

Vol 2

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MISSIONS



MISSIONARY INSPIRATIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FRANSALIANS



**“Altar Girls at MSFS
Catholic Mission
at Ponta do Ouro,
Maputo, Mozambique.”**

Rejoice in the Lord, again I say rejoice. (Phil.4:4)

Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales – Global Mission Bulletin



Dear Respected Reader,

I want Missions is in your hands in the printed form or on the screen in front of you.

At this moment, God is blessing you.

Would you mind saying a silent prayer for all the missionaries in the world?

Enjoy every page. Join the Fransalians in the sacred task of evangelization.

Thank you!

Your Mission Magazine Team

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How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

Rom. 10:14

Editorial...



The grazing 99

Vs

The missing 1

Dear and respected Reader!

In this particular Year of Missions, we, the Fransalians, recommit ourselves to our sacred task to bring back the lost ones. For the fourth time, *I want Missions* is coming to us. Each time we hold this magazine, we remind ourselves of our special call go beyond the ordinary pasture where we enjoy the beautiful scene of the grazing 99. The 99 are with us. They do not bother us much. As long as they are given their daily quota of space and nourishment and the minimum needed attention, they are just there. Their faithfulness can be either the deep personal commitment and loyalty to the shepherd, or just they sync with the rest without knowing what they do.

But the one who is not in the scene is of more significant and serious concern of Jesus.

Where is that sheep? Why it strayed? What can bring it back? Does it have some special needs? These were the questions our holy Founder Father Mermier asked when one was missing.

The Year of Missions invites us to look for the lost ones in the peripheries.

May God bless every reader of this mission magazine.

Yours in the mission of Jesus,

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS



Message from the Assistant Superior General

My dear friends, readers of *"I want Mission"* and Friends of Fransalians,

"Merciful God, out of compassion for us, you sent your only Son Jesus to this world as the first missionary and leader in every mission" : this sentence opens the special prayer that we are invited to pray all through this year dedicated to Mission (Pentecost 2021-Divine Mercy Sunday 2022).

As we are preparing our hearts to celebrate Christmas, the coming of the Only Begotten Son of God in our human flesh, let us be inspired by this prayer.

First, we pray to the **"merciful Lord"**: yes, Christmas is a mystery of mercy, a manifestation of the mercy of God towards us. At his birth the Angels are calling the shepherds to come and contemplate the Savior. Jesus, Yeshouah in Hebrew, "God saves". We need to be saved from all our anxieties, from all our distresses, and above all from all our sins. Jesus is sharing in our humanity as to lead us to share in his Divinity and to bring us back to God the Father.

Second, we mention the **"compassion"** of God. On

November 14th, World Sunday of the Poor, Pope Francis pleaded in his homely for us to become more and more compassionate to one another.

Christmas is also a mystery in which we are called to let our hearts be touched by the infinite love of God. *"God so loved the world that he has sent his only begotten Son to save the world"*: these words of St John the Evangelist ought to fill us with joy!

Third, we are calling Jesus **"the first missionary and the leader in every mission"**: our mission, as baptized faithful, as religious, as priests, has to be rooted in the very mission of Jesus. Total availability, sensitivity to the needs of the neighbor, unconditional love for all, and closeness to the poor and marginalized: all these characteristics of the mission of Jesus are present already in the events of Bethlehem like the plant is present in the seeds.

I wish you all a very Blessed Christmas season!

Fr. Yves Carron MSFS, Assistant General





Know Our Missions

Know our Missions is a new feature that would find its place hereafter in every issue of this MSFS Global Mission Magazine. The Confreres working in this mission or the people in this mission may not be known to you. But the mission entrusted to them is part of our mission too for we all belong to the missionary family of Christ.



In this issue we would like to introduce to you one of the challenging MSFS Missions in North Western side of Mozambique, close to the Malawi border.

Domue, Mozambique

St. Peter Claver Catholic Church Domue was founded on April 22, 1973 by the Jesuit Fathers from Portugal. The first parish priest was Fr. Domingo da Silva S.J. From 1986 to 1993 the parish remained without any priest assisting the parish during the civil war. And from 1993 to 2017 the nearby parish started to attend to the spiritual needs of St. Peter Claver Catholic Church Domue. From 2017 by accepting the invitation of the then bishop of the Diocese of Tete, Missionaries of St Francis de Sales took up the parish and mission



1. Full name of the parish: **St. Peter Claver Catholic Parish Domue**
2. Name of the diocese: **Diocese of Tete**
3. Country: **Mozambique**
4. Area of the parish: **2000 km²**
5. Total population of the area: **210,000**
6. Number of Catholics: **37,000**
7. Number of substations: **104**
8. Number of centers: **23 (Potential Parishes)**
9. Women religious in parish: **No women religious in the parish**
10. Distance to the farthest substation from parish center: **120 km**
11. Distance to the nearest MSFS community: **1400 km**
12. Distance from Diocesan center Tete to Domue Parish **260 km**
13. Local language spoken in the area: **Chichewa and Portuguese**
14. Number of baptism during last one year: **1852**
15. Number of marriages during last one year: **129**
16. Number of Priests serving in this parish : **2**
17. Number of Catechists in this parish **104**

Imagine... Just 2 priests serving
the Catholic population of 37,000 spread in 104
substations in 2000 square kilometers!!!!



Sharing
From



Fr. Jose Parapillil MSFS

A Tribute to
our Beloved
Anish Achan

Fr. Anish Mundiyanickal MSFS

Living afresh and alive in our hearts

An Inspiration for young and old

Fr. Jose Parappillil MSFS

Our Beloved Anish Achan!

Fr. Anish was born on November 8, 1980, in Kerala, South India. He made his religious profession on June 11, 2004 and became a member of Global Family of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. He was ordained priest on December 30, 2010. He was called for his eternal reward on June 9, 2021. The last nine years of his priestly ministry was centred in Charis Bhavan Retreat Centre of the Congregation in Athirampuzha, Kerala, India. In the midst of an active busy priestly life as a preacher he was succumbed to the after-effects of Corona virus. God has his ways in our life!

My association with Fr. Anish was from the time he was a novice in Mysore in 2003. It became a



personal lived relationship as we lived and worked together in the same community of Charis Bhavan from 2013 to 2020. The memories of a life lived together is still fresh in me though he has left us for six months for his eternal home. As I look back at his life, I am moved to state that he did embody the wide spectrum of priestly characteristics in his personal life and mission.

A matured vocation

Fr. Anish never turned back once he was convinced of his religious calling. He joined the congregation after his graduation while doing his first year post graduate studies. He was actively involved in youth/student politics in the college. He had groomed himself a confident, convinced person through his student- life back ground. It is with decisiveness and conviction that he joined the seminary though otherwise he had a lucrative career. Hence, he had a personal clarity and conviction of his life and mission right from his formation in the seminary.

A Eucharistic Centred life

The pivotal dimension and source of power for Fr. Anish was the



Eucharistic Lord. His personal life was groomed in the Eucharistic Lord. Taking time before the Eucharistic Lord, remaining bathed in the radiance of the Eucharistic Lord in prayer and adoration did really form his personal and missionary spirituality. He was a man of the Eucharist. His Eucharistic celebration poured out Divine Power, Grace and Healing on the people.

A Passionate Priest

The tempo and the dynamism of his priestly life was amazing. He was a bold, zealous missionary. Nothing deterred him from going ahead and preaching Jesus. He was courageous and affirming in his witness to Christ and the Church.

He was really proud of his priestly and religious consecration. He lived his life daily esteeming his religious life, priestly life and missionary vocation. He was a fire burning and inflaming human hearts and lives. Everyone used to be caught spell bound listening to him preaching with power of the Spirit. His spirit of surrender to God's ways and Mission was total and inspiring. He was always ready for ministry disregarding his health and leisure. Ever ready and willing for ministry was his unparalleled character of life. His words did bear a prophetic character. He was alert to confront and comfort the people who came seeking God.

A Compassionate Priest

Compassion intrinsically means to be able to feel and suffer with the pains and vulnerabilities of others. Fr. Anish was truly compassionate. His priestly life was nothing but an active, passionate involvement in the lives of people of all strata, disregarding rich or poor, educated or just the ordinary, caste, religion

I consider the life and ministry of Fr. Anish as a challenge for the young generation of priests in our Congregation and in the Church at large.

and vocation. He was able to enter into the different situations, needs and problems of people with a Divine touch. God did really anoint him with His gifts and graces that he became a true channel of God's Blessings. I used to wonder at his energy, dynamism, patience in meeting people as well as discharging spiritual activities. He used to spend hours in personal prayer, and it sustained him to be in long hours in ministry. His capacity to listen to the pains, burdens and bondages of people was alarming. He responded to every one with a Divine Message. All those who came to him had the feeling of being loved and cared by God as they returned, because they had met God in the person of Fr. Anish, in their struggles and brokenness and experienced the healing of God.

A life of Personal Holiness

I am of firm conviction that for Fr. Anish the demands of his



religious, priestly vocation were of utmost importance in his life. He was ever alert to his vocation and life as a religious and priest. He sought to live his life upright and holy especially through his sacramental life. He was regular in the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation. He had a personal confessor and spiritual director. Being his local superior for seven years he used to inform me every time he had gone to meet his confessor/spiritual director. This was an open truth and possibly a rare truth these days in the lives of young priests. He lived his life

and ministry being anointed by the Holy Spirit. As he was involved more and more in his ministry I could recognise and experience a greater and deeper measure of the Holy Spirit at work in him and guiding him. As a young priest he lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. His devotion to Divine Mercy, Mother Mary, Saints and intercession to Angels created and enabled a Heavenly atmosphere for people while he was in prayer.

All those who came to him had the feeling of being loved and cared by God as they returned, because they had met God in the person of Fr. Anish.



A Priest who became All to All

Glancing through the areas of Fr. Anish's life, his interactions and relationships in ministry we find that he was sought by people of every walk of life. Though he was young in age, people found in him a Presence and Power of the Spirit and they believed that he could help them in their needs especially in distress. He mirrored Christ by his life and became another Christ to all who met him. People really experienced him as a man of God.

A Paradigm of Life for Young Priests

Right from his formation time Fr. Anish moved forward

with direction, conviction and commitment. It empowered him to be a passionate preacher, an ardent missionary, a strong defender of the church, a genuine beacon of Divine Mercy. He lived his religious, missionary and priestly life identifying himself with the charism and multifaceted ministries of the Congregation at Charis Bhavan and wherever he was needed. Nothing deterred him from spending himself for God and God's mission.

I consider the life and ministry of Fr. Anish as a challenge for the young generation of priests in our Congregation and in the Church at large. He is the sum total of

the missionary spirituality of MSFS Congregation in our times. He remained in contact with the missionaries and missionary activities of our congregation in different parts. He did wear the Fransalian Cross which he had received from the Former Superior General Rev. Fr. Emile Mayoraz MSFS. He was always seen to be moving with a Bible close to his heart and a Rosary on his wrist and closely gripped in his right hand. He was fine, free and fearless in his demeanour. He always radiated a priestly presence.

Why this O Lord?

Why did God take away Fr. Anish from us? This was the heart-rending question asked in sadness by everyone who knew the life and ministry of Fr. Anish. I too did ask God the same question. Many people have asked me the same question. I have no answer to it and I did not wait on God to give me an answer. I do believe that God has His Ways. One decade of priestly life and services lived by Fr. Anish gives me a glimpse

of what a Priest can be in the lives of God's people. Fr. Anish is a beacon guiding and warning the people of God, a paradigm of life that is truly divine and human in a world beset with the attractions of evil. He took always a stance with God, God's ways and human goodness. Let me conclude stating that the life and ministry of Fr. Anish is the summary and summit of the invocation of St. Paul gives in his letter to Ephesians 6: 10-17. **We thank you O Lord for this indescribable gift in our life in the person of Fr. Anish MSFS. May He Rest in Peace:. Amen**



Fransalian Insights

Question: What is the unique, fundamental and most important difference between light and darkness?

Answer: The light must always have a source. But the darkness has no source.

MSFS Presence in NORTH – EAST Part of INDIA

Fr. Reji K. Mani MSFS



Fr. Reji K. Mani MSFS



Introduction

Jesus, after His resurrection and before His ascension into heaven, spoke to His disciples; "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Mat. 28:18-

20). It is God's will for us to spread the Gospel to all nations. There are many ways God uses to communicate his message; God makes use of missionaries and present believers to help spread the good news of salvation of Jesus Christ. Through the mission of the Church, many possibilities are opened to present the message of Christ to the nations. Many congregations have emerged over the centuries to spread the Gospel more effectively.

This article will focus on the mission of the Church in Northeast India particularly the role played by MSFS Congregation, with a special focus on the initiatives taken on preaching mission as it is the founding charism of the congregation.

Northeast region of India

Northeast region is bordered in the north by Bhutan, Tibet and China, in the south and southwest by Bangladesh, and in the east and southeast by Myanmar, the region known as Northeast India lies in the far eastern corner of the country. The region has eight states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland Tripura and Sikkim.

Northeast India displays a distinctive geo ethnic character. About three-quarters of the region is covered by hilly terrain, and one-quarter consists of plains. Tribals live in the hill areas and hinduized non tribals reside in the plains. 71 percent of the region's population lives in the plains of Assam, and about 14.5 percent in the four tribal hill-states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland. The nontribal communities consist mainly of the Hinduized indigenous communities and of Hindu and Muslim immigrants from other parts of India and Bangladesh. None knows precisely how many languages are spoken. The societies of Northeast India display a staggering cultural variety.

Today vast majority of the



tribal people in the tribal states of Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland are Christians. But the Christian population among the non-tribal people in the plains of Assam, Manipur and Tripura is relatively small.

Beginning of Christianity in Northeast India

The total Christian population of Northeast India, which is roughly 4.3 million, accounts for 22.7 percent of Indian Christians. Although Roman Catholic missionaries had made a few visits at an earlier date, the Protestant groups first established mission work in the region in the mid-nineteenth century. The three largest Christian groups are the Baptists, Roman Catholics and the Presbyterians. Until the middle of the twentieth century, the catholic presence was more or less confined to Assam and Meghalaya. Since



Started in the year 1975 with a pioneering team of six MSFS Confres, today in 2021 the MSFS in North East has 276 professed members. Besides there are several others from North East working in different parts of the world.

then, the Catholic Church has been rapidly spreading to other parts of the region.

Beginning of Catholic mission in Northeast India

The first missionary society assigned specifically to the region, the Foreign Missionaries of Milan (PIME) came to the region in 1872, but because of a jurisdiction dispute, no tangible work was done. From 1889 the region was reassigned to the German Society of the Divine Savior, popularly known as Salvatorians. During the First World War the German Salvatorians were repatriated, and the work was entrusted temporarily to the Belgian Jesuits (1915-22), until the charge was handed over to Salesians of Don Bosco in 1922.

The history of Northeast India after

independence has been plagued by various political insurrections. Yet the church continued to grow in the region not only in spreading the faith but playing great role in education by establishing many schools. Numerical growth of Christians picked up, particularly after independence. From 70,000 in 1945, the catholic community grew tenfold to 700,000 in 1990.

Contribution of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales in the Northeast Indian mission

Being a missionary congregation in its very nature, motivated by the missionary zeal of the founder, Fr. Peter Marie Mermier and following the spirit of the St. Francis de Sales its patron. on September 15, 1975 a band of six newly ordained priests were sent to Northeast India from the province of Visakhapatnam.



Thus, MSFS ventured to make its contribution to the great history of the church in Northeast India.

Frs George Parampukattil MSFS, Kurian Pattimackel MSFS, Joseph Kizhakkeved MSFS, Jose Mundoly MSFS, Abraham Kuttiankal MSFS, and Joseph Kuttianickal MSFS, the pioneers arrived in the Northeast India on September 21, 1975. Two by two they were sent for pastoral initiation into the dioceses of Tura in Meghalaya, Kohima-Imphal of Nagaland-Manipur, and Assam. Within a year three more confreres joined them. Within a short span of time, they got acquainted with the people, their customs and traditions and plunged into pastoral work with great zeal. Thus, the congregation took roots and began to grow in Northeast India, thanks to the regular arrival of confreres from Visakhapatnam province.

Arunachal Pradesh has been the leading recipient of missionary activities of Northeast Indian Christians. Notable conversion to Christianity took place among some of the tribes of the state. But at the beginning of Arunachal mission some people, especially among the dominant Adi tribe, considered Christianity and the modernizing tendency associated with it as a threat to their traditional identity. The indigenous faith act was enacted by the Arunachal Pradesh state. Conversion, which is defined as a renouncing of indigenous faith and adopting another faith or religion was banned by this act. Despite such opposition to Christian mission, Arunachal Pradesh has experienced the highest growth in percentage of Christian during the last decades. Christian presence in the state increased to 4.32 percent in 1981, and



then to 10.29 percent in 1991, then to 30.26 percent in 2011.

The most notable contribution of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS) among the states of Northeast India was made in Arunachal Pradesh, especially among the Adi and Galo tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh had a greater attraction to Christianity and yet the efforts by the government to preserve the culture and indigenous religion brought about restrictions by enacting the legislation, "freedom of Religious Bill," in 1978; an anti-conversion bill to prevent the spread of any Christian culture in the state. This made the missionary work almost impossible in the state.

To overcome this difficulty, MSFS established mission schools all along Assam-Arunachal border in the district of Demaji in Assam. Arunachal being so backward in education these schools at the border made it possible for the Arunachal students to seek better education in these mission schools. Being attracted by the life of the missionaries many of them embraced Christian faith. Families of these students invited the missionaries to share the Christian faith in their villages. This opened up the avenue for the mission visits to these families and to share the faith in their villages.

Having a very strong base in Demaji district in Assam by the MSFS fathers and the extensive tour in the districts of East Siang, Upper Siang, west Siang districts as well lower Dibangbally and Lohit of Arunachal Pradesh greatly helped the spread of Christian faith in these areas. Those mission visits of the missionaries were called "Gospel tours." Though there was severe opposition, the indomitable spirit by which the missionaries shared their faith was paid off by many persons accepting Jesus as the savior.

Taking up frontier missions by going to the interior and comparatively backward areas of Northeastern states was the unique mission approach of MSFS Congregation in Northeast India. Thus, new mission centers and parishes in other states like Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya and later in Tripura and Mizoram were taken up. Thus, today the congregation has spread her wings into all the states of Northeast India.

MSFS Contribution to Preaching Ministry in Northeast India

God chose to spread the good news of salvation in Christ by preaching the Word of God. Jesus spent much of his time in his public ministry preaching God's word. Accepting this mandate from Christ and being a missionary congregation MSFS had taken up very seriously the proclamation of the word of God as its primary charism.

Late Rev. Fr. Chacko Varavadavil MSFS was the first acclaimed charismatic preacher of Northeast region. Recognizing the popularity he gained in his preaching, he was set apart for preaching mission from 1994. He traveled all over Northeast India

to proclaim the word of God touching the lives of thousands of people. Eventually there felt the need of regularizing the renewal program, and congregation established a renewal centre, namely Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre in Umroi, Shillong in the state of Meghalaya in the year 2000 under Shillong Arch-Diocese. This gave great impetus to the renewal of faith through preaching ministry through residential programs. Slowly other fathers joined him to support in the preaching mission. Thus, MSFS fathers were well sought after for preaching retreats and conventions in various dioceses of the region.

Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre played a great role in the revival of faith and Christian life, as a result, other dioceses of Meghalaya, namely Nongstoin and Tura dioceses invited the MSFS to establish renewal centers in their dioceses. Thus in 2010 Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre, Mawkhlam under Nongstoin Diocese and in 2015 Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre, Tura under Tura Diocese and in 2010 Holy Redeemer Renewal Centre, Kaying in Arunachal Pradesh were established.

Fr. Chacko Varavadavil had the motto in his preaching mission as "renewal of Church through the renewal of families." To renew the family life,



focus was given on healing at various levels; personal healing from inner wounds, healing of brokenness in relationship through reconciliation and forgiveness through retreats and counseling; deliverance from drug additions and drunkenness through deliverance and healing retreats; strengthen the bond among the spouses through couples' day; children's retreats to inculcate in them the value of life and civic responsibilities; youth retreats to orient the youth to become responsible citizens by instilling in them the love for the church and society.

The tireless work of the fathers in this ministry bore visible fruits in the life of the Church in Northeast India. Many people had life changing experiences which made them to grow in the love of God and in their spiritual life.

Another major focus was the renewal of lives of the consecrated people. Many religious persons began to seek guidance to strengthen their spiritual lives. Thus, several retreats were organized for the religious groups. Forty days directed retreats, focusing on the mystical dimension of Christian and religious life began to be the hall mark of the renewal center. Renewal centers offered the possibility of spiritual guidance and counseling for the religious persons to overcome their personal problems. Many Congregations began to take advantage to renew the spiritual lives of their members through the ministries of these centers.

There was a great revival of faith

through the various renewal programs conducted in these renewal centers. One of major effects of establishing renewal centers was that many lay people came forward to volunteer in support of renewal ministry. They began to participate in the mission of God's kingdom in their own capacities; like preaching, interceding, etc. It created great impact on the quality of faith and Christian life in many dioceses of Northeast India.

The renewal centers had trained many lay people to be leaders to shoulder greater responsibilities in the parishes. Many of these persons who were part of the mission of the renewal centers were trained to become preachers of the word of God. As a result, many powerful and anointed preachers from among the lay people came up as acclaimed preachers in these dioceses. This gave a great boost to the mission of the church as renewal was taken to grass root level.

Conclusion

The focus of mission of the Church is the salvation of all. The MSFS continue to serve the Church in fulfilling this great mission of God. Preaching mission is one of the acclaimed ministries being carried out in the region of Northeast India, and it is given a great priority by the MSFS Congregation particularly in Northeast region of India. By the Grace of God many good things were accomplished by the MSFS we renew our commitment to serve the mission of Christ in this Year of Missions. May God bless all the missionaries in this tough terrain.





Australia



Austria



Belgium



Chad



Ecuador



England



India



Indonesia



Italy



Namibia



Papua new Guinea



Philippines



Switzerland



Tanzania



Trinidad and Tobago

the World

ember 2021



Brazil



Cameroon



Canada



France



Germany



Holland



Kenya



Malawi



Mozambique



Portugal



South Africa



St. Lucia



Uganda



USA



Zambia

1960 TO 2021

61 Years of Priesthood and 60 Years a Missionary in Brazil

REV. FR. MARIUS ROSSIER MSFS from Switzerland

The Birth and the initial Call

Amidst the breath taking, calm and serene nature of Mase –Switzerland, the devout couple Martin Rossier and Alexandrina brought forth their third child, on October 13, 1934, whom they named MARIUS ROSSIER. He grew up with real courage mingled with diverse human realities. To succeed and assist the family, he did take up both schooling and shepherding, bringing forth comfort and joy for the family surrounded by the cheerful and affectionate siblings.

The day of promise made every difference in the life of little Marius when the spiritual leader made his visit to comfort the family in time of sorrow after the death of the beloved mother, to bring forth new enthusiasm and fresh hope. To the usual question by any parish priest to a young boy (here Marius) , *do you wish to be a Priest?* replied little Marius reluctantly but with great hope, **yes**. He got the name enrolled in the minor

seminary. In the year 1948, he left for the city of Sion, where the institution formed the young boys with the catholic faith to create a new history of love and compassion amidst the humankind.



Now seminarian Marius started to respond steadily to Christ's calling, and the passion for the divine mother church was the hallmark of this entire formation. On holidays he continued to assist and share the responsibility of enhancing the growth of the family. The Italian immigrants did make a lot of impact in the life journey of young Marius in the decades.

A Missionary Encounter

In 1960, Fr. Marius was ordained. But before this very spiritual giving of oneself to God in total surrender, he came to know of a priest who belonged to the Congregation of Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, who preached a retreat to Deacon Marius for three days. Truly the Msfs Preacher made an honest and a spiritual impact in Fr. Marius' Life. Moved by curiosity Fr. Marius began to ask a few questions to the preacher to know more about the Missions of MSFS at that time.

Marius: Does your congregation have missions?



Preacher: Yes.

Preacher: Does it matter to you?

Marius: Yes.

The preacher Continued to explain to Fr. Marius about the missions of MSFS both in Brazil and India. To work in India, he needed a degree in sociology, but to work in Brazil, he needed no more further requirements but only the good will to venture.

Missionary Journey

In 1961, He made his passionate and dynamic journey to Brazil by ship while meditating to enlighten his future ministry in the soil of authentic catholic faith. On his arrival in Santos-São, Paulo received the salutation by the French Chaplain Rev Joseph Brando. His missionary and religious adventures continued along with Rev Brando and amidst the Calvarian Sisters of French origin. He did make every moment more fruitful, especially with the holy masses that he celebrated at the Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Calvary. Having gained the courage and the confidence to handle the situations, he got his placement to serve in the municipality of Caçador in the state of Santa Caterina as a Pastoral Vicar at St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, where brought forth the true spirit of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Francis de Sales for long seventeen years. In the year 1980, he took up a new mission station in Piaui, where he realized a very remarkable work of evangelization.

In 1983 he returned to São Paulo after 22 years to be the Chaplain of Saint Francis de Sales' personal Chapel after the death of Fr. Edmund. Fr. Marius always dared to bring forth true identity to this French community.



After six years of constant efforts despite all the inconveniences he got from Rev Dom Evaristo, the order – Founding Decree issue for the chapel to be a parish of St. Francis de Sales. In 1989, he was appointed as the parish priest of this new Parish. He rented his service for 36 years in this French speaking community. Today he is 87 years old, having withdrawn from his ministerial duties continues to inspire the young confreres to be zealous, sincere and warmhearted.

A Source of Inspiration

Besides the above spiritual qualities and the goodwill as a devout missionary, he is a priest that always loved the poor and the downtrodden all these years selflessly had been succumbing to the needy in the different nations, like Africa, Brazil and India. His passion for the poor and orphans shows how he looks for a better human society. May he always have the good spirit of Christ our redeemer and the protection of our heavenly Mother of Compassion!



**Rev. Fr. Stephendass MSFS
in Brazil.**

MSFS Bible Project in the YEAR of MISSIONS bears fruits slowly.

Please contact:
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





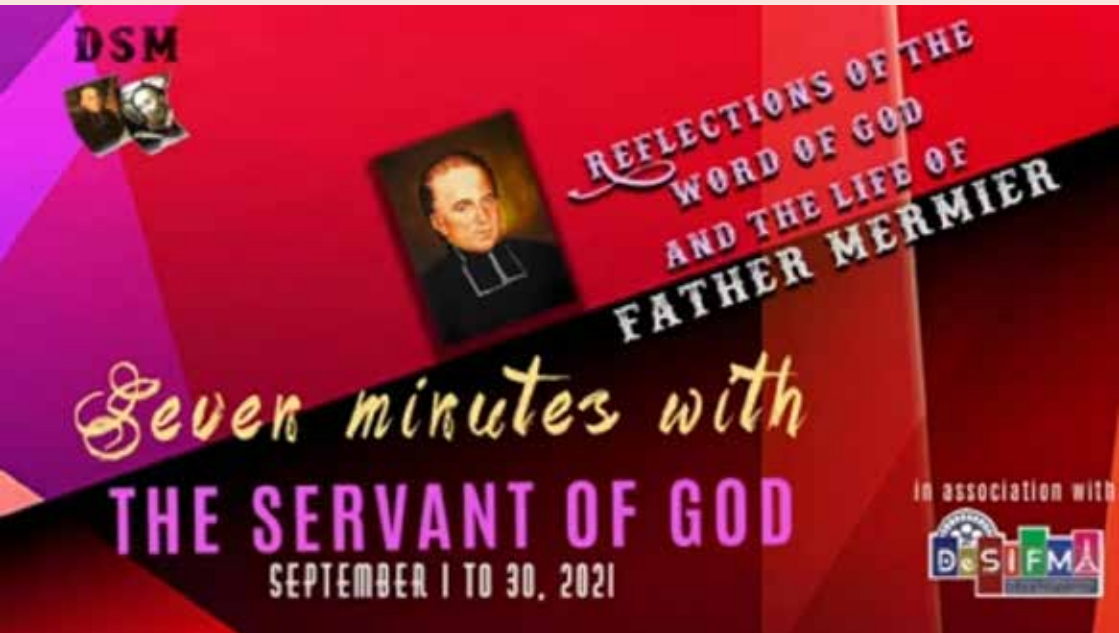
7 Minutes

*with the Servant of God Father Mermier
in the Year of Missions*

September 1, to 30, 2021

Seven minutes with the Servant of God was something unique of its kind, aiming at promoting the spirituality of Father Peter Mermier, the Founder of the Congregation of the **Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales** and the Co-Founder of the Congregation of the **Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod**. It was a collaborative effort from the

MSFS Fathers and the Holy Cross Sisters. The program was a series of short talks by the Fathers and Sisters based on certain Bible verses. The talks aimed at establishing how Fr. Mermier lived that particular message in the Bible through his life, teachings, writings as well as the vital decisions in his life.



The General Secretariate for the Mission thank you very much for the encouragement and support and for the critical feedback. We also thank DSM as well as DeSifma for all assistance.



How the 7 Minutes initiative inspired me

The short video programs on 7 minutes with the Servant of God was something revitalizing my missionary zeal and enthusiasm. I was overwhelmed to hear the missionary zeal of our founder Father Peter Mermier and in each video I could sense the importance of going to the world and proclaiming the good news. Human wisdom and the divine providence in the person and life of Father Mermier called my attention. Also his thirst for mission and to form missionaries to get out from the comfort zone is really very much encouraging. His words to our mother Claudine, “let us pray to god, let us go forward always with new confidence, let us hope that we do His work and that he will sustain it,” is a calling us to grow in our trust in God who has entrusted the mission. Once again it makes me aware of the role we have in our mission work, not as messiahs but as his disciples. Everything I may not be able to do but I can always trust in Him and His guidance in my life. Even there are times I need to realize my helplessness and entrust all my projects into his hands.

I was also touched by the creativity of our founders in the mission. Today I realize more and more that we need to be creative in our missions without sticking on to one type of work or mission. In the mission land one may not find the work to which we are used to or in which we are trained. According to the signs of time today our MSFS fathers and the Sisters of the Cross are spread around the world especially among the marginalized and in peripheries

not only geographically but also in the midst of the most needed ones.

I am glad to be a follower of Christ through the teachings of Fr. Peter Mermier and our mother Claudine Echernier in Latin America more than 26 years. Even though by profession I am a mathematics high school teacher, today I am engaged in network with the groups of anti-human trafficking, LGBT, prisoners and migrants. It is my great joy in accompanying them, supporting them and giving them the active listening and counselling through psychotherapies. I wish and desire to continue to be touched by the humble missionary dynamism of our founders and to continue to be a radical, challenging, creative, loving, compassionate and joyful missionary.

A missionary without challenge and risk does not find worth in saying that he or she is a missionary. Let us have the courage to come out of our comforts zones and move to the peripheries. This my prayerful wish to all my sisters and brothers.

I am sure that the 7 Minutes with Memier has inspired many and our Holy Founder Father Mermier rejoices over it in heaven.



*Sr. Pushpa John Cruz SCC
Peru, South America*



A critical appraisal of 'SEVEN MINUTES WITH THE SERVANT OF GOD'

One of its sorts, the maiden effort of the Congregation has 'elevated consciousness and strengthened belongingness.' The month-long journey from 'what should have happened' to 'an inspiring initiative,' was a trip down memory lane. From the pessimism of, 'could anything happen in the process of canonization' to the optimism of, 'this dimension of Fr. Mermier could change my life' has set new trends of innovation and creativity in the social media platform. From the contentment of the perennial, 'I want missions reflection' to 'the horizons of the mission of Mermier in my life' has created an urge to have it happen every year, as the views of the videos attest, though not viral!

These are some standouts:

- For the advancement of the cause of the Founder, the digital resources could well become a reference;
- Helped revive different dimensions of the spirituality of Fr. Mermier;
- Collaboration with the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod revitalized and relationship reinforced;
- Enlarged the vision of spreading the Word of God through the spirituality of Fr. Mermier by harnessing the power of social media;
- Some never-heard off areas of the spirituality in the life and teachings

of Fr. Mermier found space;

- The reading and pondering of literature related to the history and the founder revived the dying habit of reading and researching;
- The graphics, sound mix and theme music were appealing;
- Many new faces of the Congregations were given opportunity to be part of.

Well, we can enhance the quality when viewed from the angle of perfection like improvising or introducing a unified presentation model; digital quality of video and audio; a camera-conscious rehearsal and self-appraisal by the presenters, etc.

When this is introduced as an annual event of MSFS and SCC, it not only enhances our religious existence and its meaning but also collaboration, a give-and-take and in the future when he becomes a saint, we have a repository of digital resources - making us proud of our history and hegemony!



Fr. Issac John MSFS
Rome, Italy

The Cause of the Servant of God Fr Peter Marie Mermier

Rev. Fr. Thomas Kulandaisamy MSFS, the Vice Postulator writes:



- A. Present Status of the cause, report on the Rogatory Commission held in the Archdiocese of Nagpur from October 11 to 14, 2021.
- B. What happens when the documents reach the Holy See?
- C. Some of the reasons for the delay in the cause of Fr Mermier.

The Process of Sainthood



A. Present Status: Rogatory Commission in Nagpur

As of now, we have successfully completed the tribunal sessions of the Rogatory commission.¹

¹ It may be important to interview one or more witnesses living in another diocese. Although it is preferable for the witnesses to come, at the expense of the postulation, to be interviewed in the diocese of the inquiry, or for the board of inquiry to go to the diocese where the witnesses reside – with the permission of that bishop – both of these options may be unrealistic. In that case, the postulator may request the Episcopal delegate for a rogatory commission to interview the witnesses in their own diocese. Although it is not necessary, it is advisable that the postulator or vice postulator be present – without assisting at the actual interviews – during the sessions for hearing the witnesses. The postulator or vice postulator will then be able to advise the rogatory commission as to the proper method of conducting the interviews, confecting the acts, transmitting the acts, etc. and making sure that everything is done properly.

When this is done the diocesan bishop or the Episcopal delegate writes to the bishop of witnesses' diocese and requests him to establish a rogatory commission consisting of priests as the Episcopal delegate and the promoter of justice, and also to appoint a notary for the inquiry. With this request

Accomplishment of this rogatory commission is a proud moment. Nearly one year went in preparation of this event. We had around 51 witnesses total coming from all parts of India and some from other countries giving their testimony. Obviously, we needed to hold this tribunal in one of the dioceses of India. Since Nagpur had a historical importance for us MSFS, and Bishop Elias Gonsalves was very favorable and willingly accepted to appoint the necessary officials for us, we had the privilege and joy of conducting the tribunal session under the auspice of Nagpur Archdiocese. Fr John Britto Muthusamy MSFS the Provincial Superior of Nagpur was very instrumental in organizing the necessary things facilitating

he includes the questionnaires for the witness in a sealed envelope. He may request the bishop to have the Episcopal delegate set a time for the sessions when the postulator or vice postulator can be present to help prepare for the sessions and give his/her assistance without actually being present at the interviews.

the communication between the postulators and the Archdiocese of Nagpur.

Due to the present circumstances and inability of the witnesses to travel to Nagpur, we had obtained special permission from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to hold the tribunal sessions online, which the Holy See granted us with pleasure but indicating certain specific conditions to be observed.

It is noteworthy to mention at this juncture that the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod helped us greatly in gathering witnesses from their side, they had almost provided half of total 52 witness. Our special thanks to Sr Shaly Sebastian one of the General Councilors for mediating and coordinating the works with the help of contact persons in each province.

Our special thanks to Fr Sudeep Paul being the chief promoter for all the Indian Provinces, and liaising with the vice-promoters in each province. Fr Manu Joseph and Fr Domy played a vital role in organizing the various things being there on the spot in Nagpur when the tribunal sessions were on. The sessions themselves lasted for four days (i.e., 11-14 October). Each witness joined in via zoom to give their testimony.

Fr Justus Paul OP was the Episcopal delegate duly appointed by the bishop to act on his behalf. Fr Anto Kaitharath SAC was the Promoter of Justice, and Sr Vanita Macwan was the notary, and Fr. Manu Joseph was appointed as the

copyist. Depositions of the witnesses and acts of the rogatory commission would roughly be around 700 pages. This is to say that this is one of the four sessions which we already had. Others were in the diocese of Annecy (but not as many witnesses as in Nagpur).

About the Conclusion of the diocesan Phase in Annecy

We will be formally concluding the diocesan phase in a couple of months. The task ahead of us is, one thing is that we have to bridge the gap between 1993 when it was originally started, and reinitiated in 2017. Ours is not only a historical cause, but also a historical process. In 2007, there were more elaborate laws with the document *Sanctorum Mater*² issued by the Congregation of Causes of Saints. Therefore, some documents will need to be judged by the criteria applied pre-2007, and other documents by post-2007. Secondly, we are putting together the manuscripts of the writing of Fr Mermier in parallel with the typed version as per the requirements of the Holy See.

B. What happens once the documents reaches the Holy See?

First Stage: Examination of Virtues

When the copies of all records and documentation from the diocese are

2 *To read the entire document:*

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_doc_20070517_sanctorum-mater_en.html

received by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, it pertains to the undersecretary of the Congregation, under whose competence these are, to check that all that is required by law has been done. The Roman postulator requests these to be examined for validity. The undersecretary reports on this to a regular meeting of the Congregation, which issues a decree on the validity of the acts. One copy of the records and documentation is placed in the archives of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. This copy is known as the *transumptum*. The second copy is given to the Roman postulator, and is known as the *copia publica*. From this other working copies may be made.

A relator for the cause, who is to see to the progress of the cause, is nominated by the Congregation. The relator may appoint collaborators to assist in various aspects of the cause, especially in the writing of the study, *Postitio*, on the virtues/martyrdom. A Roman postulator must be approved by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. The Roman postulator resides in Rome, and deals with all matters, including finances, concerning the said Congregation and progress of the cause. The postulator has the right to appoint vice-postulators as required.

The study on the virtues (*positio super virtibus*) should contain a documented statement in chronological order of the life of the Servant of God, along with the testimony concerning sanctity. Written sources and oral testimony should be critically evaluated in their historical, religious, and social context.



The critical study of the life of the Servant of God should be preceded by the following elements, given in general outline:

- History of the cause,
- Sources and criteria used in preparing the study
- Biographical profile of the Servant of God (concise, and with reference to the exact source in the documentation);
- Details and foundation of the reputation for sanctity and virtue and its continuance until the present.

In the study on martyrdom (*positio super martyrio*),³ the martyrdom itself, its cause, and surrounding circumstances are of great importance. However, a concise account of the whole life of the Servant of God should be given also. The study on the virtues/martyrdom is given to a particular meeting (*congressus particularis*) of theological consultants presided over by the promoter of the faith. They have the task of examining the study

3 *Essential features of a martyrdom are: A cruel or violent death- any unnatural imposed death can be regarded as cruel; Willingly accepted – the person did not die cursing the persecutor; Out of hatred for the faith in general, or of a particular virtue.*

to determine the evidence for and the reality of the existence of virtue to a heroic degree, or of martyrdom.⁴

The documentation and the written opinions of the theological consultors,⁵ together with the report of the promoter of the faith, are referred to the cardinal and bishop members of the Congregation for the causes of Saints.

Second Stage: Final study – Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops

A panel of cardinal and bishop members of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints meet in an ordinary congregation (*congregatio*

⁴ *In older causes, or even in some particular recent causes, the chief relator could ask that the study be examined by historical consultors, or other experts, before being given over to the theological consultors. Should this occur, the written opinions of these historical consultors and/or other experts, together with explanations of the relator, if necessary, are to be appended to the study when given to the theological consultors.*

⁵ *A two third majority voting in favor is required for approval. Note: votes can be positive, suspended or negative. Any matters which receive any suspended or negative votes are referred back to the relator of the cause for his explanation and or clarification, and this is included in the report of the promoter of the faith. Any matters receiving a majority of suspended or negative votes are referred back to the relator for his further consideration and research, and are presented again at a subsequent particular meeting.*

ordinaria) to examine the study on the virtues/martyrdom, together with the opinions of the theological consultors and the promoter of the faith. One of the cardinal or bishop members of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints is appointed as ponens of the cause and he addresses the Ordinary Congregation. He presents and defends the case for the cause under discussion. The findings of the ordinary congregation of cardinals and bishops is referred to the Holy Father by the Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

The Holy Father approves the publication of the decree on the heroicity of virtues/martyrdom of the servant of God, who may henceforth be referred to as Venerable.

Approval of Miracle⁶

⁶ *Please note before we go to submit the dossier on miracle, obviously and logically, an inquiry on a reported miracle is to be carried out in the diocese in which the miracle occurred. It is a separate process from an inquiry on virtues or martyrdom of a servant of God. If the inquiry into the reported miracle is held before the completion of the diocesan process, the diocesan postulator handles it. If the inquiry is held after the completion of the diocesan process, the Roman postulator appoints a diocesan postulator for the inquiry on the reported miracle, or may see to it himself.*

The competent postulator is to submit to the competent bishop a brief, accurate report on the alleged miracle with documents pertaining to it, and request the bishop to establish

Only after the degree on the heroicity of virtues/martyrdom is issued, may the matter of miracles in a cause be discussed by the Congregation. A proven miracle is required for beatification. Another miracle, occurring after beatification, is required to be proven for canonization. It is usual practice not to require a proven miracle for beatification in the causes of martyrs. However, a miracle is always required for the canonization of a martyr. A study or position on miracle (*positio super miraculo*) is prepared containing an exposition of the facts, the findings of the diocesan inquiry and all documentation. An in-depth study of all facets of the case is made independently by two medical experts appointed by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

If at least one of the two gives a positive judgment as to the worth of the claimed cure, the case may proceed. The written findings of the two medical experts are then referred to a further five medical experts for study and evaluation. The seven medical experts come together after individual examination of the evidence to form a panel (*coetus medicorum*). They discuss

the inquiry. The bishop will seek a preliminary opinion from one or two experts. If this opinion is favorable, the bishop will establish a juridical inquiry with requisite officials, and conduct the examination of the witnesses along the lines described above concerning the inquiry on the life and virtues of the servant of God.



and vote on the matter, and their conclusions are added to the study. A two-third majority voting in favor is required for approval. In a group of seven, a two-thirds majority is five.

The study on a miracle (*positio super miraculo*) will then be examined by the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints in a similar manner to the examination of the study on the virtues/martyrdom, i.e., by a special congress of experts/theologians, and then by an ordinary congregation of a panel of its cardinal and bishop members. A full report of these examinations is presented to the Holy Father, who then decides to proceed with the ceremony of beatification.

Third Stage: Beatification and Canonization

The declaration of beatification is made by the Holy Father – usually in a liturgical celebration, generally in Rome, or in the country in which the Servant of God lived, worked or died. By beatification the title of *blessed* is bestowed, and public liturgical cult is permitted. This is usually restricted to nominated institutes/places associated with the new *blessed*. Requests from competent authorities to extend the exercise of public cult may be granted.

For canonization, the presentation and approval of a further miracle, which occurred after beatification through the intercession of the blessed, is required. The process of the examination and approval of the miracle for canonization is the same, on both diocesan and roman levels, as that for the miracle prior to beatification. Canonization, by the Holy Father, bestows the title of saint. This may lead to insertion into the liturgical calendar of the Universal Church.

Once the enquiry at the diocesan level is completed, and all the documents sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, the cause enters into second phase. Secondly, the juridical validity of the cause is done, and the *positio* is prepared. Then we have the third phase, which also takes place at the Congregation in Rome. It consists in the discussion or judgment on the merits of the cause by the different organs within the dicastery.

C. Reasons for the delay in the Cause of Fr Mermier

As Missionaries of St Francis de Sales, we often come across people taunting with this question or asking us, why your founder not even a blessed yet, while all the other congregations which came later have not only their founder become a saint, but a couple of others? Well, it's quite natural to get these types of questions asked or bombarded with!

But, it's important to remember that within seven years of our foundation, out of 14 members, six confreres

were already sent as missionaries to India answering the invitation of Propaganda Fide and responding to the urgency of the mission.

Besides that, in 1903, after about 50 years of our foundation, we lost our mother house, because of religious persecution in France, and our fathers had to flee Annecy having all their belongings hurriedly packed, and the archives all in disarray, some lost, others misplaced. The two world wars added fuel to the fire, and these unfortunate events never permitted us to consolidate ourselves as we would have wished.

In addition to all these, our founder Fr Mermier never thought he needed to be the center of attention, always on the mission of preparing missionaries and sending them out to India responding to the urgency of the call. The missionaries had nothing else in mind except mission, and people who needed them the most, to bring the light of Christ to those buried in ignorance and darkness.

It was the call of Vatican II to go back to the sources and later in the 1980s when Fr Adrian Duval who was the Superior General commissioned to gather and compile the letters written by Fr Mermier, that invigorated us towards a renewed interest in our founder. Having initiated the cause of sainthood in 1990s, reinitiated in 2019 which died down during the interim period, we have brought the cause forward now, and we are nearly at the end of the diocesan phase.

Conclusion

It is not an exhaustive article neither on the cause of Fr Mermier or causes in general. The intention was that you have a cursory glimpse on the cause of Fr Mermier and its present status. One thing we would ask you to do is to keep spreading the devotion to Fr Mermier. We need one radical extraordinary miracle to take him to the next stage of beatification. All the works we are doing (in fact 80% work of the entire process which is normally the case in any cause) is aimed for the title 'Venerable', which perhaps many of us may not be aware of.

May God bless every effort that we make in this regard. May

our holy founder Father Peter Mermier bless his sons and daughters the *Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales* and the *Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod*.



*Rev. Fr. Thomas Kulandaisamy MSFS,
the Vice Postulator*



The saintly smile!

A pencil drawing of the image of
Fr. Peter Mermier

by **Ms Joicy Joy Eriyanickal**

We are wanted !!
in PERU



MSFS Moving to another new Mission, new Nation in South America

VISIT TO ARCHDIOCESE OF AREQUIPA, PERU

After working in Ecuador for a few years and having the required missionary competence, and with the standing invitations from a few dioceses in South America, it was the felt need to extend our missionary and pastoral presence in the neighbouring country of Peru. With this purpose in mind, at the request of the Provincial Administration and the General Administration, a study visit was conducted. It was a historical moment when, Fr. John Kennedy MSFS and Fr. Melky Fernandes MSFS visited the Archdiocese of Arequipa, Peru on September 7, 2021.

The Archbishop His Grace Javier Augusto



Del Río Alba, and His Lordship Raúl Antonio Chau Quispe, the Auxiliary Bishop extended a warm Welcome to the missionaries.

The Auxiliary Bishop took the priests around different places to know the Archdiocese better and proposed to us a few parishes / missions. There is a new scope to extend our MSFS presence in Peru. The archbishop is very open and invites our congregation to implant our missionary presence in his Archdiocese. While he was talking to





the confreres, he mentioned that he was inspired by the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and this was the reason why he wanted the MSFS to work in his Archdiocese.

By the grace and blessings of the Almighty we the MSFS may start our first community in the Archdiocese in January 2022 and a second community is planned in May 2022. Let us hope and pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may be enlightened, guided and strengthened to begin our mission in the Archdiocese of Arequipa, Peru. May God bless this plan.

We express our sincere appreciation to Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS our

beloved Superior General and the General Curia, Fr. Jayaseean MSFS the Provincial Superior of the Pune Province and the Provincial Curia and Fr. John Kennedy MSFS the Mission Superior in Ecuador and the confreres working in Ecuador for this initiative and their great missionary zeal.

May our Patron St. Francis de Sales, bless this plan!

May Mother of Compassion be our strength!

May Father Mermier continue to inspire us with his prayers and blessings!

The name Peru is derived from a Quechua word implying land of abundance, a reference to the economic wealth produced by the rich and highly organized Inca civilization that ruled the region for centuries. The country's vast mineral, agricultural, and marine resources long have served as the economic foundation of the country, and, by the late 20th century, tourism had also become a major element of Peru's economic development.

" Meekness IS NOT WEAKNESS "

MATTHEW 5:3-12

The Qualities Required of a Missionary Today

Inspirations from St. Francis de Sales

Part 1 Humility

Part 2 Meekness

In the last issue, we reflected on the virtue of humility as one of the qualities of a Missionary. This great and eminent virtue is never alone in its functioning. This is a virtue most loved by our Saviour and his blessed Mother, along with the millions of saints who walked the path of humility. Humility is a virtue which is also accompanied by another equally important virtue which our Saviour loved most along with humility. He invited his disciples to learn from him how to be meek and humble. He demanded from his followers a meekness that is emanating from one's heart.

Meekness is the prominent virtue exercised by St. Francis de Sales. He teaches the advantages of being meek, and from his rich experience, he shows us the benefits of practising meekness in with others and with oneself. According to Pope Pius XI, "Endowed with every virtue, he excelled in meekness of heart, a virtue so particular to himself that it might be considered his most

characteristic trait" (Pope Paul XI, *Rerum O m n i u m Perturbationem* No.6). Meekness is considered to be the most predominant character of Francis de Sales.



Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS

Considering the fact that he was a person who had been excellent in all that he did and in all that he was, it is not wrong to say that he had a special affinity towards meekness. The success of his life as a son to his parents, a student to his teachers, a lawyer to his clients, a priest to his Bishop and his people, the great missionary to the antagonistic people in Chablais, a Bishop to his flock and a loving spiritual director to his formees, depended on his practice of the virtue of meekness. But no one should take it for granted that it was a God-given gift he received it freely and passively.

He acquired the virtue of meekness as a result of constant struggle and cooperation with the grace of God. It

was never an easy task for Francis de Sales to practice meekness. He had to fight against his natural instincts as he was hot tempered and could be aroused to anger easily, even at the slightest provocation. His self-awareness was great, but his desire to subdue his passions was still greater. He fought courageously and continuously without being discouraged, even at the insignificant failure.

He did constant watch over himself and did violence to his will that he was successful in harnessing the promptings of nature to be violent and impulsive. Over the years of struggles of taming his passions, the result was fascinating! Francis de Sales became a living image of the humility and gentleness of his Master. According to the testimony given by the doctors who embalmed his body before the burial, it was found that his bile had been turned into stone which had been broken into tiny particles. According to the physicians, this phenomenon is the result of the great struggles the saint underwent in making his natural inclinations subject to his will.

How can a missionary draw many souls to Christ through his likeness to Christ? **According to Pope Francis, the best way to become a missionary of the Gospel is to 'take on the style of Jesus'.** The style of Jesus is inevitably to be meek and humble of heart.

Francis de Sales insists on the importance of making a thorough examination of one's interior affections in order to check on one's passion and anger. "This wretched life is a journey to the happy life to come. We must not be angry, but rather we must march on as a band of brothers and companions united in meekness, peace and love" (SFS. IDL III.8).

There are occasions which give rise to great tide of passions in our soul, especially that of anger and arrogance.



They come to us and subdue us unaware. The aftermath of these outbreaks of passions is often catastrophic. It affects our spiritual life, social life, community life and our personal life as well. Often many of us are branded as hot tempered and arrogant priests because of our failure to curb our passions.

Every missionary is sent to the missions as a lamb among wolves (Lk 10:3). Missionary life is not always a pleasant work. We have to face many wolves in our ministry. **And we must take extreme care that we don't get transformed into wolves because of our passions and anger.** It is necessary to imitate the courage of St. Francis de Sales to be meek and humble. Then we shall have many souls drawn to the Lord. Walk the way of Francis de Sales and walk it with courage and without the fear of failure.

Live Jesus!

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



**The Carol Singers at MSFS Parish in Goa, India
Our Lady of Fatima Church
Cotto de Fatorpa, GOA**



It is a fact that people are always well aware of what is due to them. Unfortunately, they remain oblivious of what they owe to others.

St. Francis de Sales