



MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES USA VICE PROVINCE

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VPUSA-AT-5

April 25, 2014

Dear Confreres:

In two weeks we will celebrate the feast of Pentecost. This is a good time for us to meditate on the promise of Jesus to send us His Holy Spirit to hold us together as a community of brothers and to enable and empower us to carry on His mission to its fulfillment. The Acts of the Apostles tells us that at Pentecost, the disciples experienced a harmony, a unity, a fellowship that they never dreamed of! Acts 2:1-11 tells us that “a noise like a strong driving wind filled the entire house and tongues as of fire rested on each of them”. They were from different territories, they were of different background, and spoke different languages, but they understood each other!

The disharmony, the disunity and the brokenness and confusion that people experienced at Babel was reversed...at Babel they began to speak many languages and they could not understand each other anymore...at Pentecost, they spoke different languages and they understood each other. A new kind of harmony, oneness and togetherness - a communion of persons happened. The Holy Spirit filled the disciples with a new power....they were no more afraid...and they spoke boldly. They moved with courage and compassion to bring the good news of Jesus to the world.

Acts of the Apostles tell us that the followers of Jesus were of “one mind and one heart” (Acts 2:42-47), that they were together in a common life, in the breaking of bread, in prayer, in listening to the word of God, the instruction of the Apostles and in ministering to the wider community. This is what attracted many to the early Christian community, “Day by day, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2:47).”

Peter, in his first letter challenged his readers to be living stones being built into a “spiritual house” – a community, not isolated, individualistic, solitary religion (1 Peter 2:4-9), but faithful people in communion, in fellowship, in union of mind and heart.

It is on the fidelity of the believers and their relationship to one another that the Church is built. It is our connection to Jesus, the living corner stone and our concern for one another that creates and sustains the Church.

Paul used the image of the body to describe his vision of Christian life – many members, with different functions, different in size and shape, form one single body. Each member has to honor and respect the other member of the body to function well. Paul saw the gifts and talents of individuals as gifts from the same spirit, but gifts given for the common good and not for personal gain. Different gifts, variety of gifts, abundance of gifts – all from the same Spirit, given for the good of the community. Paul saw unity (not uniformity) in diversity as God’s gift for common life and for common good.

Even when sin and misunderstanding burden community life, is not the sinning brother still a brother and a sinning sister still a sister with whom we stand under the word of Christ? Will not his/her sin be a constant occasion for us to give thanks that all of us may live in the forgiving Grace of God in Jesus?

Let us be grateful for our fellowship in the community in which we have been placed, even when there is no great experience, no discoverable riches, no bursts of joy, but much weakness, small faith and lots of difficulties without complaining to God that everything is so paltry, so petty, is so far from what we expected. None of us can ever live by our own deeds and words, but only by that one word and deed that binds us together: the gift of forgiveness and grace in Jesus.

As we prepare to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, let us pray to the Holy Spirit to gather us again and again and hold us together as a community of brothers. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit to give us “good counsel” and “gentle wisdom” to discern what God expects of us and the courage to fulfill his purpose for us.

Congregational Retreat 2014

The following congregational retreats have been announced. If you are unable to attend one of these retreats, you may make plans to attend it in your province of origin. Please remember that this retreat is mandatory. Our Superior General, Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil will be our retreat director. I thank him for his readiness to join us for the retreat.

First Group: Monday evening, August 25, 2014 to Friday Noon, August 29, 2014.

Second Group: Monday evening, September 1, 2014 to Friday Noon, September 5, 2014

These two retreats will be held at Wellspring, Fransalian Center for Spirituality, in Whitehouse, Texas.

So far 36 have registered for the first retreat and 7 for the second retreat and 5 have informed me that they will participate in the retreat in their provinces and so will not be joining us. **I request the rest of you to please register for the retreat before June 5, 2014.**

If you are travelling by air, please book your ticket to Tyler, Texas (TYR – airport Code) and let me know and I will make arrangements to pick you up at the airport on arrival.

You or your province will not be charged for accommodation, food and other retreat expenses, unless you require a private room. Please let me know if you need private accommodation with the understanding that you will have to pay for this facility.

Congratulations:

Fr. Santhiyagu Arokiyasamy has published a new book "Through the Year with St. Francis de Sales". He draws inspiration from the Scripture readings of each day's liturgy and offers us a thought from St. Francis de Sales for further reflection. Hearty congratulations to Fr. Santhiyagu.

New Assignments:

Fr. Amarnath Nagothu (Vizag Province) is appointed Pastor of St. Monica Church in Palatka, FL, in the diocese of Jacksonville, Florida.

St. Monica Catholic Church
114 South 4th Street
Palatka, FL 32177
Phone: 386-325-9777; Fax: 386-329-1960; Cell: 904-402-4047

Fr. Antony Rajesh (South East Province) is appointed parochial vicar at St. Margaret Parish, Otsego, MI in the diocese of Kalamazoo, Michigan.

St. Margaret Parish
766 S. Farmer Street
Otsego, MI 49078
Phone: 269-694-6311; Fax: 269-694-5415; Cell: 269-201-8003

Fr. Thomas Olickal (East Africa Province) is appointed Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in the diocese of Tucson, Arizona.

Our Lady of Fatima Parish
1950 W. Irvington Place
Tucson, AZ 85746
Phone: 520-883-1717; Fax: 520-883-2450; Cell: 903-221-6116 (Cell)

Fr. Stephen Soares (Nagpur Province) is appointed Parochial Vicar at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in the diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana.

Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
145 Church St.
Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457
Phone: 318-352-3422; Fax: 318-352-3822; Cell 318-730-8114

Fr. Mariadas Sesetti (Vizag Province) is appointed Parochial Administrator of St. Vincent De Paul Parish with additional responsibility for the care of St. Bede Church at Kelly and St. Patrick Church at Corning in the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas.

Fr. Mariadas Sesetti
St Vincent De Paul Rectory
308 E 3rd St
Onaga, KS 66521
Phone: 785- 889-4896; Cell: 785-294-2759

Conferees Returning to India:

Fr. Bhaskarreddy Gade has returned to Visakhapatnam, his province of origin after two years of ministry in USA and has received a new assignment in his Province.

Fr. Benjamin Dande will be returning to Visakhapatnam, his province of origin after nine years of ministry in USA and will soon receive an assignment in his Province.

Fr. Arokiaselvam Nithiyaselvam will be returning to South East India Province, his province of origin after seven years of ministry in USA and will soon receive an assignment in his province.

We wish Fr. Bhaskar, Fr. Benjamin and Fr. Arokiaselvam God's blessings as they begin their ministry in their respective provinces.

New Provincial Administration:

South East India Province

Fr. C. Sebastian Raj	- Councilor & Admonitor
Fr. A. Jeyakumar	- Councilors
Fr. A. Edward	- Councilor
Fr. S. Deivasakayaraj	- Councilor
Fr. M. Nicholas	- Provincial Bursar

Northeast India Province

Fr. Emmanuel Uppamthadathil – Councilor & Admonitor
Fr. Athnas Kerketta - Councilor
Fr. Benoy Veliyathu- Councilor
Fr. Reji Kizhakethalackel - Councilor
Fr. Joseph Kannamangalath - Provincial Bursar

Brazil Province

Fr. S. Eldin Bernard is appointed Administrator of Brazil Province with effect from March 19, 2014.

Chad-Cameroon Delegation

Fr. Manoj Xavier Arackal is appointed Delegation Superior of Chad-Cameroon Delegation, effective April 15, 2014

Episcopal Vicar of the Amravati Diocese, India

Fr. Mario D'Souza of Pune Province is appointed Episcopal Vicar of Amaravaty Diocese, India.

In behalf of USA Vice Province, I congratulate the new Provincial Administration of North East and South India Provinces, the Administrator of Brazil Province, the new delegation of superior of Chad-Cameron and the new Episcopal Vicar of the diocese of Amravati, India. Let us pray that the Lord blesses them with wisdom and courage as they assume their new responsibilities.

Let us pray for our confreres....

Fr. Frederic Meynet of France-Suisse Province, aged 90, expired on 17th March, 2014.

Fr. Abraham Chirayil of Vizag Province passed away on April 18, 2014 at the age of 85.

Fr Joseph Karuppanan of Nagpur Province passed away on April 29, 2014 at the age of 89.

Fr. S.M Peter of Pune Province passed away on May 21, 2014 at the age of 49.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and perpetual light shine upon them.

Let us pray for our confreres who are sick.....

Fr. Philip Mangatt of Southern African Region, is diagnosed to have cancer.

Fr. Raison Kaduvakuzhiyil of South West Province is undergoing chemotherapy.

Fr. Gilbert Bugnon, former Provincial of Brazil under treatment for cancer.

Fr. Jerson D'souza of Pune Province who had suffered a heart attack and is under treatment.

May the Lord touch them with His healing presence and bring them back to good health.

North American Salesian Network (NASN) 2014

North American Salesian Network (NASN) was formed at the 2013 meeting of the “Salesian Initiatives”. USA Vice Province has participated in the meetings of the Salesian Initiatives in 2012 and 2013 and became a member of this organization when it was formed in 2013.

Fr. John Peter Arulanandam represented USA Vice Province at the 2014 meeting of NASA, held at St. Paul of the Cross retreat center in Detroit, MI, from April 28-30, 2014. The following is report of the meeting sent by Fr. John Peter Arulanandam.

“There were fourteen members of the NASN present at the meeting, represented by seven Priests, four sisters and three lay people. At the introductory session the members briefly introduced themselves and the type of ministry they are involved. On the following day we had five sessions where we discussed the relevance of NASN’s Vision and Mission and the best ways and means to make Salesian Spirituality known to more people. Concrete proposals were made for making better use of our resources through media and any other available medium of communication to help people to connect with the life of St. Francis De sales. All the members

were of same opinion that we must make a request to our Holy Father to recognize our patron Saint in a special way in his apostolic letter in the year 2022. There was also a concrete suggestion to have a large Convention, in which all the members of the Salesian Family could participate but it has to be studied further before concrete decisions can be made. The meeting ended on the April 30th at 10:30 am and the members felt a sense of accomplishment and departed to their ministry places with a renewed vigor and enthusiasm.”

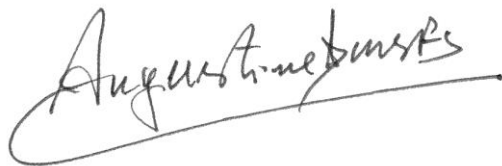
Thanks to Fr. John Peter Arulanandam for participating in this meeting at my request and for sending this report.

Conclusion:

Dear confreres, thank you for your ongoing support. Be courageous and learn to walk faithfully and joyfully! We are Fransalian Missionaries. We must learn to live a lifestyle that is uniquely Fransalian, different from that of the world around us. The only measure of our faith is how we live, not what we profess! Let us walk faithfully, for faithfulness is the mark of a man of God.

Be faithful to your calling! All you do may not be successful in your eyes or in the eyes of others. The real success lies in your fidelity to who you are and what you have come to know as your calling. Just be faithful and be joyful!

You are in my daily prayer. God bless you and all you do for God’s people and keep you safe in the center of His Love.



Augustine Tharappel, msfs
Vice Provincial,
Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales, USA Vice Province

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It is not by the multiplicity of things we do that we acquire perfection, but by the perfection and purity of intention with which we do them. (SFS)