



CASA GENERALIZIA
MISSIONARI DI S. FRANCESCO DI SALES,
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SG-AB2-17

JANUARY 31, 2025

SUPERIOR GENERAL TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

My dear Confreres,

We are at the dawn of a significant milestone in our Congregation. We begin our XXI General Chapter 2025 tomorrow at Stella Maris, Visakhapatnam, India. This two-week journey will allow us to delve into the roots of our Congregation, soak up the treasure of our charism, and respond to the needs of our society. Forty-three ex-officio plus Delegates, four participants, and three invitees representing all continents will attend the General Chapter.

The beauty of the General Chapter is that we can listen to confreres from various cultures and perspectives. This diversity enriches decision-making and strengthens our fraternity. Rev. Sr. Romana, Superior General of the Poor Servants of Our Lady (PSOL), and Mr. Johny K.C., Commissioner of IT and GST, will share their perspectives from a woman religious and layperson's angle.

We will celebrate the Chapter in a synodal manner, with its ecclesial and charismatic dimensions. We will listen to the Word of God, seek to discover the signs of the times and respond to the needs of the world as missionaries.

The aim of the General Chapter is clarified in Canon 631/1: In an Institute, the General Chapter has the supreme authority in accordance with the constitutions. It is to be composed in such a way that it represents the whole institute and becomes a true sign of its unity and charity. Its principal functions are:



- To protect the patrimony (the charism, mind, disposition, spirit, and purpose of the Founder and traditions of the Institute at the time of its ecclesiastical approval) of the Institute
- To foster appropriate renewal in accord with the patrimony (charism)
- To elect the supreme Moderator (and his Curia)
- To deal with matters of greater importance and to issue norms that all are bound to obey
- To examine the state of the Congregation and to promote unity and synodality for the common good.

Let us continue to pray for our XXI General Chapter that we may fulfil its functions with the assistance of God's grace.

GRATITUDE

This is my last circular to you. I thank you, my confreres, for welcoming me into your lives, allowing me to serve you, and supporting me in many ways. What an honor it is to be part of our beloved Congregation and serve its mission! I thank God for using me to further the Congregation's mission.

In 2013, when I was elected Superior General, I had no idea what an incredible journey lay ahead of me. This multi-task, multicultural, and international ministry has been a solid learning experience for me and an opportunity to serve as the 14th Superior General after our beloved Founder, Father Peter Mermier. I know this is time to hand the baton to the fifteenth Superior General. Before I do it, I must state that it was purely by God's grace that I could tide over pleasant and unpleasant times.

Being aware of my inadequacies and limitations, I could tap into the resources of a talented and creative General Curia that you gave me. I am profoundly grateful to Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, the Assistant General and the General Secretary for Mission; Fr. Jacob Karamkuzhyil, the General Councilor and Secretary for Education; Fr. J. Stephen, General Councilor and Secretary for SAIM; Fr. Saji George, the General Councilor and Secretary for Formation, Fr. Jose Cheriyanthara, the General Bursar, Fr . B. Suresh Babu (who was part of the General Administration but later was appointed Provincial of Visakhapatnam), Mr. Yves Carron, who was the Assistant General for three years. Together, we did what we have done. Without them, I would not be able to do what we did. Their unique qualities and agility have been used in their responsibilities as General Secretaries. I have been blessed to work alongside such a talented and committed team on the Curia. Their love and support have sustained me through the good times and the difficult times; I will always be thankful to them.

My gratitude and appreciation go to the past and present Provincials who played a significant role in understanding and collaborating with the General Curia for the common projects of the Congregation. The Provinces have been sensitive to the needs of the Congregation in supplying personnel and financial support whenever requested. I appreciate and thank the valuable help rendered by Fr. K. Ignaci Muthu, Fr. K. Thomas, Fr. Dola Velankanni, Fr. Athnas Kerketta, and Fr. Domy Vallomkunnel for helping the General Administration and me in dealing with juridical and canonical matters. I thank Fr. Thomas Kalariparambil, Fr. Thomas Cherukat, Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, Fr. James Panthalanickel, Fr. Dola Velankanni Rao, and Fr. K. Thomas, the members of the Expert Commission, for preparing and presenting the proposals on juridical matters to be voted at the Extraordinary General Chapter 2022.

An expert committee consisting of Fr. Jean-Paul Fournier, Fr. Agenlo Fernandes, Fr. Jacob Parappally, and Fr. Sessety Mariadas (of happy memories) prepared and presented to us four study papers on the Spirit of the Founder, Ouer Charism, the History of the Congregation, and MSFS Constitution and General Directory. The Extraordinary General Chapter 2022 mandated Fr. Agnelo Fernandes, Fr. Thumma Mariadas Reddy, and Fr. Binu Edathumparambil to work on an integrated final draft of the four research papers with Fr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara as the facilitator and contact person from the General Administration. I thank our confreres for their brilliant work and contribution to the Congregation.

I thank Fr. Mark Hriinii, who served the Generalate Community as House Superior and Secretary to the Superior General, for his dedication and generous assistance. I appreciate Fr. Ajit Daimary, the present House Superior and Secretary, for his committed and joyful service to me, the Generalate community, and the entire Congregation. I thank the Dibrugarh Provincial for the two confreres at the service of the Congregation.

I appreciate Fr. Thomas Chozhithara, who served as the Director of the Mission Development Office for six years and did a commendable job stabilizing and coordinating the Province MDOs. I thank all our confreres, past and present, who were at the service of the Lumen Christi Community in Arusha, Schalanders Community in Italy, DSM in Hyderabad, De SIFMA in Chennai, and all our confreres who served in different committees and commissions in the past six years for their goodwill and availability to the Congregation.

*“The history of our congregation is a mute witness to the courage, trust in God, love for the mission, simplicity, self-sacrifice, and generosity in the lives of early missionaries. They divested themselves of comforts and placed their time, talent, and treasure at the disposal of the congregation. We need to grow in the **virtue of gratitude** towards our religious family for giving us the identity of MSFS.” cf., Study Paper -One*

As I complete my term and leave my office, I am thankful to the Lord for the Holy Spirit's protection, grace, and power, which kept me vigilant about my responsibilities and protected me during my travels. Knowing my inadequacy and unworthiness, I have often prayed, and I continue to pray, "Lord, your grace is sufficient for me." It has been painful to make decisions that affect the lives of confreres when confronted with grave violations of norms of religious life. I am left alone after following the discernment process in the General Council meetings and preparing to implement the decisions. There were days and nights of struggle within my conscience in processing the decisions and ensuring that the decisions were just and proportionate. The battle between the cost of not making decisions and how the outcome of the decisions impacted the confreres remained stressful. I can honestly say that with my Council, we upheld the renewal and growth of the confreres and the norms and values of religious life. If, in any way, I have failed in living up to the vision of my ministry and office, I am truly sorry.

Thank you, dear Conferers, and may God be praised!

NEWS – EVENTS – DECISIONS

- 1. Fr. Jundie SUMAGAYSAY** is appointed the Delegation Superior of the Philippines Delegation under Southwest Province for a second term, effective December 06, 2024.
- 2. Fr. Manoj ARACKAL** is appointed the Delegation Superior of the Chad-Cameroon Delegation under Southwest India Province for a third three-year term, effective January 6, 2025.
- 3. Fr. Gijo JOHN** (Pune Province) is appointed a member of the MSFS community in Schlanders as the local administrator and pastor of the Italian-speaking community, effective September 30, 2024.
- 4. The DSM Heritage Retreat 2025 will be held from May 12 through May 23** in Annecy, France. Participants must prepare in advance with a Passport, visa, and tickets.
Age Eligibility: 45 and above
- 5. The Spirituality Program Annecy (SPA) will be held from October 04 to November 14, 2025,** in Annecy, France.
Age eligibility: 45 and below

6. MSFS *eStatus*: MSFS STATUS 2025

The long-awaited MSFS *eStatus* is ready. The application will be released during the XXI General Chapter. I congratulate Fr. J. Stephen and his team at De Sales Technologies for this absolutely fabulous *eStatus 2025*.

The features of the new *eStatus* are:

eStatus: Your Comprehensive Religious Directory App

eStatus is a versatile mobile application designed for religious congregations, dioceses, and organizations to streamline communication, enhance connectivity, and support spiritual life. This app provides a comprehensive directory of members with detailed profiles, appointments, and institutional information, including addresses and contact details of centres and establishments. It features a dedicated obituary section to honour and remember departed members, along with timely reminders and notifications for birthdays, ordination anniversaries, and significant events to foster connections within the community. Additionally, *eStatus* offers a rich collection of prayers for various occasions, making it an invaluable tool for nurturing spiritual practices and simplifying administration. Whether for clergy, religious members, or lay collaborators, *eStatus* brings everything you need to stay connected and organised right to your fingertips.

The Logo of MSFS eStatus 2025



eStatus

MSFS Mobile App

Everything you need at your finger tip!!!

7. DSM: De Sales and Mermier Resource & Animation Centre

The new logo of DSM



DSM Logo:

This logo is not just a symbol rather it is an expression of theological statement of faith, love, and mission. *The logo encapsulates the following:*

1. '**Globe**' symbolizes the universal call to evangelization.
2. '**Dove with Olive Branch**' symbolizes the Salesian spirit of peace and love.
3. '**Fountain Pen Nib**' symbolizes the commitment to teaching and guiding souls to God.
4. '**Bold DSM Text**' symbolizes the firmness of faith and missionary zeal.

Together, these elements manifest the very essence of De Sales and Mermier's vision and mission, deeply rooted in love, patience, education, and evangelization.

Thus, the DSM logo envisions the theology of Salesian missionary spirituality, enabling us all to embrace our call to holiness and service to God and humanity.

8. Congratulations To:

Fr. Dr. Athnas KERKETTA (On being appointed as a Council Member of the Commission for Canon Law, CCBI)

Fr. Dr. Henry Jose KODIKUTHIYIL (On being appointed as a Council Member of the Commission for Theology and Doctrine, CCBI)

Fr. Dr. Dola VELANGANI RAO (On being appointed as a Council Member of the Commission for Canon Law, CCBI)

Fr. Dr. Domy VALLOMKUNNEL (on his appointment as the Episcopal Vicar of Delhi Archdiocese)

9. Gratitude

We thank **Fr. Samuel Devaraj Thomas**, the director of SPA, and Fr. Hepuni John for their assistance in conducting the Salesian Program Anney (SPA) 2024, which was held in Anney, France, from September 28 to November 8, 2024.

Special thanks to **SFS Guwahati** for hosting the first-ever MSFS Inter-School National Quiz Competition and Fr. George Thomas for meticulously organizing it.

Thanks to **Fr Johnson KALLIDUKIL, General Secretary for Mission**, and the organizers for conducting PMP NATIONAL GATHERING and prayer days at MSFS Provincial House, Silapathar, Assam, from October 28 through November 01, 2024.

Congratulations and thanks to **Fr J. Stephen, the General Secretary** and the director of De SIFMA, for successfully organizing the convocation ceremony at De SIFMA (De Sales International Film and Media Academy) on October 12, 2024.

Thanks to **Fr J. Stephen, the General Secretary**, and **Fr Jnanamani Simon** for updating and designing the website of our Congregation. Kindly login: msfs.org

Thanks to **Fr Saji George, the General Secretary for Formation**, for organizing ongoing formation programs for priests ordained from 2014-2016 and 2017-2022 in three batches at different venues.

Thanks to **Fr Saji George** and **Fr J. Stephen** for organizing the MDO Directors Meet at MSFS Provincial Guwahati Province on November 30, 2024.

Thanks to **Fr. Jacob Karamaluzhyil, the General Secretary for Education**, for the successful second edition and publication of the Moral Science book A SPOONFUL OF HONEY.

Congratulations to **Fr. Francis POOVELIL, MSFS**, on being appointed Finance Officer of the Newly Proposed College Extension at Morning Star Regional Seminary, Kolkata.

10. Prayerful Tribute to our beloved Confrere

Fr. Paul Camilo Dominic Gonsalves MSFS, Nagpur Province, died on October 19, 2024. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Those who have not fulfilled the suffrages do the same as soon as possible (MSFS Const. No. 118; Gen. Directory No. 98).

11. Departures from the Congregation

Incardination

Fr. Peter Antony GEORGE

Fr. Pally Dilip CHAKRAVARTHY

Fr. Francis Stephen

Laicization

Gade Kishore Reddy

Martin ELAYADATHUMADATHIL

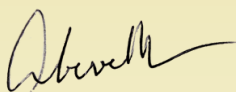
We thank them for serving the congregation's mission and wish them well in their future endeavours.

St. Francis de Sales:

"A soul united to God is like a tree planted beside the waters, always green and full of fruit."

"God takes pleasure in seeing you take your little steps, and like a good father who holds his child by the hand, He will accommodate His steps to yours and will be content to go no faster than you."

Live JESUS!



Father Abraham VETTUVELIL, MSFS

Superior General