

# Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, Nagpur Province



# CIRCULAR

To All the Members of the Province

MT-01,2023

26 August 2023



## Provincial's Itinerary

### September

- 05 - Aurangabad-FTI
- 06 - CIDCO
- 07 - Jalna
- 09 - Nanded
- 10 - Kinwat
- 14 - Nagpur
- 27 - Seraikela
- 28 - Sini
- 29 - Badadurgapur
- 30 - Kandor

### October

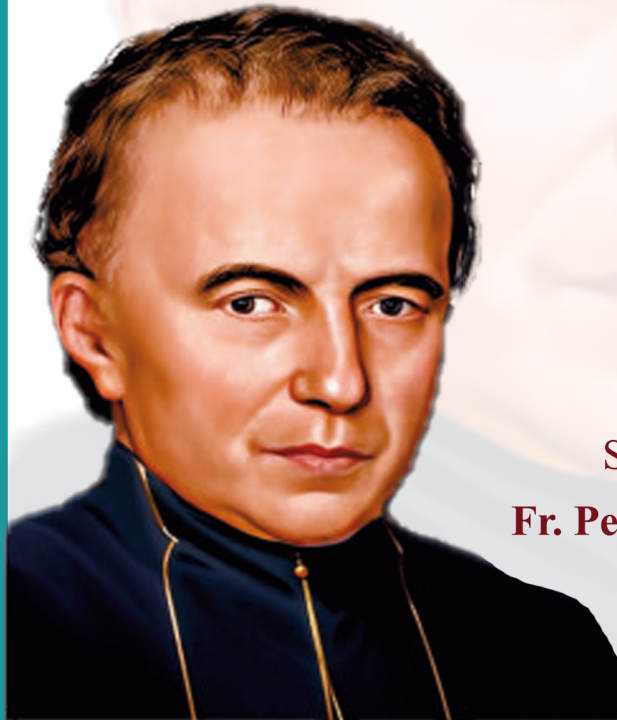
- 01 - SAIM Meet at Nagpur
- 04 - Bano
- 06 - Panderpalli
- 07 - Bamra
- 09 - Latapara
- 11 - Ambapani
- 12 - Raidhi
- 14 - Jhajar
- 15 - Vinayasadan
- 16 - Mahima
- 17 - Nemuch
- 23 - PMP Meet at Nagpur

"Man proposes and God disposes, we are in the hands of God: He is a good Father. We can be better nowhere else than in the arms of His Divine Will. I say therefore: May this most Holy and most lovable will be done".

-Fr. Mermier's Letter to Fr. Cheminal,  
29 January 1843.

## 233 Birth Anniversary of Our Founder

28/08/1790-28/08/2023



Servant of God  
**Fr. Peter Marie Mermier**

### MSFS PROVINCIALATE

23, 24 Residency Road, Sadar, Nagpur 440001

Ph: 91-712-2527805. Mobile: 08825671090



provincialnagpurmsfs@gmail.com; mtmanojmsfs@gmail.com  
provincialbursarnagpur@gmail.com; xalxomsfs@gmail.com  
secretaryprovincialnagpur@gmail.com; manimsfs@gmail.com



# From the Office of the Provincial

**Dear Confreres,**

My loving and fraternal greetings to each one of you from Nagpur Provincialate! On 15 August 2023 I took charge of animating and guiding our Province as its sixth Provincial. This is my first letter to all of you, and I hope this will be the beginning of a long journey together, with the Lord walking alongside each one of us. The General Council of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales met on 01 July 2023, and decided to appoint me as the Provincial Superior of Nagpur Province. I am fully aware that the responsibility of animating and leading the Province is very demanding and challenging. However, trusting in the power and providence of God I have accepted it and decided to commit myself to the service of the Province, the Congregation and the Church at large. As per the tradition of the Province, I was installed on 15 August 2023 during the solemn Eucharistic celebration which was presided over by His Grace Archbishop Elias Gonsalves of Nagpur Archdiocese, concelebrated by Provincials, former Provincials, confreres, diocesan priests, and witnessed by religious sisters and a few invited guests.

## **Gratitude**

“What thanks O Lord can I render Thee for all the gifts thou hast showered on me?” I make the sentiments of the Psalmist my own as I express my deep sense of gratitude to Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, the Superior General and to the General Curia for their faith and trust in me. I also would like to thank Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu the Provincial of Visakhapatnam Province, Rev. Fr. Johnson Gonsalves, the Provincial of Pune Province, and Rev. Fr. Jayaseelan the former Provincial of Pune Province for their presence during my installation ceremony. As we look back to the past six years of the life of our Province, let us be grateful to the Lord who has done marvels through each one of us. At this juncture, I would like to thank Rev. Fr. John Britto Muthuswamy for his dedicated and generous services to the Province for the past six years (2017-2023).

Dear Fr. Muthuswamy, as the leader and the guide of the Province for the past six years, you worked hard to ensure qualitative growth of each individual as well as of each institution and parish. Having so much experience and expertise in the field of education you always had the vision of adding needed facilities to the existing infrastructure. Your frequent posts in ‘Fransalian Educators’, the Education Forum WhatsApp group, bears testimony that you are up to date with all the changing trends in the field of education. When it comes to construction, we have seen your passion, enthusiasm and total involvement in the project till its completion. I also look at you with admiration for travelling far and wide to visit communities

and confreres to animate and to guide them. At times your health didn't permit you to move around, yet your sense of commitment to the responsibility gave you the needed strength and stamina to visit places and to animate confreres and communities.

Dear Fr. Muthuswamy, we the Province members will always remain indebted to you for your leadership, mentorship and guidance to the Province for the past six years. You stood strong no matter how strong the storms of life were in times of challenges, setbacks and hardships. You always remained focused knowing fully well what you were supposed to do. Your firmness and determination to do things on your own proves that you always wanted to give your best in everything you did. Hence it would not be wrong to say that you always sought perfection not only in big things but even in small things.

My dear confreres, at this juncture we express our sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Muthuswamy who guided and animated the Province as the Provincial Superior for two terms, with single minded devotion to God and to his office. He has just laid down his office after six years. We assure him our prayerful support in all his future undertakings and endeavours. May God bless him with good health and happiness in life.

## **Convocation of the Provincial Chapter 2023**

As per the requirement of our Constitutions, the newly appointed Provincial Superior is to convoke the Provincial Chapter/Congress within three months of his appointment, with the explicit consent of the Superior General (Article 228). In consultation with Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, the Superior General and as per the provisions of the Constitutions, **I hereby convoke the Provincial Chapter 2023, to be held at the MSFS Provincialate, Nagpur, from 10th November, 4.00 pm to 13th November, 1.00 pm.**

The theme of the Provincial Chapter is **“LIVE AND BE A VISIBLE SIGN OF OUR CHARISM”**.

The Provincial Chapter is a symbol of fraternal union and a forum of collective discernment and accountability for the life and mission of the entire Province (Article 234). The whole Province will have to be so well prepared that it becomes truly an occasion for a thorough evaluation, discovery of greater inner strength and a joint attempt to find ways and means to make the spiritual life and mission of the Province more vibrant and effective. It is obligatory on the part of all members to participate wholeheartedly in the preparation of the Chapter (Article 235). All communities are requested to pray for the success of the Chapter during the daily spiritual activities. It is a spiritual event by which all of us are expected to gain inner strength to make the mission of Jesus more vibrant and people oriented. The modes and modalities of the Provincial Chapter 2023 will be soon shared.



## **The Steering Committee:**

Chairperson: Fr. Manoj Tirkey

Convenor: Fr. Sylvester Xalxo

## **Members:** Fr. Jnanamani

Fr. Vishwas T.

Fr. Arun P.

Fr. Bosco P.

Fr. Rakesh K.

Fr. Christuraj

## **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR THE PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 2023**

(To be recited in communities from 01 September to 10 November 2023)

God, our Loving Father!

We praise and thank you for your merciful and faithful love.  
We surrender to you our infidelities, selfishness and pride and seek  
your forgiveness.

Pour your Holy Spirit on all of us, the members of Nagpur  
Province,  
as we prepare for our Provincial Chapter 2023 and 21st General  
Chapter of our Congregation.

In these moments of Your Grace and our conversion,  
we implore you to transform us  
and set us free to be true and joyful in our vocation.

We thank you for the charism you gave to Fr Mermier, our Founder  
and to each of us through our religious consecration as MSFS.

Deepen our knowledge and practice of the spiritual way  
shown to us by St Francis de Sales;  
Knit our hearts with bonds of fraternal communion in our  
communities;  
Set us on fire with missionary zeal  
to give witness to Jesus. and proclaim His Good News;  
Awaken in us undistracted awareness, affection and devotion  
to your Risen Living Presence and Love in our daily moments of  
life.

Yes, Father! We want to live our charism  
so that we may “live Jesus” and “give Jesus” to the world,  
as did our Mother Mary of Compassion.  
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**L: Mary, Mother of Compassion. ---- Pray for us**  
**L: St Francis de Sales. ---- Pray for us.**  
**L: Blessed Father Peter Mermier. ---- Intercede for us**



## OUR HEARTS FILLED WITH GRATITUDE SAY THANKS FR. MUTHUSWAMY FOR YOUR SIX YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Fr. Melroy Almeida MSFS



On 15th August 2017 Fr. Muthuswamy took charge as the 5th Provincial of Nagpur Province. Putting his full trust in God he accepted the responsibility and ministry of animation and leadership. He believed that “When problems come into your life like non-stop rain, God will always be your umbrella.” Administration was not a new ball game for him as he worked as Provincial Councilor for three terms under three Provincials. He certainly saw at close quarters how his predecessors

functioned and he picked up their administrative skills. He also was for many years in school administration as Principal, during which he did a commendable job of bringing up the standard of the schools in academics and games. All these experiences certainly stood him in good stead, when the mantle of administration of the Province was placed on his shoulders.

**1) He was a person on the move:** He regularly visited the communities and ensured that everything was moving in the right direction. He gave instructions, advice and guidance whenever it was needed.

**2) He was a person who always wanted to do something new and innovative:** He ensured that the latest and best facilities available in the market were acquired and placed at the disposal of the students for their intellectual growth. He also provided for infrastructural development and interior decoration to improve the ambience of the place. The latest being the Provincialate chapel and dining hall. When I entered it for the first time I said; “Wow! Banquet Hall of Tuli International.”

**3) He was a man of prayer:** He spent a lot of time in the presence of the Lord and he constantly heard the Lord telling him; “My grace is sufficient for you.” Before he left on a long journey he spent some time before the Lord. So his Guardian Angel was always there to protect him.

**4) He was a community person:** Faithfulness to community life was another hallmark of his. Like our Founder Fr. Mermier he believed that it is good for brothers to live together and have things in common. “He had no preferences in choosing to live with members.” said a former Provincial. He would always say that religious life and community life are two sides of the same coin. In his meetings he insisted that the Local Superiors ensured that the confreres are regular in community life, especially being present for the daily Eucharist, prayers, meals, meetings, etc. Regular seminars for the Local Superiors were organized, the latest being held on 14th August 2023, a day before he laid down his office.



**5) He was always available for the Province and its members:** “His response to the needs of the Province in giving his services at the request of the Provincial was always positive.” said a former Provincial. Being of this obedient disposition, he expected the same from his confreres. He was very cordial in his relationship with confreres, devoid of all cultural, regional and other considerations. He never looked for any kind of prominence and self-esteem.

**6) He has a great passion for sports and games:** As long as his health permitted he was very active particularly on the basketball court. With this same enthusiasm he promoted sports and games in the schools he worked. The same passion he continued as Provincial. This is seen in the sports facilities that he insisted upon in the upcoming schools. He also encouraged confreres to play, do physical exercises and go for daily walks.

**7) He is a voracious reader:** “The one who reads, leads.” He spends a lot of time updating himself about the latest happenings in the world. Be it from the newspapers, magazines, the T. V. or Google. Dining table sharing and discussions was the best time to interact on various topics.

**8) He is a friendly, welcoming and caring person:** He showed deep concern for confreres, especially the seniors and the sick. This was specially seen during the Covid-19 period. Despite being sick he ensured that others were properly taken care of. I can personally vouch for it.

**9) He is a person who accepted pain and suffering with patience and equanimity:** Six years of his Provincialship has taken a toll on his health, especially suffering from severe backache, but he has taken it in his stride. He did not complain but did his best as his health permitted. When duty demanded he went to visit confreres or see the progress in the new projects undertaken. What better gift can we your confreres give to a person like you? What more but the assurance of our prayers for God’s healing touch in order to enjoy good health and happiness!

**10) He is a person with green fingers:** In 2015 Pope Francis wrote *Laudato Si*, an encyclical on the need to protect the environment. Fr. Muthuswamy was an ardent environmentalist much before this document was published. Flower, fruit and vegetable plants adorned various places he worked. Presently the most visible example being the garden of the Provincialate. Particularly seen is a variety of seasonal vegetables and flowers. It was admired by all those who visited the place. Being his good neighbours we would regularly get a share of his hard work and supervision.

We can write a lot more but we will restrict it to these 10 points. I conclude with the words expressed by one of our confreres. “Thanks galore Fr. Muthu for your yeoman service, your compassionate outlook on life, stress free animation, encouraging and purposeful orientation, and never tired spirit. The chair you carried on your shoulders had its tremendous moral and social responsibility. Often as onlookers, we do not realize how difficult it is to shoulder authority, discern and discuss religious and Church issues and execute decisions, hoping that the best comes out. We salute the bravery of listening to criticism, etc....”

May God reward you abundantly as you hand over the baton of animation and leadership to our young and dynamic confrere, Fr. Manoj Tirkey. Our prayer for you Fr. Manoj is to remember that, “When you have faith in God, you don’t have to worry about the future. You just know it’s all in His hands. You just go ahead and do your best.” Thanks once again Fr. Muthuswamy. All the best Fr. Manoj.

# I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH HIM WHO STRENGTHENS ME



Fr. Melky MSFS



15th August is a significant day in the history of Nagpur Province. It is on this day that the Province was given an official start. It always coincides with the Installation of the New Provincial Elect. This year, i.e. 15th August 2023, Rev. Fr. Manoj Tirkey was installed as the 6th Provincial of Nagpur Province during the solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by His Grace Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves and concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Johnson Gonsalves, Provincial of Pune Province, Rev. Fr. Suresh Babu, Provincial of Vishakhapatnam Province, Rev. Fr. Jayaseelan, former Provincial of Pune Province and Rev. Fr. Muthuswamy, the outgoing Provincial of Nagpur Province. Provincials of different Women Congregations, religious sisters, MSFS confreres, priests of the Diocese, and the other guests were present. The mother, aunt of Fr. Manoj, and two religious nuns who are his cousins were present. Archbishop Elias in his homily stressed on the importance of cooperation of the members and a mutual helping mentality for the smooth sailing of a person

in leadership. After the homily began the Installation Ceremony. During the ceremony Fr. Manoj pledged his faith in the basic teachings of the Church and the obligation to administer the Province in the true spirit of his God given authority. The ceremony was very solemn and it ended with a concluding prayer by Fr. Manoj. After Mass a felicitation programme was held to honour the dignitaries and special invitees. All the dignitaries shared their messages and congratulated the new Provincial. The programme came to an end with a delicious meal in which all joyfully partook.







## A GOOD SUPERIOR CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Fr Peter Thomas MSFS



The Annual Local Superior's meeting/animation program was held on 14-08-2023 at the MSFS Provincialate, Nagpur. The meeting began at 8.45 a.m. by invoking the presence of God and lighting of the lamp. Fr. Singarayar SVD was introduced and welcomed by Fr. Wilson Abraham on behalf of all the Local Superiors present. In his talks the resource person emphasized that educating the Local Superior is equal to educating every confrere in the Province. The session began on a remarkable note "You are the Church." The talks were mainly based on the ideas shared by the different authors, concepts discussed in various meetings and his personal reflections and experiences. Leadership is raising one's own vision and performance to higher standards and building one's personality beyond normal limitations. Reflections were shared on different models of Leadership - Love Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Relational Leadership, Graced Companionship, etc.

The Biblical leaders are the best examples to reflect on the leadership traits of Jesus. A leader should be able to monitor, direct, guide, instruct, advise, facilitate and attend to the needs of the other in every walk of life. A leader should follow certain conflict resolving strategies during moments of disagreements such as maintain emotional



balance and leading people towards mediation, negotiation, collaboration, compromise, problem solving, emotional intelligence, accommodating problems, avoiding coemptions, practice active listening, perspective taking, maintain a positive attitude, use humor when it is appropriate and create a culture of open communication and stress management.

After the animation program the Provincial shared his views. He strongly reiterated that the local communities are the representation of the Province in small units. Just as a family has a head so also local communities have their appointed Local Superiors who can make a difference in the life and mission of the members. The meeting concluded at 5:00 pm with a short prayer. The concluding Eucharistic celebration was at 7.00 pm. After the mass, during the felicitation ceremony in the dining hall, the resource person was honoured and appreciated. It was followed by a sumptuous dinner.

## A New Addition to the Salesian Literature

The book titled “Relevance of the Life and Teachings of St Francis de Sales” is an outcome of the MSFS Nagpur Province’s series of recollections talks conducted during the period 2022-2023 that was declared as the year of St Francis de Sales in commemoration of the quatercentenary of our patron’s death. We were privileged to release it on 15th August during the installation function of the new provincial of our province. His Grace most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, Archbishop of Nagpur released it and gave the first copy to the new provincial. I express my congratulation and gratitude to Rev. Dr. Domy Thomas the chief editor and the co-editors Fr. Issac John and Fr. Wilson Abraham who tirelessly worked to make this project a reality. I also congratulate and thank our confreres who transcribed their thought content of the recollections talk material for publication purpose. They are Fr Agnelo Fernandes, Fr Francis Venmenikettayil, Fr. Allen Gonsalves, Fr. Manoj Tirkey, Fr. Benedict De Souza, Fr. Issac John, Fr William Anthony, Fr Wilson Abraham, Fr Moises Goma, Fr Melroy Almeida and Fr Robin Parapuram. Fr Tom Kanat did the type setting and Fr Lalji Pattathil made the cover design. I am sure that this book will be an asset to the Salesian Literature and it will help many for the spiritual growth. Congratulations to the editorial team and all the other confreres who worked for this book.





## BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM LORD

Fr. Melky MSFS

Every chapel is a place of prayer and worship. Prayer has been the hallmark of Salesian Spirituality, no matter whatever profession one is engaged in. The MSFS have always kept this sacred place holy and serene. On 31st July 2023, the newly renovated Chapel at the MSFS Provincialate, Nagpur was blessed and inaugurated by His Grace Most Rev. Elias Gonsalves, the Archbishop of Nagpur. The chapel was given a facelift and architectural change with a theological meaning and significance. The decorated sanctuary contains at its very centre the triple cross model. It's a cross within a cross. There are five paintings on the ceiling, which summarize the life of Jesus. This renovated chapel is a replica of the Byzantine structural outlook of the Church, wherein the ambience enhances one's realization of the Divine presence and a discerning silence leads to God experience. Thus, this renovated Chapel is the place of exhilarating ambience to seek and find the Divine. Archbishop Elias in his homily reiterated that the Chapel is to be considered as the place of salvific mystery and personal encounter with the one who lived those mysteries by word and deed. Fr. Muthuswamy, Provincial Superior of Nagpur Province, Fr. Joy, Provincial Superior of the Pallottines, Nagpur, 30 priests and religious nuns were present for the occasion. After Mass, a short felicitation programme was held. Fr. Roy SAC who was the main brain of the work was felicitated along with his team of workers and designers. The programme came to an end with a sumptuous meal.





# Province Annual Retreat

As announced earlier (ref. JBM 52 Dated 29/07/2023) the Province Retreat for the Group I, will be held at MSFS Provincialate, Nagpur, from 18th - 23th September 2023. The retreat begins on 18th November and ends on 23rd November by evening. It is mandatory for all the members to attend the annual retreat as per the list given below unless you have received prior permission from the Provincial to be absent. Requests to change groups for retreat will not be entertained without a valid reason.

## **1st Group (September 18-23)**

Sebastian Annaikandathil, Simplicio Rocha,, Pius Gonsalves, Joseph Plathottam, Joseph Pullopillil, Agnelo Fernandes, Emmanuel Vattamattam, John Carvalho, Jose Parampukkatil, Barnabas Xalxo, Melroy Almeida, Ignatius D Costa, Peter Dominic, Benedict De Souza, Emile Tirkey, Shantwan Khutekar, John Britto Muthuswamy, Philip Maleparampil, David Paul, Austin Correia, Oscar Kujur, Joseph Kailamangalam, John Dive, Marcus Ruptake, Manoj Tireky, Kulandai Raj, Lalit Tigga, Bijay Kerketta, Kamil Tete, Petrus Kullu, Domy Vallomkunnel, Deepak Kindo, Peter Kujur, Anand Kullu, Arun Ekka, Anson Kaliyath, Ramesh Damala, Cyprian Dungdung, Lalji Pattathil, Jinoy Kopy, Gijo Francis, Anto Thomas, Anil Pandit Ratan, Vinayanand Katru, Roshan Tigga, Santhosh Kumar, Michael Toppo, John Parkhe, Ambrose Minj, Sujith Minz, Deepak Baa, Amrit Kujur, Joseph Gollapudi.

## **2nd Group (December 26-31)**

Thomas Kuttiankal, Scaria Kadamkulam, Jose Mudavankunnel, Mathew Thayil, Joseph Kalekattil, Peter Paul, George Joseph Kurickal, Mathews Kodamullil, Richard Tirkey, Vishwas Torne, Anil George, Wilson Abraham, Alphonse Arockiaswamy, Solomon Sahayaraj, Johnson Parikkapilly, Shijumon Mangalath, Marianus Kujur, Vinsent Minj, Anthony Amaladoss, Patras Tirkey, William Anthony, Allan Gonsalves, Selbestar Xalxo, Bosco P, Lajarus Soreng, Amal Raju Bandanadam, Saiju Vettukallel, Ignathi Kshirsagar, Silbester Kullu, Christhu Raja, Arun P, Nobit Kombanathottathil, Sudhir Kujur, Paul Varambinakam, Hilarus Tirkey, Rakesh Kerketta, Telesfor Lakra, Peter Thomas, Sandeep Tirkey, John Ruptake, Albin Joseph, Anto Varghese, Jomon Mathew, Lijohn Kachappilly, John Peter, Jnanamani, Yobu Melkie Sadhek S, Manu Joseph, Anto Deepak, Anoop Francis, Santosh Soreng, Battula kalyan, Rajat Kumar Digal, Amit Tirkey, Sanjay Lakra.

## Celebration of the Year of Fransalian Youth

As our Superior General convoked this year as the Year of Fransalian Youth. We are asked to organize various animation programmes and competition for the youth in all our parishes. As directed by the Youth director through the letter, all the parishes to elect the ex-officio members on 27 August 2023.

All the parish priests are requested to organize animation programmes for the



youth to mark the Year of Fransalian Youth in their own respective parishes. The in-charge of youth should send the photos of the programmes conducted in the parishes to the Youth Director. Regarding the celebration of Year of Youth at Province level is tentatively scheduled for 23 to 25 November 2023 at MSFS Provincialate, Nagpur.

### Information

#### Feasts in September:

8th -Nativity of the Blessed Mother

15th -Feast of Mother of Compassion,

30th -Founder's Day.

Let's prepare ourselves spiritually for the above-mentioned feast by conducting novenas. Communities can celebrate the feasts meaningfully in the manner that best suits them.

Bros. Brajil Baa & Bishal Kuillu will be going to ARUSHA for their Philosophical studies.

30th September - Fr. Lalji George will be leaving for SPA Programme.

- Fr. Sujit Minz will be going to France for the Pastoral Ministry

01 & 02 October - SAIM Meet at Nagpur with General Councilor

23 to 26 October - PMP Meet at Nagpur with General Secretary

10 to 13 November - Provincial Chapter

23 to 25 November - Celebration of the Year of Fransalian Youth at Province Level

Hearty Congragulations Thank You & Best Wishes



**Rev.Fr. Johnson Gonsalves MSFS**



**Rev.Fr. Jayaseelan Selvaraj MSFS**

*In Loving Memory of*



**Rev. Fr. Joseph Pulickal MSFS**

**Birth : 18-02-1933**

**Death : 15-08-2023**

**Visakhapatnam Province**



**Rev. Fr. Saji Tharayil MSFS**

**Birth : 12-08-1966**

**Death : 18-08-2023**

**Guwahati Province**

**Let us pray for the sick**

For the Speedy recovery of Mrs. Thangam Lucas Mother of Fr. L. Yesudoss

**Let us pray for the Deaprted**

For the departed soul of Mr. Christopher Kerketta, Father of Bro. Benedict Kerketta

For the departed soul of Mr. Elias Lakra, Parental uncle of Fr. Telefor Lakra



## Salesian Thought



"The motivation with which you perform some action may be far more important and powerful than the action itself".

Yours Fraternally in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Manoj Tirkey".

Fr. Manoj Tirkey MSFS  
Provincial Superior

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

### About Fr. Mermier's First Appointment as Priest?

His first appointment was at Magland in 1813 and he was an assistant pastor to Fr. Desjacques.

He was an over zealous priest, he spent his time in late night updating his theology and preparing for the ministry of the next day. His pastor gently cautioned him to moderate his zeal by telling him not to burn all the candles.



## Listen to our Founder

"I have totally dedicated myself to the work of the missions, to the sublime ministry of Jesus Christ who is the first missionary and the leader in every mission" - Fr. Peter Mary Mermier, 24th September, 1838.

Live  
JESUS

