



MISSIONS



MISSIONARY INSPIRATIONS, ASPIRATIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FRANSALIANS



Angel Goretti

I am a **miracle child** by the grace of God through the MSFS Fathers and their friends. Please read my story on page 33.

Praise the Lord all you nations; extol him, all you peoples.

Psa. 117:1

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Published by:

MSFS General Secretariat for the Mission

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"Love endures everything"

1Cor. 13:7

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"True joy comes from following the will of God, even when it leads us to suffering."

lesson from the life of the Servant of God

Father Peter Marie Mermier

Editorial...

Dear Respected Reader,

You are now holding the 10th issue of the **MSFS Global Mission Magazine**, I Want Missions.

This is the final issue I am preparing in my capacity as General Secretary of the Mission and as Editor of this mission magazine. I sincerely appreciate your support and encouragement. One of the proposals at the PMP National Gathering in October 2019 at Charis Bhavan was to launch a magazine highlighting the evangelisation and pastoral work of the MSFS worldwide. That was the first Parish Mission Preaching Gathering I organised after assuming the office of General Secretary for the Missions in February 2019. With your encouragement, appreciation and support, we could regularly bring out 10 issues of the Mission Magazine in June and December of every year. Besides the soft copies, we have also been bringing them out in print form – printing 1000 copies in India and 1000 in Africa.

Today, the magazine provides information. Later, this will become history for future generations, serving as inspiration. May this magazine continue to share information and insights and inspire many.

God bless your hands as you hold this magazine and your eyes as you read it. May God illuminate your mind and fill your heart with love and compassion after the example of St. Francis de Sales and Servant of God Father Peter Mermier.



With sincere thanks and blessings

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Salamat

Gratias

Thanks

ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳು

Ahsante

Merci

Danke

ಧನ್ಯವಾದಲು

Obrigado,

Gracias

Naonga

நன்றி,

Zikomo

Dankie

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Weebale

धन्यवाद,

Khublei

Grazie

Terima Kasih

Message From Superior General

Christmas is a season of hope. Pope Francis has called us to begin a pilgrimage of hope. The Jubilee 2025, with the theme “Pilgrims of Hope,” will start on December 24, 2024. The Holy Father opens the ‘holy door’ in St. Peter’s Basilica, offering 1.3 billion Catholics the possibility of obtaining a plenary indulgence and a year of graces. This is a year of hope for a world suffering the impact of war, the ongoing efforts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a climate crisis. Jubilee is the name given to a particular year, a time to re-establish a relationship with God, one another, and all of creation. The Jubilee of Hope will end on the feast of the Epiphany in 2026.

The Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, committed to their missionary charism and vision transmitted by Father Peter Mermier, are called to bring the Gospel of hope, joy, and peace to the world. The spirit and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales give us the purpose and optimism to keep the light of Christ burning in situations where we are surrounded by the cry of the earth and the poor, wars and violence that shed blood in human history, the deplorable situation of millions of migrants and refugees, and 700 million people living in extreme poverty.

The message of Christmas is about hope. In the Bible, hope is not mere wishful thinking but the confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises. When Mary meets her cousin Elizabeth, she says: “Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!” (Luke 1:45). That is the language of hope. Hope believes that what the Lord has said to you will be accomplished. We need the confident expectation that God can be relied on to fulfill the hopes He has awakened in our hearts through the promises of His Word.

I Want Missions is the story of Fransalians serving the Church in 32 countries where the Lord sends them to announce the Gospel of Hope. We share with our readers how we offer our missionary zeal and awaken hope in people, participating in the mission of the Church. To be a missionary of hope means recognizing hope among the people we are sent to. They are the ones who often succeed in finding hope in difficult situations. We then let them evangelize us.

This December issue, we celebrate the growing mission of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales worldwide. May the joy and peace of Christ fill your hearts, carrying you into a blessed New Year! I appreciate the work of Fr. Johnson KALLIDUKIL, the General Secretary for Mission, and the contributors to this beautiful Christmas gift.



Live JESUS!

Father Abraham VETTUVELIL, MSFS

Superior General

December 14, 2024

Rev. Fr. George Vayalil MSFS

Legend and Legacy 1899 - 1987

Beyond borders - Fr Vayalil: a catalyst for global mission

Those who knew Fr. George Vayalil, known as 'Vayalilachen,' the veteran and pioneer Missionary of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS), will testify that he was a saintly legend of his epoch! He was the one



Fr. James Manjackal MSFS

who daringly and heroically ventured to go out of his 'comfort culture' and 'own people' - to Visakhapatnam, an unknown far away place - to evangelise, not knowing the culture, language or lifestyle of the people there. Surely, he had in his heart the thirst of Jesus to save souls and a strong trust in God's Providence. It was this mighty faith that propelled him to jump into the unknown, like that of Elijah, the prophet, who said facing adverse situations and challenges, 'I have been most zealous for the Lord'. (1Kg 19:10)

Fr Vayalil has left a royal legacy of missionary work par excellence to the MSFS and to all missionaries worldwide. He was the catalyst for a missionary movement that began in Kerala, one of the smallest states of India, and has spread far and wide - across the globe - to every nook and corner of the earth.

Thirst for souls

The thirst for souls in the heart of every missionary dawns from the thirst of Christ on the Cross on Calvary when He said, "I thirst" (Jn 19:28). It is that thirst which enkindled the apostles and disciples of Jesus to go around the world to preach the Gospel. One of them was

VAYALILACHAN

the Apostle St. Thomas, who touched the wounded Heart of Jesus and said, 'My Lord and my God!' Armed with this powerful experience of the Lord's Mercy, St Thomas undertook the great missionary adventure to the southern part of India, Kerala - to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus. He worked miracles and wonders in the Name of Jesus and founded a solid Christian community. Thus, from the beginning of Christianity, there was a strong Christian presence in Kerala, and they were called St. Thomas Christians. They increased and multiplied - but being afraid of the pagans around - they failed to evangelise those who did not know Christ, the only Saviour of the world. Many countries received faith much later than India, but it spread faster there. No missionary efforts on the part of St. Thomas Christians are recorded until recently!

It was in such a context that Brother George Vayalil - a seminarist of the Diocese of Changanacherry - saw many priests in his Diocese sitting idle in the presbyteries with no pastoral works. He felt that he did not want to be also one like them, who did not go out of Kerala, to evangelise. 'I did not want to be a priest idling away my precious time...' he wrote in his autobiography. He knew very well that the work of a priest must be missionary and prophetic. The Holy Spirit touched his heart with a thirst for souls. I say that it was the spirit of the thirst and enthusiasm for souls in the heart of the Patron of the Congregation that he was to join, St.

Francis de Sales, and the spirit of the cry of its founder, Fr Peter Marie Mermier, the servant of God, who always said: "I want missions!"

God always calls and chooses people for His mission in response to the people's cry for salvation - as we see in the Bible's call of Moses, the Judges, and other Prophets. Fr. Vayalil was called to the mission of Visakhapatnam seeing the cry of the people for salvation - in Mangalapalam, Madugula, Bobili, Boddipalle, Marvada, Rajam, Palkonda, Kondadaba, Kothakotta, Kothur, Amity Villar etc. all in the then diocese of Visakhapatnam.

Power in weakness

Fr Vayalil had no additional academic qualifications or a doctorate from university when he decided to be a missionary. All he had was his absolute trust in Jesus and His call to become a fisher of men. He was small in stature, dark in colour - with nothing spectacular in behaviour nor eloquence in speech. The word of God, "God chose the foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something so that no human being might boast before God" (1 Cor 1: 27-29) is so authentic about Fr. Vayalil.



When he went to Kerala to fetch the first batch of postulants for the Sisters of St. Joseph who had heard great things

about the missionary work of Fr. Vayalil and read his articles from various periodicals and magazines on missions, they expected to see in Fr Vayalil, the embodiment of greatness - a handsome, tall man, a great writer, eloquent speaker and a zealous missionary! But they were disappointed to see a man looking like a Muslim - a young dwarf of a man in a shabby soutane (cassock) - sporting a still shabbier beard and sniffing most of the time. (Cf. Breakthrough, Memoirs of Fr. George Vayalil Page 30) "Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance but the Lord looks into the heart" (1 Sam 17:7b) Jesus noticed in him a great personality that was like Him, to serve and save humanity.



Breakthrough

He was a man who broke walls and barriers and swam against the currents of the time. It was when practically no one wanted to go to the missions. The clergy, his parents, relatives, friends, and all those who heard about his decision to go to the missions of Visakhapatnam objected to his adventure. As he had lost his mother at a young age, it was his older sister who cared for him in the place of his mother. It was hard to leave her and his elderly and bedridden father, who were unwilling to send him to the missions. Some ritualists objected to his leaving the Oriental Rite and joining the Latin Rite! But nothing could stop him! Throughout his life, he was a man of decision and he never compromised

his lofty ideals and values of life with anything mean or contrary. Even when he had to leave the missions because of his ill health - beriberi - he decided to go back to Kerala and recruit missionaries for Visakhapatnam and other missions.

It was very challenging to recruit candidates for the MSFS, staying in the Mission Home Pala meant for students for the Patna mission. He would also encounter great struggles in founding the minor seminary to recruit and train missionaries for the MSFS to work in various missions. Fr. Vayalil used to say that his illness was a blessing of God in disguise - to have an increase of missionaries. He was always optimistic in all his past adverse events in life. Because he

loved God, the Lord did everything for his good (Cf. Rom 8:28).

Prayer did wonders

Fr. Vayalil was a man of prayer. Prayer was his weapon to cross barriers and to recognise and open God's ways and plans. Anyone will be thrilled to read the following mystic experience from his autobiography, and perhaps this amazing experience alone should definitely be sufficient to promote him to sainthood! 'Vayalilachen' recounts in his autobiography this experience when his dear and near ones objected to his going to the missions, "Entering the room, I closed the door. Then, kneeling down after kissing the floor, stretching my hands in the form of the cross, I raised my heart to the heavenly Father and, in union with the Crucified Lord,

expressed my helplessness to Him. I cried like a little child. Hot tears rolled down my cheeks and wetted the floor. They were the unforgettable moments of my life. As tears gushed down, I experienced such a heavenly joy that no words can describe. A unique experience of heavenly bliss radiated my whole being. Even if the joys of heaven were no greater than what I then experienced, I thought that no sacrifice on earth would be too much to pay for it. I wished that those blessed tears would never cease to flow, but after a few minutes they dried up, and with it, vanished the beatitude too! There remained only a calm. Slowly I got up without knowing why, I opened the door to the veranda. Later, I understood why I did so. My mission was to start then and there.' (Ibid. page 24)

All his spiritual children and others who had lived in the community with him know how he used to kneel before the Tabernacle and pray for long hours. Through prayers, he found answers to his questions and solutions to all his problems and that of others. It is fascinating to read a prayer he wrote and gave to a religious sister who was stubborn to reconcile with her junior sister and decided to leave the post in the convent. It was the prayer he wrote, that brought reconciliation between the two sisters, 'O Lord, you have suffered all humiliations and agonies for my sake. I cannot measure the depth of your love for me. But I have not the strength to suffer these little pains and misunderstandings which you are pleased to send me for your love's sake. So, I am leaving my post, dear Lord...' (Ibid, page 44) After reading this prayer, the sister burst into tears with repentance, went to the junior sister - asked for pardon -

and lived together with great love for each other in the same community for a long time.

A thorn in the flesh

He had the problem of nightmares for 32 long years! Often at night, but at times during the day when he tried to sleep, he used to scream and make unpleasant noises, disturbing others. He was carrying this humiliation practically till the end of his life; but in his autobiography, he wrote that he claimed to heal from it by following 'The Power in Praise' taught by Rev. Merlin R. Carthers. Was it a nightmare or a torment by the devil, I do not know. Often in his spiritual colloque, he used to tell me that it was "a thorn in the flesh' but the Lord did not remove it, although he and others prayed many times for liberation and healing. He was always hearing in his heart the words of Jesus echoed to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).

A Charismatic

Fr Vayalil was always open to any new movements in the Church or in the Congregation. He always tried to bridge the generation with his openness to the Spirit. He was able to mingle with the young and old without any inhibition. As soon as he heard about the arrival of the Charismatic renewal in the Church, after the Second Vatican Council, he read articles about it from the 'New Covenant' magazine. When he heard about the Charismatic retreat at Fransalianum, Pune, he decided to go with me to take part in it. Due to my intellectual pride and certain prejudices, I could not open my

heart to the charisms of the Spirit. In contrast, with a child-like attitude, Vayalilachen opened his heart to the Holy Spirit and started praying and singing in tongues on the first day of the retreat! When he returned spirit-filled, I was empty in my heart, and I had to wait still for the laying on of hand by a new convert Christian! Ever since he became Charismatic, his spiritual life changed completely. He fell in love with Jesus through the Holy Spirit and spent a long time in intimacy and friendship with Jesus in prayer. He always hummed in the heart the hymns, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' and 'to be like Jesus, to be like Jesus'. Although he was always a happy man - making others happy with his jokes and witty statements - after his Charismatic experience, he began possessing the joy of the Spirit, which he tried to share with others.

Ever since he recruited me to the seminary - to be an MSFS - he was my spiritual father; after both of us became Charismatics, we were spiritual directors to each other. We

both had our personal prayers early in the morning at four. One fine morning, after my personal prayer, he came to my room for a general confession. I did not know that he was preparing for his adieu to this world. That evening, he had a heart attack and received extreme unction. The following day after 4 am - when he used to be with Jesus daily in personal prayer - Fr Vayalil met Jesus, his friend, face to face and flew to eternity! It was his desire to die at the time of his personal prayer. The Lord who fell in love with him fulfilled even this, his little desire!

A man of holiness and zeal!

I am sure that Fr George Vayalil must be whispering in the ears of our hearts to live as zealous missionaries with enthusiasm for saving souls - to quench the thirst of Jesus. Let us pray that 'Vayalilchen', who was a burning lamp - who radiated the love and holiness of Jesus to one and all, may be promoted to sainthood as soon as possible.

Do you recognise these faces?



MSFS in Australia

In the land of Kangaroos.....

Fr. Mani Malana MSFS



The year 1998 marked the beginning of the MSFS Presence in Australia. We started with one confrere from Vizag, India, working in the Sydney Diocese. After 26 years, we now have 18 MSFS Confreres from three Provinces in India working in Australia. They render their services in the dioceses of Melbourne, Sydney, Parramatta, Broken Bay, Toowoomba and Adelaide.

The confreres come together province-wise often. Due to the large geographical distances, the meeting of all the confreres together, takes place only once a year.

All are working in big parishes and are entrusted with different duties of the dioceses, such as the dean, the formation of seminarians, the finance council, and

the pastoral council. Every parish has schools, both Primary (K-6) and High School (7-12), nursing homes, and a few parishes have hospital ministries too. Many active spiritual, pastoral and outreach groups and programmes exist in all parishes. In 2023, the Sydney diocese entrusted two Parishes to the care of MSFS on a permanent agreement.. All the bishops, priests, and parishioners are pleased with the works and life of MSFS in this vast country.

Pastoral Challenges in Australia

Decline of church attendance and lack of laity's active participation in the Church life. Those who used to come regularly on Sundays come only once or twice a month or on any important occasion. After the Covid 19, many people lost



interest in community mass; some still attend only the virtual mass on media.

This is the widespread effects of secularisation, generational shifts and disinterest in an organised and hierarchical Church.

The youth are disconnected and disengaged. They complain that the church does not realistically cope with contemporary issues and problems. Mass and sacraments are boring, and church leaders don't understand and engage them enough.

To deal with the diverse cultures, backgrounds, and ethnicities of the people in the parishes. It takes time for the people to follow the Indian accent and the mindset of the priests. There are different rites and traditions of various people who migrated to the country lately. Their idea of the sacraments and church teachings, especially those families where one of the parents is of Protestant or Eastern Church background.

The lasting impact of clerical abuse and scandal continues to affect the credibility of priests. There are lots of restrictions and limitations imposed by government sectors when engaging with schoolchildren in teaching the faith. As all church volunteers need police check/clearance and other safeguarding-related protocols, getting volunteers in the parish to help with the parish ministries is tough.

People are divided on the ethical and crucial issues of society on abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, genderfluidity, etc. In pastoral care, people are following their conscience, and many don't even care to come to the church or discuss those problems with the priests.

Lack of consecrated people (religious sisters and brothers) to help in the parishes' educational, health and pastoral life. At times, there is the feeling that the purpose of working in Australia is more for money and not mission.



Pastoral Ministry in Australia: New Vistas

- Having expressed the challenges that may be confirmed by the whole world or Western society in particular, the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales can provide much pastoral service to the local churches. Bishops are aware of the talents and gifts of the MSFS priests; they have entrusted us with significant responsibilities in the dioceses, such as Deans, formation of seminarians, financial Council, Pastoral Council, etc.
- The people and other priests always appreciate MSFS lifestyle and charism of prayer, humility, gentleness and hospitality. People are very open and appreciative of the MSFS priests' ministry.
- Some of the Local Ordinaries encouraged us to live in our Local Communities to strengthen, inspire and share the particular

charisms of the Congregation, which are ever relevant to all types of people at any time in history.

- The mission needs more priests who are totally committed and courageous. We also need more effective long-term planning and deliberate strategies as a congregation to enhance the MSFS's presence in Australia.
- We must look for possibilities for MSFS to work as a unit to make our presence more effective in this vast country.



We are inspired!

Fransalian Associates

St. John Neumann, Lilburn, Georgia USA

The Fransalian Associates at St. John Neumann is a dynamic and growing group with seven current consecrated members and an additional seven members to be consecrated in January 2025. The group holds monthly meetings with Fr. Sunny Punnakuzhiyil MSFS, St. John Neumann's Pastor and animator for the local unit, to study and discuss the writings of St. Francis de Sales. They recently completed the study of **The Introduction to the Devout Life** and are currently studying **The Art of Loving God**. Several parishioners who are dedicated to and benefit from Salesian Spirituality also join us regularly in our meetings. In addition, the group maintains a literature display that is supported by the Fransalian parish. The display provides a variety of booklets and pamphlets promoting Salesian spirituality and devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows free of charge to our parishioners. The St. John Neumann local unit greatly appreciates ongoing support from the Provincial Superior and anticipates providing increasing support for him in the future.

Father Anthony Bonela visited St. John Neumann Fransalian Associates and the study group on April 13,

2024. It was a much-anticipated encounter with this gentle and gracious Missionary Priest. Although he holds the important office of Provincial Superior in the USA Province, he is, at heart, a humble priest of the well-respected and well-loved



Ms Marge Pope

Father Anthony arrived with the appreciation of a group of attendees who are specifically inclined to the teachings of Salesian Spirituality. His introduction was insightful and riveting as he described his early experiences and led through his call to the priesthood. His talk brought out great treasures of the faith, rich in Biblical verse references and the significance of the virtues associated with the Spirit and Spirituality of Saint Francis de Sales. He added a fresh understanding of the founding of our religious order so closely associated with the meek origins in France by Father Peter Mermier, and its world mission efforts which were expanded to India, before the expansion throughout many nations we now realise today.



We are inspired!

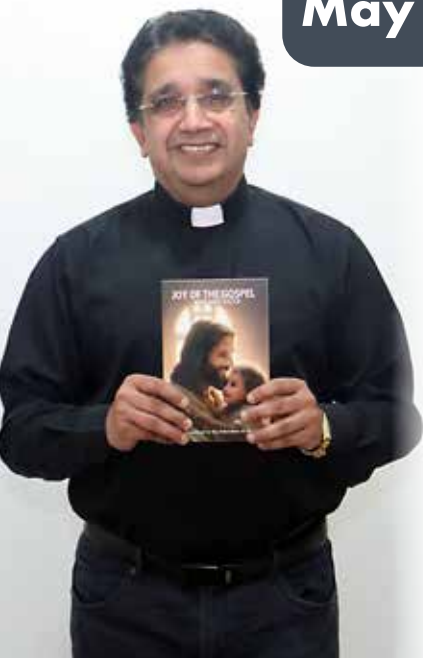


On August 10, 2024, Father Anthony Bonela visited again and shared his insights and wisdom as he concluded our study of the **Introduction to**

the Devout Life. He encouraged us in our pursuit of holiness through the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. He also shared some of his life stories and challenges facing priests as they give their lives to God and His people. Father Sunny also made an appearance to show his support.

We thank and appreciate the MSFS Confreres not only for supporting us in our ordinary pastoral and spiritual life but also in a very special way for sharing with us the rich spirituality of St. Francis de Sales and the missionary heritage of Father Mermier.

May God's Word nourish you!



Joy of the Gospel

**Text and reflections for
the daily readings for the
Holy Mass.**

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The Parish Mission Preaching

Annual Gathering and Prayer days AT SILAPATHAR, Assam, India October 28 to November 1, 2024

The MSFS PMP National Gathering and Prayer Days of this year 2024, guided and led by Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, MSFS, General Secretary of the Mission, was conducted in the MSFS Provincial House Dibrugarh Province, at Silapathar, Assam, India. It was attended by 27 confreres from the seven MSFS Indian provinces. The event commenced with the Eucharistic celebration on the 28th of the evening by Fr. Amirthanathan, MSFS, who also celebrated his birthday on the same day.

Fr Varghese Paul Manickathan MSFS, the PCIC for Mission, Dibrugarh Province, welcomed all the participants and informed the day's schedule and guidelines. All the participants were welcome and honoured with a shawl according to the local tradition. In the beginning, the Provincial of Dibrugarh Province, **Fr. Tomson Aerthadathu MSFS**, gave a talk on the Biblical foundation of the Mission and connected the MSFS Heritage. Later, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil encouraged the members to take this chance to be together as brothers gathered in prayer and to strengthen one another in our preaching and healing ministry.

Fr. Jude Poovakulathu MSFS was the main resource person for the program. The key theme was DELIVERANCE AND HEALING. In his talk, the preacher, totally depending on the

Word of God, spoke with authority about the origin of the devil, the seven capital sins with their heads, the activities of the devil, both ordinary and extraordinary, the reason for satanic activities, deliverance through the last seven words of Jesus on the cross, Divine justice and Divine mercy and concluded with the twelve virtues of Mother Mary. The passage from Mathew 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you" was the primary running stream of the event.



Fr. Jerry Louis MSFS

All the participants were inspired to make meaningful confessions. Fr. Jude conducted the adoration for two hours with anointing, exorcism, and deliverance prayers. It was a heavenly experience for everyone, as everyone felt light and liberated. Miss Jingsngur Khongkhlad, a layperson, testified movingly about the gift of the Eucharistic Lord taking residence on the tongue, exhilarated the participants with faith and inner joy.

The sessions were lively, as the participants actively interacted with the guide through their questions and viewpoints. The preacher kept everyone spellbound by quoting the



scripture thoroughly and clarifying every doubt with utmost satisfaction. The chosen theme was interesting, as it connected to Satan and his legion. The input sessions ended with the vote of thanks proposed by Fr. Jayakumar MSFS.

Fr. Erudaya Raja MSFS thanked the provincial house and the parish community members for the warm hospitality and care shown to the participants. The last session of the PMP was moderated by Fr. S. Jerry Louis MSFS. The province-wise report was presented to the forum by participants from various provinces. Many shared their experiences, the challenges faced due to other commitments, lack of time and coordination and their future plans. Above all, everyone felt happy and joyful to be part of this wonderful ministry. In his concluding remarks, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil encouraged the fathers never ever to lose heart as the Lord is guiding and protecting all through the loving intercession of Mother Mary, our Patron St. Francis de Sales and our Founder Fr. Peter Marie Mermier. It was proposed to have the next PMP Meeting in Pune Province. The secretary, Fr. Varghese Manickathan, proposed the final vote of thanks.

The program was concluded with the solemn Eucharistic celebration by Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS and all the participants. After the program, we also visited some of the mission centres in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

Following our beloved founder's proclamation, 'I want missions,' the daring and dedicated missionaries of the NE provinces have toiled hard, facing all hurdles and challenges to build up the mission stations and thereby succeed in bringing souls to God. It was inspiring to encounter our beloved fathers' simplicity, dedication, and generosity. I was very impressed by the hospitality, care, and concern of the confreres toward us, the participants from different provinces.



MSFS in Spain

A Chablais Challenge!

Territory and Organization of Diocese of Sigüenza-Guadalajara

The diocese covers 12,190 km² and extends its jurisdiction over the Catholic faithful of the Latin rite residing in the autonomous community of Castilla-La Mancha, in the province of Guadalajara.

The diocese's headquarters is in Sigüenza, where the Cathedral of Santa María is located. In Guadalajara is the Co-Cathedral of Santa María de la Fuente la Mayor.

The diocese of Sigüenza was established before 589, when the first known bishop, Protógenes, participated in the Third Council of Toledo and signed the minutes as *segontiae ecclesiae episcopus*. However, the historian and bishop Brother Toribio Minguella places its origin in the 4th century.

Our Arrival

On 8 March 2023, Frs. John Kennedy MSFS and Raymond Figredo MSFS, the pioneers of the Spanish mission, arrived in Spain. At the Bishop's house, Most Rev. Bp Atilano and Rev. Fr. Agustín, the Vicar General, received



and welcomed us warmly, and we had lunch with them. The same day, in the evening, we reached Humanes, where our present residency is. The Parish Priest, Fr. German, and a few people welcomed us.



Fr. John Kennedy MSFS

In the beginning, we helped in the parish Humanes, which has four more substations. In August, Fr. John Kennedy was appointed as a collaborator in the Parish Tamajón, while Fr. Raymond assisted in Humanes.

The Real fact of the parish and Diocese

Tamajón parish has eleven substations, namely Majaalrayo, Valverde, Muriel, Robleluengo, Capillo de Ranas, Palancares, Ocejón, Atalaya, Campachuelo and Campillejo. Among all these villages, only three villages people want Sunday masses. The main parishes, Tamajón, Valverde and Majaalrajo celebrate masses only on Sundays too only very few, hardly 3 or 4 old people, come for masses. Sometimes, we had to cancel the Sunday masses since no one was there. It is the reality of the parish; the people are not interested in the church, and the faith is dying off in this parish, in the Diocese at large in Spain. The church is facing a very severe faith crisis, and we



don't know the future of the church in Spain. The local diocesan priests most of them stay with their own families or their parents stay with the priests, so they are happy with few people in the church.

The Challenges of the "Spanish Chablais"

In the beginning, as soon as we saw the alarming situation of the faith of the people, we started to visit the houses. However, the people were not interested in our visits. If at all someone needed the priests, they would inform us and only then we can visit them. This was a clear sign that the people don't like that we visit their houses. Whenever we meet the people on the streets, they love to talk, but when we open up the

Currently, our work is limited to the celebration of the daily Mass. We must devise suitable mechanisms to draw the faithful to God, following the example of St. Francis de Sales, our patron, and Father Mermier, our holy Founder.

topic regarding the faith, or coming to church they don't like it, and they avoid us mostly and feel that we are neglected. We can never see any youngsters coming to the church. This is a clear fact of where we are, and the situation is worsening in the Diocese. Currently, our work is limited to the celebration of the daily Mass. We need to devise suitable mechanisms to draw the faithful to God, following the example of St. Francis de Sales, our patron, and Father Mermier, our holy Founder

New Parish Fontanar

Fr. John Kennedy is appointed as the parish priest of Santa Maria la Mayor, Fontanar, along with two more substations, Alarilla and Taragudo, from September 2024. This parish is bigger in number than the other two parishes, but the participation of people is less than in the other parishes. People are very reserved regarding faith. People have yet to be ready to accept any new way or proposal. Let us see the possibility. In the footsteps of our Patron, St. Francis de Sales, and our Founder, Fr. Mermier, through the intercession of our beloved mother, let us hope for a better future.

Today, the Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales is present in 211 dioceses in 31 countries.

Bishop Karnam Dhaman Kumar MSFS

Bishop of Nalgonda, India

1. **Dear Rev. Bishop, Shalom! Can you share something about your person, family background and your vocation history with MSFS?**

I was born on 16th November 1963 in Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh. My parents are namely Mr. Karanam Raja Rao and Mrs. Nirmala Mary. My faith journey began with my baptism on 2nd December 1963 at St. Maurice's Church, Vizianagaram, and my confirmation followed on June 30, 1974. My early education was at St. Antony's School in



Vizianagaram, which laid the foundation for my vocation. Feeling the call to serve, I joined Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales at St. John's Minor Seminary, Nidadavole, in 1979. My formative journey took me through various spiritual and academic training stages, from philosophy at Suvidya College, Bangalore, to theology at Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, Pune.

I made my first profession as a Missionary of St. Francis de Sales on December 15, 1983, and my final profession on December 3, 1989. I was ordained a deacon in 1990 and a priest on October 17, 1990. Over the years, my ministry has been diverse, encompassing roles such as Assistant Parish Priest, Parish Priest, School Principal, Rector, and Provincial Counsellor. I also served in Germany for pastoral ministry and as the Delegate Superior of MSFS confreres in the Diocese of Münster. My journey reflects the guiding hand of God and the inspiration of the MSFS charism and family support. I am so grateful to all my formators, especially my vocation promoter, Rev. Fr. Thomas Anikala MSFS.



2. Could you please share your long journey as a religious in the MSFS Congregation?

I am very happy to be a religious in the MSFS Congregation. My journey as a religious has taught me many lessons, including the unique spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. The beautiful quotes of SFS, “I’m nothing if not human,” and “Bloom where you are planted,” have imprinted themselves in my heart. That’s what made me seek the will of God all through my life. As Mother Mary said, “Let God’s will be done,” is my lifelong inspiration and motivation.

3. Now, you have more than 30 years as a priest. What is priesthood for you?

4. For me, priesthood means having or possessing the Heart of Jesus. Thus, I continue Jesus’ mission: to love and serve without reserve and work for the glory of God. As a missionary, I love the people without reserve and am loved by them.

5. When you were informed of Pope Francis’s decision to appoint you as a Bishop, what was your take on it, and what was your response?

At the very first moment, there was silence, and I could not say a word.

Then, the Nuncio gave me until the next morning to wait for my response. I told him that *with God’s blessings, the Holy Father’s blessings, and your blessings, I would say YES to the Lord.*

6. Can you please summarize the pastoral, social, and economic situation of the diocese you are shepherding?

The Diocese of Nalgonda spans 32,632 square kilometres and encompasses six civil districts: Nalgonda, Suryapet, Bhongir, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, and Wanaparthy. It is organised into five deaneries—Nalgonda, Miryalaguda, Suryapet, Mahabubnagar, and Bhongir—and comprises 70 parishes. Of these, 48 are managed by diocesan clergy, while 21 are under the care of religious priests. The diocese is blessed with 106 diocesan priests, 62 religious fathers, 236 religious sisters, and nine religious brothers. Together, they work tirelessly to meet the faithful’s spiritual, social, and economic needs. Their dedicated efforts have borne fruit, with many communities experiencing growth in faith and social upliftment.

Despite these achievements, challenges remain. A significant portion of the diocese, particularly in regions where Hindutva groups are influential, still awaits comprehensive evangelisation.



Meanwhile, the transformative impact of religious education, social service, and globalisation has enabled certain sections to overcome poverty and improve their socio-economic conditions. The diocese continues to strive for holistic development, nurturing faith and fostering dignity and self-reliance among its people through dedicated pastoral care and social outreach.

7. What are the important challenges that you face today as the head of the Local Church?

As St. Francis de Sales said, the renewal of the Diocese is possible only with the renewal of the priests. First and foremost, the challenge is to animate my priests, help them understand our priestly culture and nature, and encourage them to follow Jesus without boundaries or barriers.

8. How do you see the missionary fervour of the MSFS Congregation in today's context?

The past glory of the missionaries is still glorified rather than creating new missions and visions of the times. Let us not lose sight of our missionary charism. If missionaries become selfish and live in comfort zones, their fervour and dynamism will gradually decrease. Therefore, let us be missionaries all the time, seeking the will of God and reading the signs of the times.

9. What do you think are some of the qualities that a missionary should have?

Jesus is our first missionary. Let us learn all the qualities from Jesus to be wonderful missionaries worldwide. We need humility, patience, openness, adaptability, and, above all, love and faith. As our founder said, "I want missions," so every missionary should cry out, "I love missions." A missionary is one who loves the people and is loved by them.

10. Any final word of message for the readers of this MSFS Global Mission Magazine?

Dear Fransalian Friends, please pray for all the missionaries worldwide, especially for MSFS missionaries. Let us cultivate global thinking and local living. All those who have passion for Christ join hands with MSFS and build up the synodality of the Church. Let us also work together to build up global mission and to spread God's Kingdom here on earth. May God bless all the readers of MSFS Global Mission Magazine. I remain with my prayerful wishes and blessings.

God bless you our beloved Bishop Dhaman

FRANSALIANS in PERU - NEW HORIZONS



Fr. Maria Anand Pathi
Lourdu Samy MSFS

We Fransalians entered another milestone in Latin American missions true to our missionary commitment following the words of our founder servant of God, Fr Peter Marie Mermier: *"I want mission"*. We had founded a new mission community in Peru, in the Arch Diocese of Arequipa. Arequipa is one of the most prominent and historical provinces of Peru. It is known as *"La ciudad blanca."* Our mission is near the Pacific Ocean. It is 146 km (southwest) from the city of Arequipa. It is known as the pearl of the Pacific Ocean and consists of many beautiful churches and beaches. Our mission in the area of the Lagunas de Mejia A national sanctuary is a protected area on the coastal plain of Peru, in Islay Province.

The first canonical community of the Fransalians in the Archdiocese of Arequipa was instituted on May 22, 2022. At present, Fr Maria Anand Pathi Lourdu Samy MSFS is the Superior Parish Priest, and Fr Sagar Kata MSFS is the Assistant Parish Priest in the mission. The diocese had entrusted the parish of San Isidro Labrador of Dean Valdivia y Mejia to the care of the Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales. The parish consists of six sub-stations and covers many small villages. The basic occupation of the people in this area is agriculture.

The MSFS Mission in Peru is filled with hope and scope for new evangelisation. Archbishop Javier Augusto del Rio Alba is very hospitable, kind, and concerned for the Fransalian Missionaries

The Catholic community participates in the liturgical service but needs to be renewed in their faith and strengthened in church doctrines. Jesus says, "Be aware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matthew 7:15) The Catholic community needs to be strengthened amidst the influence of other denominations. Protestants, Lutherans, Mormons, and evangelists are trying to hunt the Catholics and distort them from the way of truth. Our MSFS charism started to be implanted in the hearts of people. We started the Fransalian programs, one day youth program, retreats and in and through the Sacraments and social welfare activities for the people of God.

For over three years, God has been transforming lives through the Mission of Hope.

SHARING THE GOSPEL: We believe true transformation ultimately comes through Jesus Christ. We strive to embody and share the gospel in every interaction. Our rich heritage of Salesian spirituality guides and animates our religious services and preaching.

PASTORAL ACTIVITIES: Our Pastoral program provides ongoing





biblical training and church teaching to hundreds of children and youth every year. We equip our youth and catechists, strengthen the local churches and communities, dialogue with their culture, language, and tradition, and build our Salesian charism in the hearts of the people, little by little, building the kingdom of God in our mission.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:

Through Women's Empowerment, we desire to equip women to change their sad and painful stories from brokenness to restoration and from shame, difficulties, and psychological to redemption through the power of Christ and the gospel. We have some empowerment programs during the year and teach our youth and children about responsible parenthood.

CHURCH ADVANCEMENT

PROJECTS AND SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES FROM THE PERU MISSION

We focus on uplifting the community and enhancing the lives of the faithful. We strive to improve the chapels and



churches that have been neglected for a long time. We mobilise the people to construct and strengthen the chapels in our missions. We encourage traditional religious celebrations within the mission. For instance, on September 24, 2024, we celebrated the feast of Virgen de Mercedes, the central feast in our Parish, attracting many devoted participants honoring Mary. On October 28, 2024, with renewed spirit, we, the faithful, celebrated the Feast of Señor de Los Milagros. This year, a greater number of faithful joined in the celebration. On October 11, 2024, our confirmation children participated in a two-day retreat, an enriching spiritual experience for our youth, organised by the Fransalians. We celebrated the sacrament of baptism for 100 children. We involve our youth in the life and activities of the church and participate in the diocesan renewal programmes.

During his visit in Lisbon, Pope Francis said, "I leave you with these thoughts. Carry on if you fall; get back; walk with a goal in mind; and train each day of your life. Nothing is free in life; everything has to be paid for. Only one thing is free: the love of Jesus! So, with this gift that we have the love of Jesus and the desire to carry on the journey, let us walk in hope, be mindful of our roots, and move forward without fear. Do not be afraid."

In the missionary journey, we must build and strengthen the Catholic Christian community amidst the influence of other denominations. We need to implant the seeds of new evangelisation, which means every community member must be the messenger of the good news of Christ. May God bless our humble efforts!

**Fr. Maria Anand Pathi Lourdu Samy
MSFS**

Peru Mission

A Unique Call, Mission and Ministry

The real story of two persons who passionately love the passion of Christ!

Dear Respected readers of the MSFS Global Mission magazine!

In this issue of Mission Magazine, I wish to introduce two humble souls who are great before God. They are **Ms Tessy Sebastian** (59) and **Ms Sujatha Kuriackose** (51).



Tessy



Sujatha

Tessy is in Kuruvianal, Pala Diocese, Kerala. **Sujatha** is in Thadiyampadu, Idukki Diocese, Kerala.

They were born normal, healthy children in devout Catholic families. However, the same will of God who allowed them to be born here on earth also, in his permissive will, allowed them to undergo excruciating pain and suffering in the course of their lives.

Tessy was born in the year 1965. On December 18, 1981, she was diagnosed with Guillen-barre syndrome. To this day, she is paralysed from the hip to the toe. The then-available medical care did not help her much. Tessy was 16 years old when she was affected.

From 1981 to 2024 – long 43 years of being bedridden!

Sujatha was born in the year 1973. On December 7, 1988, when she was returning from college, the bus got into an accident by falling into a valley of 200 meters (Murickassery Accident). Many passengers, including some students, died on the spot, many got injured, and some got paralysed lifelong. Sujatha is one of them. This happened when she was 16 years old. From 1988 to 2024 – long 36 years of being bedridden!

I have been in touch with them and their families for some years. Both of them are taken care of by the family members. **The family**

members, including the children, consider it a divine call or holy vocation given to them to take care of Tessy and Sujatha. Even in the most excruciating, painful moments, I never heard them complain against God or anyone. They have a deep sense of gratitude for the care they receive. They spent time praying, reading God's word and doing small works with their feeble hands. They are actively involved in some online prayer groups.

This is the Word of God that comes to my mind when I reflect on their lives:

We are hard-pressed on every side but not crushed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed. We always carry around in our bodies the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies. (2 Cor. 4:8-10)

We believe:

Suffering is part of every mission. We have lots of pain. But it is our joy to suffer with the passion of Christ. To this day, we can respond to every adverse situation with the attitude of Job, who said:

'If we take happiness from God's hand, must we not take sorrow too?' And in all this misfortune, Job uttered no sinful word. (Job 2:10)

We are glad that the MSFS Mission Magazine brings out something about our life and mission in our humble homes. We are delighted to be connected to the MSFS Congregation through regular contact with Fr. James Manjackal MSFS, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS, and others. Their visits, prayers, and support mean a lot. We also regularly and faithfully include the MSFS Congregation and all the missionaries in our prayers. We also thank you for your prayers and blessings.



Tessy



Sujatha

I humbly request that every reader of this mission magazine say a silent prayer for them both, as well as for several others who are bedridden and for their families.

Fr. Johnson Kallidukil MSFS

**Pride leads to disgrace but
with humility comes wisdom.**

Prov: 11:2

Being with the Missionaries

A Testimony

rejuvenates me!



My name is Ms. Sole Ferrer. I am a civil engineer from Chile, South America. My passion in life is to do voluntary work and promote volunteer work to address the needs of so many people. I want to transform and create awareness and convictions in the hearts of volunteers so they can continue giving their time, talents, and even material help to missionaries worldwide.

Since 2010, I have been in contact with the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales through volunteer groups, fundraising for their needs, and as a friend and family member. The possibility of working with them has been a special grace and has transformed my life in many ways.

By working together, I have learned about their mission: untiring work, covenantal commitment, without waiting for results or praise, but always trying to leave the places, the people, and the towns in better social, spiritual, and economic situations. This is a real mission in God's eyes.

I have seen and experienced MSFS Charism of living the Salesian Spirituality and working with the zeal of Father Mermier. Outstanding are the qualities of hospitality, friendship, and sincere work.

My first activity with the Fransalians was organised in 2011. They were building a secondary school in Mkuza, Kibaha, Tanzania and needed economic help. That year in Rome, we organised various fundraising activities at the Highlands School, such as baking sales, theatre plays, raffles, etc. The entire school community was involved: children, youth, teachers, parents, grandparents, etc. We also promoted the exchange of written letters between both schools so that they could connect even at long distances.



Ms Sole Ferrer

That year, the donations received during the Christ the King Mass in Guadalupe Parish in Rome were also used to build the school. That summer, the first group of volunteers visited Tanzania. We brought gifts and the donations we had received. My work during those months consisted of being a teacher's assistant in the school and helping with the secondary school's construction and painting. The experience of living every day in Tanzania, sharing with teachers and kids, and learning Swahili words, African traditions and customs was an eye-opener for the volunteers.



Since then, we have continued working together. In 2014, we started a Project in Tabora, helping the orphanage and boarding school in the Fransalian community. Almost 150 students of the Engineering School of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile visited, worked and lived in Tabora, Tanzania during the period of six years. The groups were at least 15 volunteers selected six months before travelling to prepare themselves and learn about the culture, traditions and a little of Swahili language.

The main goal was to reinforce the studies in the orphanage and identify community problems so we could propose solutions before leaving.

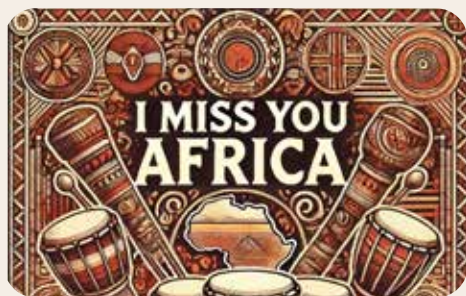
Personally, my experience working with the Fransalians taught me many things through their lives, works and



relationships. These include but are not limited to the following :

- *Prayer and action need to always be together;*
- *The confreres care for each other, and they motivate and inspire each other.*
- *Always “fighting” to reach their goals of evangelising kids and families: never giving up, always looking for different means to achieve the goals.*
- *They support help, love the church, and respect the demands and challenges that are present in their local communities.*
- *Hospitality is a word that defines the Fransalians as attentive to details, smiling, make you feel at home.*
- *Their respect for the African culture and traditions.*
- *Their capacity and commitment to master the local languages.*
- *Their joy, happiness and family spirit among the members and the different communities, despite the big distances.*

I am extremely thankful to God, who makes my life part of the Fransalians’ Ministry. I felt that my life was different because of them. **And some days when I miss Africa, its sunsets, its people, its colours... I always think of the many MSFS Confreres in Africa who give themselves as volunteers for the work of God.** I pray for them and the entire MSFS Global family and bless them in the silence of my heart.



The Life of Reverend Father Amédée DELALEX MSFS

A Swiss Missionary **38 years in India**

Anne Marie Delalex
Great-grandniece of Father Amédée Delalex

Father Amédée DELALEX was born on July 6, 1827 in Marin, a village near Evian, in Haute Savoie, located 30 km from Geneva (Switzerland). He is the last child of a family of nine children. His very honorable family (it has a coat of arms) is distinguished by a great fervor in its Catholic faith. Indeed, two of Amédée's nephews were missionaries of the Foreign Missions of Paris (MEP) in north of present-day Vietnam, which was then called Tonkin and Laos. And the next generation gave the church two nuns to the Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross and two priests.

Amédée DELALEX studied at the colleges of Thonon and Evian. He took theology courses at the Grand Séminaire d'Annecy and entered the MSFS novitiate at La Feuillette. He was ordained a priest in 1851. The same year, he was chosen for the mission to India and embarked in Marseille on July 15 on the sailing ship Canada accompanied by three MSFS priests and six nuns from Saint Joseph d'Annecy. They arrived in Vizagapatam on December 10, after five months of travel instead of three, due to the contrary winds in the Atlantic Ocean having pushed the boat towards America. His family would have liked Amédée to join the Missions Etrangères de Paris (MEP) which had existed for two centuries and therefore had a lot of experience and a solid structure. But Amédée chose MSFS, a mission that had only existed for about fifteen years. This choice says about him that he did not fear the unknown and did not seek security.

A Deep Faith and Great Humility

In his Alpine region, one would say that he had a faith that could move mountains! He showed a faith that would cross unknown oceans to go to

a distant and unknown country. At a very young age, he felt his vocation. He never changed his purpose.

Letter to His Family: June 25, 1851

You know, my dear parents, it has been a long time since I had any other goal than this one; since I was still very young, no idea has ever pleased me more than that of devoting myself to the salvation of so many abandoned souls, deprived of the grace of our holy religion; it was with this intention that I entered the Missions of Annecy; During the four years that I remained there, my resolutions, my designs did not vary for a single instant: all this makes me see with all evidence that this is my vocation and that I would be an unworthy priest in the eyes of God if I did not have the courage to walk where God calls me.

In His Travel Journal

He says that he is burning with the sole desire to make his God known and to make him loved. It is without pride that I speak thus, missionary as I am, because I know that this is a pure grace from heaven and I also know well that a thousand others better than me would have cooperated, would have fulfilled this vocation better than me if they had felt called to it.

Very Difficult Living Conditions In India

During his 38 years in India, Amédée moved around a lot to take on his various missions in the dioceses of Nagpur and Vizagapatam, in Ya-



nam (5 years), Kamptee (one year) and Jubulpur (30 years). The distances were great and the travel conditions were very difficult. *It took four months*, from Yanam in September 1857, to reach Hyderabad and then Kamptee reached in January 1858, accompanying a regiment to the center of India, as a military chaplain. A journey of more than a thousand km with the crossing of the Godaveri River.

Letter from Father Delalex, Kamptee, March 10, 1858

We had to travel on terrible roads, in the middle of forests and rocks, through mountains populated by tigers and other wild animals. We had to cross rivers. It was hard to believe that a regiment, followed by wagons loaded with provisions, ammunition and baggage, could pass through these roads. It was a long caravan of soldiers, servants, horses, elephants, camels, cows and wagons of all kinds.

Ascetic Living Conditions

Appointed parish priest of Jubulpur, he arrived there in April 1859 and remained there for thirty years until his death in July 1889. Far from any other mission centre, *he learned solitude there. He remained 18 months without meeting other priests:* not a heart to whom he could confide his doubts and sorrows, not a friend near him to support and encourage him!

His parish had 900 Catholics, 400 English and Irish soldiers, 400 Tamil soldiers and a hundred Anglo-Indian and Goan civilians (inhabitants of Goa). In addition, he regularly made long journeys to visit all his surrounding stations. *For 14 years, Father Delalex had for all accommodation only the back of the only existing chapel, separated by a movable partition.*

A Builder Priest

Amédée had assisted Father Thévenet in constructing the beautiful church of Jubulpur, inaugurated in January 1873, and thus learned to direct works. The Bishop had decided to send

the sisters of St Joseph to found a convent and open a school for girls and an orphanage. They had to be housed. Father Delalex set to work and transformed the old chapel into accommodation for the sisters and into a primary school. He took up residence in a room in the presbytery school. There are several constructions or renovations to his credit.

A Priest - ready to listen to the Most Destitute

Now that he had a beautiful church, he took pleasure in decorating it; he also made it the center of his apostolate. Every day, at 3 p.m., the poor he helped came there to pray and sing. This was his chapter, he said. He stayed with them to teach and encourage them. He spoke their language. He had learned English, Tamil, and Hindustani in addition.

The orphans and the abandoned were the first to benefit from his zeal for their spiritual and material good. At the end of their primary studies, he endeavoured to place his protégés in the administration and the railway company, providing them with stable employment. The authorities could refuse nothing to this smiling and simple priest whose zeal they appreciated.

His schools developed over the years. The primary school was approved by the Government in 1873. The upper primary school (Middle school) in 1884; it later became a secondary school, recognized by the government. This is the present very famous St Aloysius College.

Entering Eternal Life in 1889

On Wednesday morning, July 10, 1889, Amédée died of Septicemia caused by an injury to his left hand that was not treated immediately. Father Etienne Bonaventure, who would become Bishop of Nagpur, assisted Father Amédée in his last moments. He wrote to the Superior General on July 12, 1889:

Father Delalex had just passed away on the morning of the 10th. His death was like his life,

gentle, holy and calm. For 30 years, Father Delalex had edified everyone in his beloved city of Jubulpur. His sweet smile and simple manner won him hearts. He was universally loved and admired. Also, his funeral was a triumph.

On July 11, at 6 a.m., Father Souchon sang high mass in a church where a large congregation was gathered. At 7:30 a.m., the funeral procession set off. The army had made a point of honoring its military chaplain. The military band led the way, followed by an altar boy carrying the cross, the school children and orphans, the priests and the coffin placed on the carriage of a cannon pulled by six artillery horses, under the guard of the artillery sergeants of the line regiment. Then came a large crowd of people and carriages, officers on horseback, soldiers, Christians and even Hindus and Muslims.

I seemed to see the good father smiling from heaven and in his deep humility saying to us all, as he had already said to his doctor: "you take too much trouble for me."

Appreciation by Rev. Fr. Pierre-Marie Mermier, Founder of the MSFS

In a letter addressed to the Bishop of Vizagapatam on June 29, 1851, Reverend Father Pierre-Marie MERMIER introduces him, among others, to the four missionaries leaving for India in July 1851. He says that Amédée DELALEX is a very good subject with talents well above the ordinary.

REMARKS by Anne Marie Delalex, great-grand-niece of Father Amédée Delalex

On the Burial of Amédée Delalex

A coffin carried on the carriage of a cannon is a ceremony reserved for national funerals such as those of kings and queens and Churchill in England. The burial of Amédée DELALEX whose coffin was carried on the carriage of a cannon is a remarkable exception!! proof that he was loved and respected by the army which did him this honor. He was a military chaplain during his 38 years in India.

On all the Other MSFS Missionaries In India:

There were many MSFS missionaries, mostly French and from the two Savoys, who, like Amédée, devoted their lives to making God and the Catholic religion known and loved in India, *this country so far from their native land where they never returned and they never saw their family again!* More than 160 missionaries between 1845 and 2020. Some stayed for more than 50 years! And we must not forget the large number of Sisters of Saint Joseph of Annecy who accompanied the MSFS to India since 1849.

May God bless all of them with eternal peace and joy.

During the long **38** years of his life as a Missionary in India

Father Amédée DELALEX MSFS

never visited his home country.

India was his home till his journey to the eternal home!



Chile is a country in Latin America. Its capital is Santiago de Chile, and the population is 19,658,839. The population is 41% Catholic, 13% Protestant, and 46% other (including Atheists and Agnostics). Chile's official language is Spanish, and its currency is the Peso.

In May 2023, the Provincial of the Franco-Swiss Province, Rev. Fr. Jean Yves Letue MSFS, accompanied by Father Marco Sanhueza MSFS, made a first visit to the Bishop of the Diocese of Talca, Monsignor Galo Fernández. The objective of the Missionaries of San Francisco de Sales is to provide missionary service in the parishes of the diocese. Monsignor accepted the missionaries' request and entrusted them with two parishes in the city of Curicó, located 191 kilometres from Santiago de Chile.

The city of Curicó was founded on October 9, 1743, under the name Villa San José de Buenavista. The township developed around the current

Sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin of Mercy, which was inaugurated in 1755. Despite its strategic location, it did not grow in population as a large city due to its religious reputation, marked by a significant number of existing religious convents, and the influence of aristocratic families that contributed to the low population. Curicó is characterised by its Mediterranean climate, which enables it to excel in the production of fruits and vegetables, particularly cherries and excellent wine.



The Missionaries of San Francisco de Sales arrived in the city of Curicó on August 18, 2023. A team of three confreres was present: Fr. Fredi Navarrete Aguilar MSFS, who took over the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in the rural area on August 19, 2023; Father Marco Sanhueza Valenzuela MSFS, who began his role at the parish of Christ the Risen in the city on August 20, 2023; and Father Patricio Aguayo Araya MSFS, who was appointed as vicar for both parishes.

In the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, the parishioners are immensely grateful for the arrival of Father Fredi Navarrete MSFS, which has facilitated the celebration of Mass and the sacraments in the parish. Most importantly, it has provided the daily presence of Father Fredi Navarrete MSFS.





When Father Marco Sanhueza’s arrival was announced in the parish of Christ the Risen, it gave the communities a new impetus, a spiritual contribution, and a weekly presence and celebration of the Sacraments.

In addition, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales serve as chaplains

to other Parishes in the city, such as the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mercy, Sanctuary of Our Lady of Carmen, and Parish of Jesus the Worker. They also accompany the movements of the Neocatechumenal Way and Cursillo de Cristiandad. They also assist the sick at the hospitals by administering sacraments.



Thus, the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales are directly involved in reinforcing and renewing the Faith. Since their arrival, they have distinguished themselves by their liturgical celebrations, availability and service.

From the city of Curicó-Chile, a warm greeting to all our brothers, Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales.

Chile is affectionately known by its inhabitants as the “pais de los poetas” or the “country of poets”. This is because two of the country’s most well-known and beloved literary figures were the poets and writers Gabriela Mistral and Pablo Neruda, who both won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

Angel Goretti



My name is **Letizia Njagi**. I am a housewife and a mother of three children. I am from Nairobi, Kenya. Here, I would like to share my faith experience, in which some Fransalian Fathers played a crucial role. On December 14, 2016, I gave birth to my third child in a public hospital in Nairobi. Her name is Angel Goretti. She is alive today, and many call her a miracle child. She is considered a miracle child because of our deep faith and how the MSFS Fathers were involved in our family.

Goretti was born with bladder exstrophy (a condition involving an open abdominal wall). Additionally, some organs had not yet formed. Some doctors believed that the infant would not survive, and even if she did, they thought she would never be able to walk. A few even predicted her death within days!

We were discharged from the hospital after six days because there was nothing more that could be done for the baby. My husband and I found ourselves in a challenging situation. We had to make a crucial decision. We had no money to take the baby to a private hospital. Then, through a priest, God whispered to us: **'Take the baby and go home. This child will be a blessing for you and many.'** I then found the courage to say: **'God, in His eternal plan, has given us this child in this form. God does not make mistakes. I will take care of this child.'**

We welcomed her into our beautiful home of love, a single-room rented house. Goretti has two older sisters, Yvonne and Anna, who are students. We are economically disadvantaged. My husband is deaf and mute and communicates

using sign language. He works in a daily wage job. I used to teach as a primary school teacher, but due to Goretti's condition, I could not return to work. Additionally, my health deteriorated.

Another significant challenge was that, due to the shock, I could not produce breast milk. Therefore, the baby had to be fed special formula from the first day. Compounding the already profound mental and physical agony was the heart-wrenching criticism from some villagers who claimed that such a baby was a curse from God because of the family's sins! Nonetheless, we placed our trust in God. We cared for the baby, using warm, salty water and maintaining high hygiene standards to protect the open area from infections.

Humanly speaking, it was impossible for us to survive. However, the Divine came to our aid through the good priests of the Fransalian congregation. To make a long story short, the MSFS Fathers, along with their benefactors and partner organisations like Living Waters in the USA, some families from the parish of Percha in Italy, Frauenfeld in Switzerland, and many people of goodwill, have supported us to this day, both financially, spiritually, and emotionally.

Thus far, four operations have been conducted on Goretti. Each operation and its associated expenses average around US\$6,500. As Goretti still lacks a urine

bladder, she needs to use high-quality diapers, which require regular changes to prevent infections. Now, Goretti is in Class III and shines as one of the best students. She is passionate about learning and enjoys singing, dancing, cooking, etc.

As I have mentioned above, some people condemned our child as a curse from God. However, time has shown that she is a blessing. **Goretti, too, is a child of deep faith.** She's at times worried about the many scars on her belly and wishes she had none. She's also worried about her teeth that got damaged by the many medicines that she has been taking. She needs to use certain medications until she's fifteen years. Despite her many challenges, she has embraced everything as a gift from God. **She loves Jesus and Mother Mary immensely.** On behalf of our family, I thank the MSFS Congregation and all the people of goodwill who honour our human dignity and love us.

Thank you, MSFS Fathers, all our



benefactors, for realising your great MISSION in our humble lives.

With sincere thanks and love
Letizia & Stephen
Yvonne, Anna and Goretti

*Ahsanteni sana.....
Thank you all for your love and care*



Deus providebit!



Good News from Bara Durgapur Mission, Jharkhand, India

"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8



The Bara Durgapur Mission is located in the Santhal Pargana region of Sahibganj District, Jharkhand. Jesuit Missionaries from Malta planted their roots in the Dumka-Raiganj area about 80 years ago, and one of their efforts led to the establishment of the Mundli Mission, which resides 5 kilometres from Tinpahar, making it one of the oldest missions in the region. The Bara Durgapur Mission was one of the sub-centres under the Mundli Parish, where priests occasionally visited to celebrate masses in makeshift sheds. An Indian Jesuit missionary, Fr. Peter Savarimuthu SJ, envisioned a school at this mission in 2010 and spent two years constructing a modest structure containing four classrooms. The mission was subsequently handed over

to the Diocese. Fr. Joseph Kailamangalam MSFS The diocesan priest in charge of the Bara Durgapur Mission, Fr. Ambros, and local Catholics initiated a humble school in 2012. After three years of challenges, the mission was entrusted to the Fransalians of Nagpur Province by Rt Rev. Julius Marandi, the Bishop of Dumka, on 16th September 2015, a day after the feast of Our Lady of Compassion. We are in the 10th year after taking over this Mission from Dumka Diocese. It was an experience of journeying through darkness and slowly coming to the light. Initially, the journey was hard to accept and challenging to navigate. But the LORD sent many persons and organisations as TORCH BEARERS to lead us forward and to come out of the darkness. The words will not suffice to thank the ALMIGHTY GOD. But we must acknowledge HIS WONDERS in this remote area.

Among the myriad blessings, the most remarkable and recent is the opening of the newly constructed parish church



dedicated to our Beloved Mother of Compassion, the Patroness of the MSFS and of MARIAN NAGAR, BARA DURGAPUR MISSION I'm thankful for the opportunities, challenges, and lessons learned. I'm grateful for the unwavering support of our mission team, the generosity of our benefactors, the guidance of our spiritual leaders and the continuous prayerful support of our dear intercessors.

"Throughout our journey, I've been consistently amazed by God's provision and timing. Often, even before we could envision implementing a new project or initiative, God would already be working behind the scenes to bring it

to fruition. He would send people with the right skills and resources, inspire supporters to contribute generously, and provide the necessary means to turn our vision into reality." MISSION. It's been a humbling experience to see how God has been the true architect of our mission, using us as mere instruments to accomplish His will. I'm grateful for the countless ways He has shown up, providing for our needs and exceeding our expectations."

May HE continue to perform HIS miracles in the Mission Territory , Praise the Lord.

Fr Joseph Kailamangalam MSFS

Maria Bambina

A unique devotion in one of our MSFS Parishes

Fr. Austin Joy MSFS

Udayapatty is a small village in the Diocese of Salem, Tamil Nadu, India. The residents are predominantly poor and middle class, mainly depending on daily wages for their livelihood. The parish was established in 1997 and was entrusted to the MSFS. This parish is called "OUR LADY OF GOOD HEALTH CHURCH." With the approval and blessings of the Local Ordinary, along with the support of the parish leadership team, this devotion was initiated in July 2023.



The Italian phrase "**Maria Bambina**" translates to "**Baby Mary**." In 1735, Sr. Isabella Chiara Fornari, Superior of the Poor Clare Sisters in Todi, Italy, modelled the Simulacrum (image) in wax. Later, the image was handed over to the Charity Sisters. The Parish Priest from Italy bought the Baby Mary's statue through the Charity Sisters, and the Bishop of Salem, Most Rev. Dr. Arulselvan Rayappan blessed it. This devotion is the first of its kind in the whole Diocese.



The unique presentation of Our Lady's Casket in the Church is highly symbolic and significant. Every second Sunday of the month is observed as **Bambina Sunday**. People from various parts of Tamil Nadu and neighbouring parishes flock to this place to seek our Infant Mary's powerful intercession. The service begins at 10 in the morning and continues until 1:30 in the afternoon, with lunch served for all. Many miracles are reported, and everything is documented.

TESTIMONIES:-

- After 13 years of marriage, a couple named Mr. Prince and Mrs. Jeni became parents through the powerful intercession of the Holy Infant Mary, and their child was named Maria Infantina.
- A non-Catholic lady named Maheshwari testified to a miraculous healing of breast cancer after seeking the powerful intercession of our

Infant Mary intercession.

- A child named Antony Jovan was healed of his kidney-related ailment after praying to the Holy Infant Mary and was miraculously discharged from intensive care.

Likewise, many miracles are reported by the faithful during the second Sunday service. We can feel that God's ways are indeed different, and in this place, He works powerfully through Holy Infant Mary. This unique devotion at this special location is attracting many people. The MSFS Fathers are indeed following the path "To Jesus through Mary" and are actively involved in the ministry by hearing confessions, celebrating Holy Mass, delivering special preachings, offering powerful adorations, providing oil blessings, and more. Let us journey together with Mary to Jesus as Pilgrims of Hope in the Jubilee year 2025.





Qualities Required for a Missionary Inspiration from St. Francis de Sales on Being Human

“The word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth...” (John 1:14). The Incarnation is the most magnificent and astounding mystery into which we are all called to be sharers. God becoming human is truly remarkable. While we all strive to emulate God, we face a significant challenge in being authentic human beings. We are called to imitate God. The Old Testament reminded the Israelites to be holy, following the example of Yahweh (Lev 19:2). We celebrate Christmas with all its pomp and glory without realising that the mystery of the Incarnation prompts us to be genuine human beings. Sometimes, as the years pass by, we get the sense that we forget to be the real human beings we are created.

We often come across the expression, out of bitterness, that someone is not human in his approach. This would be the worst remark we can ever get in our life. If you hear that remark about yourself, know that you have failed in your life as a human being and, still worse, as a Christian and a religious. Because all Christians are to be reflecting that great humanity lived by Jesus. According to Francis de Sales, “Sometimes it happens that those who imagine themselves to be angels are not even good men and

there is more sublimity in their words and expressions than in their way of thought and deeds.”

Francis de Sales himself teaches Philothea about being truly human. “Sometimes it happens that those who imagine themselves to be angels are not even good men and there is more sublimity in their words and expressions than in their way of thought and deeds.” “I am nothing if not human.”



The Word came closer to the flesh. The Word became part of the flesh and embodied it. Thus, He turned the flesh into the Word by becoming flesh. Often, it is the act of distancing our flesh from the Word that results in our failure to be authentically human. In the garden, Adam and Eve distanced themselves from the Word through their sin of disobedience. The same Word has come after our human nature to sanctify it and return it to its original status. He embraced the human nature with love. That’s why he could live among his people. When our life and mission do not reflect this sanctified human nature, then our distance from the Word is very great. Though we preach the Word with vigour and enthusiasm, we find ourselves alienated from the Word, and there is no Incarnation taking place in us.

Francis de Sales was a man with a heart full of compassion for everyone who came to him. He became a saint admired by many because of his closeness to the Word. He provided a space for that Word, and that space was within every human heart. This is why his spirituality is known as the spirituality of the heart. Salesian spirituality celebrates the humanity of the Lord. "Consider the nature he has given you. It is the highest in this visible world; it is capable of eternal life and of being perfectly united to his divine majesty." Human nature is regarded as the highest nature in this created world. God has created it with a purpose, and the purpose for which God has created man in this world is to exercise God's goodness in him.

The Incarnation was the highest form of the expression of God's goodness to humanity. The tenderness of the child in the manger, the docility of the boy to his parents, the compassion of that teacher for the sinners, his feeling of oneness with the poor and the sick, his attitude of forgiveness toward his persecutors etc., are the expressions of that goodness of God made visible in Christ Jesus.

In our missionary life, this quality of being truly human must become

a reality. The ability to empathize with those who suffer, the capacity to connect with the little ones so that we can elevate them to God, the courage to step outside oneself as Jesus did to uplift others and help them feel the closeness of God through one's life and ministry, are some of the qualities we can practice to make the Incarnation a joyful and meaningful reality in our lives. In addition to these, one should also cultivate the human quality of relating to God regularly, following the example of Jesus, to sanctify our sinful human nature. We certainly need the assistance of the one who became human so that we may imitate him and be the Emmanuel in our homes and ministries.

Live Jesus!

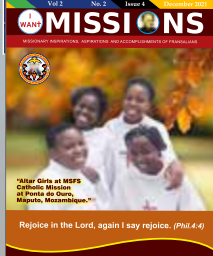


Fr. Johnson Pathiyil MSFS

St Francis de Sales' Mission & Teaching with Wisdom & Humour

Once, a religious complained to Bishop Francis de Sales that his new superior was even worse than the old one. "Instead of a horse, we now have an ass." "But," the saint said, "was not Balaam well instructed by an ass?"

Another time, Bishop Francis rebuked a man for making fun of a hunchback. "The works of God are perfect," said, SFS. "What! Perfect, and yet deformed?" replied the acquaintance. "Yes, perhaps he is a perfect hunchback."



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