessed you with good health. Any secrets behind your health? May be some tips for the new generation.**

I am told that St. Francis de Sales said, "Da mihi animas, coetera tolle" – 'Give me souls and take away the rest.'

Live a simple and humble religious

life without aspiring for positions and comforts.

From Visakhapatnam, as Provincial, I went to Hyderabad to meet Archbishop Emeritus Samineni Arulappa. Since two years I had not visited him. Seeing me he said, "Fr. Thomas, what is the secret, you look always the same." I said "Your Grace, no anxiety, no worries and no ambition."

I had a dozen or more disastrous motorcycle accidents, some incidents of imminent death, some deadly diseases which doctors wrote off, Cardiac bypass surgery and so on. In all these I see the loving mighty hand of God protecting me. God had a plan for me. I can never thank God enough for all his immense love and unbounded compassion and forgiving mercy. If I live today at the age of 90 it is a miracle.

**May God bless our MSFS Congregation.**

**May God bless this year of Missions.**

**May God bless you who read this. Amen**

## MSFS Mission Development Offices

“Mission” deals with the proclamation of the life-giving Word. It is a process that is based on the twin commandment of Love of God above everything and Love of the neighbour as oneself. This is a lifetime commitment to which every Christian is called through the sacrament of Baptism. Being a missionary is not a job but a sacred call which implies a lifestyle of being totally belonging to Jesus through an intimate relationship in daily prayer. It is a matter of Being rather than Doing. We Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, are “professionally” evangelizers and leaders of Christian communities, where we live a life of mission and lead others to do the same.

The Mission Development Offices of

the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales which are present in all the provinces and mission unites of the congregation empower the missionaries through its two-dimensional ministries. Primarily, MDOs provide holistic support to missionaries in their work of evangelization, by assisting in establishing mission stations and parishes; by procuring materials and vehicles for evangelization, etc. Secondly, they assist the missionaries in their works of charity to help our brothers and sisters who live in vulnerable situations. Through these two basic functions, the MDOs not only help the people to live their call to holiness but also by assisting them to recognize their very nature of being images of God, thus empowering them to live a dignified life.

Lend a hand to the  
MDO



*Sharing a family meal!  
Fr. Robin Mathew Thonikuzhiyil MSFS in  
St. Daniel Comboni Parish, Doba, Chad*

Fr. Thomas Varghese MSFS, Director, Mission Development Office, Via del Mascherino 46/2, 00193 Rome.

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Insights  
Year of Missions



**But now I will send for many fishermen,” declares the Lord, “and they will catch them. After that, I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt them down on every mountain and hill and from the crevices of the rocks. Jer. 16:16**

# Fishers and Hunters

St. Ambrose interprets this passage like this. The fishermen and the hunters are priests who are called to rescue those living in sins and to show them the correct path of salvation. The hills represent pride; holes in the rocks speak of the empty desires. The emptiness of the crevices stands for those bad habits and attitudes that make a person dull and spiritually dead.

In order to create this world, God the creator did not seek the assistance of anyone. But in the process of saving this world, God decided to make the priests as his partners.

Mother Mary was holier and more privileged than all the apostles. However, the keys of the Kingdom of God were not entrusted to Mother Mary but to the apostles and their successors.

St. Flavian has stated that the hope of salvation for people is entrusted to the priests.

According to St. Chrysostom the parents give birth to their children to this earthly life. Priests are the spiritual parents who are called to give birth to the heavenly life. If there are no priests there would not be the communion of saints here on earth. This was the conviction of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Just as the Father sent me, I too sent you (cf. Jn. 20:21). It is with a mission that Jesus established priesthood and commissioned the apostles.

When Jesus authority to forgive sins, it is a clear lesson for us that administering the sacrament of reconciliation is a very special task for the priest in his ministry.

If, we priests, do not show genuine interest in administrating the sacraments in a worthy manner, who would care for them? If we do not hear confessions, to whom shall the people go?

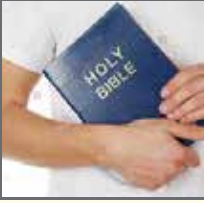
*Dear Missionary!*

*Before we turn this page, let us ask ourselves:*

*What do I hunt? Where do I go fishing?*



Please contact:  
[msfsbibleproject@gmail.com](mailto:msfsbibleproject@gmail.com)

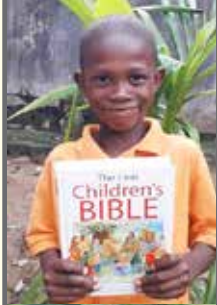


## *Beloved Reader, Shalom!*

In this Year of Missions, it is our dream to make the Holy Bible available to as many people as possible. All over the world, there are persons and families who cannot afford to have their personal Bibles.



In the holy name of Jesus, we invite you to be part of this Bible Project.



***Bible for all***





# My experiences of being a Missionary in Africa

*Fr. Prakash Prasanth MSFS*

***I want missions!*** This was the firm resolution of the Servant of God Fr. Peter Mary Mermier, our holy founder.

Dear Reader of *I want missions*, Shalom!  
*Tumsifu Yesu Kristu!*

As our beloved Fransalian Family is celebrating the Year of Missions, I thought this sharing of some of my experiences of being a missionary in East Africa, would be apt to this occasion. I was ordained priest in the year 2016. Soon after my priestly ordination, my first appointment was not in an MSFS Community or parish. But I was appointed as the assistant parish priest to a diocesan priest in the Diocese of Gulbarga in North Karnataka, India. All in all, it was a good time. However, after two years, when I was appointed to be in Kibaha, Tanzania, in the MSFS Novitiate house as the Assistant Director of Novices, the experiences were very different. After working in Africa for three years in the formation house as well as with quite good pastoral exposure, now I am back in India. The various experiences in Africa widened my horizons and exposed me to new cultures, new lifestyles and a new way of responding to situations. Amidst many challenges and struggles, I could draw strength from a new religious ethos and missionary dynamism in East Africa. My experience was the best teacher.

## **A disappointing Appointment!**

The expectation of each one's life is to achieve the dreams, and when it comes true, one is satisfied. I too,

had a lot of expectations about my second appointment. But I never thought that it would be in Africa. One day Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal, the Fr. Provincial met me and communicated to me the decision of the administration to send me to Tanzania, East Africa Province. (That too in the Novitiate Formation house as Socius!).

As stated in the introduction, soon after my ordination, I was appointed as an assistant parish priest in one of the parishes in the diocese of Gulbarga, which is located in north Karnataka. The parish had nine substations. I had a good experience being a pastor though there were some practical difficulties like water, climate and finance. Now once I heard about sending me to Africa, I was saddened. The word Africa was not pleasing for me because of the preconceived ideas about Africa. So, it had a negative impact on me as well.

I had heard about Africa during my school



days. Africa was said to be a place of poor people with lots of suffering. Nothing would be available, a place of dark people. If I trace my memory back from the time I had joined the seminary, I had little information and very little knowledge about Africa, its lifestyle, food habits, climate etc. which I had heard from some of our confreres who had worked there and shared their experiences. Some of them were interesting to listen to, and some were frightening. With this knowledge and understanding my expectation was not good. In my initial stages of formation, I had never opted for Africa. I was indeed afraid to go to Africa.

### **Here I am, Lord**

I was in shock and did not expect this new appointment. I had the inner struggle to say YES or NO to the decision of my authorities. So, I had requested the Provincial to give some time. As I was not in a position to make any decision after hearing about my new appointment, Fr. Provincial understood the situation and

allowed me to reflect on it. But for sure, he expected a positive answer. I was confused because of the preconceived ideas about Africa. I did not feel like informing my parents and family members, which, I was sure, would make them intensively sad as well. I was waiting for an apt time to tell them. I had shared with some of my friends about my new mission, and they had expressed their views, and some of them supported me. But the fact was that I had to go to Africa. After a few days of reflection and prayer with the advice of my friends and confreres, I decided to accept this appointment and go to Tanzania. However, my family members were not pleased with my decision, but they respected my 'yes'.

At last, although not with full conviction, but out of obedience to the Major Superior, I made up my mind to go and say *yes*. I remember the fear, the agony, the mental torture and the tension I had in order to step out from the homeland. First of all, travelling for the first time to a strange land, strange culture. Long hours



of journey with no known companions. However, I had confidence that everything would be alright and took this task as the will of God and entrusted myself to the care of God and of Mother Mary and started the journey.

## The Warmth of Africa

As the flight landed in Dar es Salaam, I stepped out from the flight experiencing within me lots of apprehensions. But soon I could feel the warmth, hot breeze from the Indian Ocean reaching the shores in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. No one was known to me. I saw many eyes looking at me very strangely. But soon, I realized that they wanted to help me. I was happy that people welcomed me with a smile and greetings. They made me feel that I am not unknown but known since I was wearing a clergy shirt. The people are very much aware of the very presence of the priests and their missionary services. As I arrived outside the airport Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the then Director of Novices, was waiting to receive me. He came towards me with a broad smile and hugged me, said *Karibu Tanzania*. Then I felt *my God now I am in the safe hands*, and I have reached the destination. Since then, I could feel a positive vibration with my new mission in Africa.

## Bloom where you are re-planted!

I remembered the quote of our dear Patron St. Francis de Sales *Bloom where you are planted*. After living for three years

in Tanzania, I am happy and believe that I could accomplish the task entrusted to me to a great extent. I was involved in the formation as assistant novice master and local bursar. However, I got many chances to be with the people in administering the sacraments, especially the sacrament of Eucharist and reconciliation. I felt lucky and blessed to come to Africa, especially to East Africa Province. The acceptance of the confreres and the people, the love, care and concern I had received is immeasurable. **The people of Tanzania are good at heart, very simple, warm and welcoming.** I was taken up by the attitude of the people



in greeting everybody even though you are a stranger. I also had the chance to pay a visit to all our missions in East Africa and our new missions in Malawi. It was a wonderful experience for me as the missionary life is concerned. I do admire the confreres, their enthusiasm and commitment in pastoral, formation,

education and innovating ministries. As for me, it was my first community experience as an MSFS priest. I would say I have cherished and satisfied in living with my confreres in East Africa Province.

## My Life as a Formator

Being a formator was a new experience for me. I was a formee a few years back, and now I have become a formator for the first time, though I did not want to be. I took it as the will of God and tried my level best to be a good formator the way I could. I would like to thank the

Provincials Fr. Benny Kottanal and Fr. Mathew Thazhathukunnel for having confidence in me and had entrusted me with this task. Fr Johnson Kallidukil and Fr. Stephen Ubadesi had taught me to be a formator with their very lifestyle and commitments. Fr. Pius Kochuparampil, the parish priest of St. Francis de Sales Parish Mkuza and the confreres there always encouraged me in the pastoral works, in spite of my language barrier.

According to my experience, the formation in Africa is **freedom with responsibility**. The formator is not a taskmaster but a companion to the formee. As a companion, the formator understands, accompanies and even challenges the formee. The formees - no matter in what stage of formation they are - expect that the formator listens to them and to have dialogue with them. Everyone has the right to be respected. A formator is not a taskmaster who dictates things, but he should be an inspiration through his very presence. As a formator, one needs to understand the formees, and the formator has many things to learn from the formees. The most difficult

task in the formation was the situation in which a formee would be asked to discontinue as the result of discernment. But I believe that it is a cross that a formator must bear for the wellbeing of all concerned.

*I never want to be a formator.* That was my slogan when I was a formee, but later, I found myself a formator! I may not have done things perfectly, but I can confidently say that I tried to do the best possible. I do understand my drawbacks which I need to improve.

### **Challenge of being a Missionary in Africa**

I know I can't generalize the challenges. Some of them must have been my own challenges pertaining to me alone. Getting accustomed to the humid, semi-warm climate of the Coastal Region was, in the beginning, a task. The language was also a challenge to me though the language Kiswahili is simple and easy. The fact is that I did not show much interest. I was happy with my broken Kiswahili to manage the show. The common factor I





had found was the slowness of the people in everything. But positively seen, we can say that people in Africa have time. There is no hurry. People take time for one another.

There is an interesting saying regarding time in Africa: **When God created the world, he gave watches to the Europeans and he gave time to the Africans.**

As a result, we need to wait a long time for any work to be done. So, practising patience was a challenge in the formation as well. Quoting one of the European missionaries who was in Tanzania, some of the confreres used to say:

***To be a missionary in Africa, we need an ounce of wisdom and an ocean of patience.***

**And finally....**

In conclusion, I would describe that the experience of my being in Africa was very positive. In fact, I never expected it to be so good. By saying this, I am not intending that we all should go and experience life in Africa. What I mean is that we should accept the situations in life as they come. Life will be not only on the bed of roses but there are also hardships, disappointments and sufferings. But what is more important is accepting reality and leading life happily.

Today I can say I did it by the grace of God. Once I accepted the task, I had no serious issues. I could work, I could adjust, and I could cope with any situation or problem that I came across. As a whole, I enjoyed and cherished my stay in Africa and could contribute from my part whatever I could. Being in Tanzania paved for me a new experience in my mission and commitments, which gave fulfilment of being a missionary in my own way.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves often, confined within the walls of the Provinces, and we have prejudices about other missions and about people of different continents.

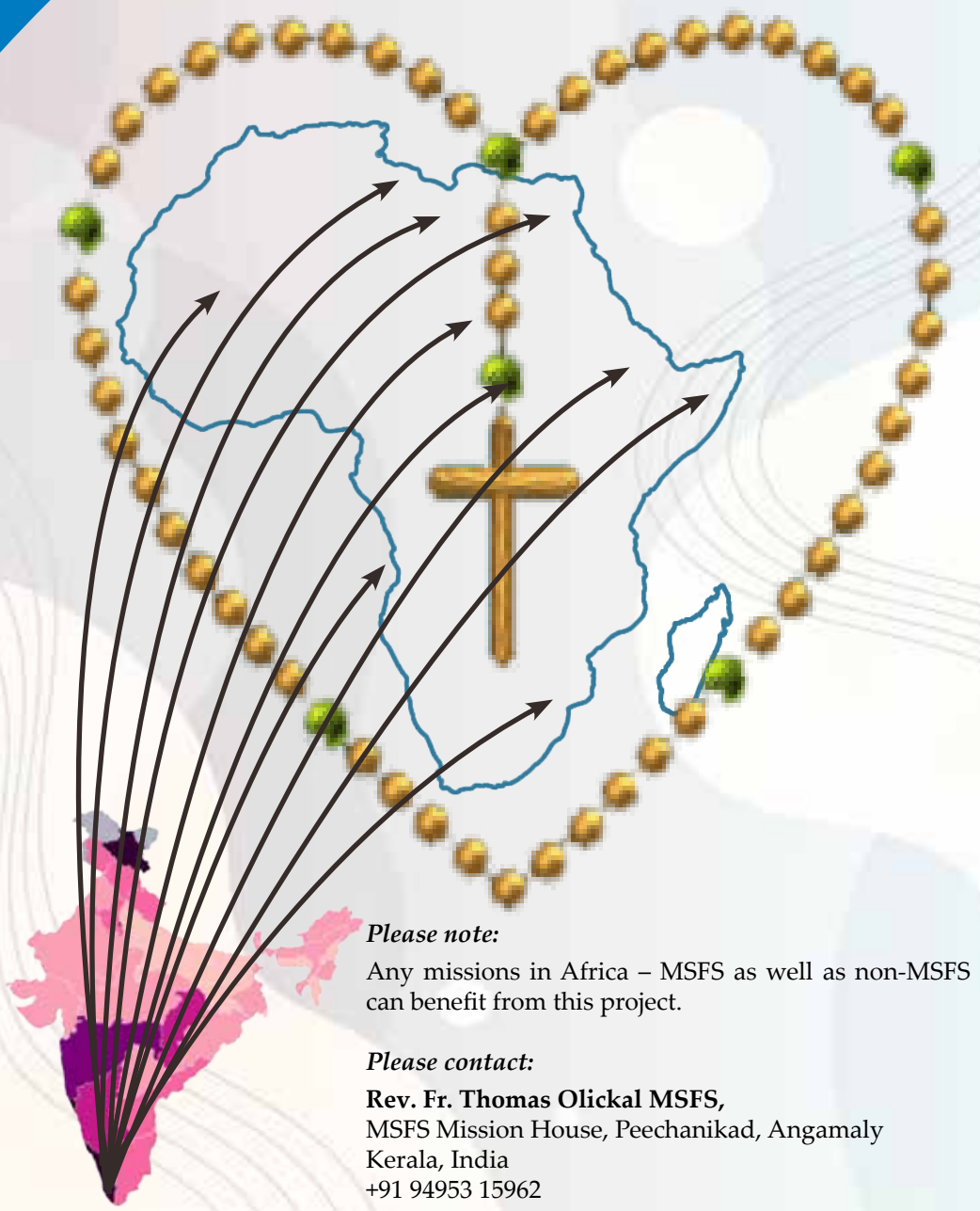
**In this context, I would highly recommend this kind of missionary exposure for every confrere for a few years, outside one's home/province territory.**

Let us learn to appreciate other cultures and other styles as long as they are not contrary to the Gospel values. I remain grateful to God and to the Fransalian family for designating me to work in Africa.

***May God bless Africa! May this Year of Missions bear fruit abundantly.***

***Live Jesus!***

# Rosaries from Small Kerala to Big Africa



*Please note:*

Any missions in Africa – MSFS as well as non-MSFS can benefit from this project.

*Please contact:*

**Rev. Fr. Thomas Olickal MSFS,**  
MSFS Mission House, Peechanikad, Angamaly  
Kerala, India  
+91 94953 15962

# Thank you, Thamarassery Diocese

**One Crore Rosaries for Africa** was an initiative of the MSFS with the intention of gathering Holy Rosaries or pious articles from the faithful in Kerala and for the African Missions. The first diocese to which this appeal was sent was the Catholic Diocese of Thamarassery. During the month of October 2020, a month dedicated to the devotion of the Holy Rosary, more than 15,000 Holy Rosaries were donated. Young Missionaries boys and girls of the *Cherupushpa Mission League* spared no efforts in many parishes going

from house to house and collecting Rosaries.



On Behalf of the Catholic Missions in Africa, we thank Mar Remigiose Inchananiyil the **Bishop of Thamarassery Diocese** for blessing this venture.

We thank all the priests and religious and laypeople and very specially the children who were part of this project. Besides, there were Rosary Collection Boxes at some retreat centres (e.g., Charis Bhavan Athirampuzha) and at shops for religious articles (e.g., Matha Books Karukutty). Through them, over the years many people contributed generously thousands of rosaries and other religious articles. There are also small pious groups and individuals and some religious sisters who commit themselves making Holy Rosaries for the people in various missions in Africa.



*The Postulants of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Most Holy Eucharist in Morogoro, Tanzania, receiving a statue of Mother Mary gifted from Kerala.*

Our special thanks to Fr. Thomas Thevadiyil the director of MCL who did the organizational matters for the gathering of Rosaries.

**I want Missions** is the global missionary bulletin of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales - Fransalians, published in June and December every year. It is meant for free distribution for all those who are interested in the mission of Jesus Christ. If you wish to have copies please contact us via:

***email: [iwantmissions@gmail.com](mailto:iwantmissions@gmail.com)***



**A sincere smile is the silent language of the Divine within you.  
A person devoid of the Divine can only make noise about God.  
A person filled with the Divine becomes a voice of God within.  
And one becomes a preacher communicating God and not the self.**



**Among the virtues, we should prefer that which is most conformable to our duty and not that which is most conformable to our inclination.**

***St. Francis de Sales***