



## MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES USA VICE PROVINCE

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VPUSA-AT-8

December 23, 2014

Dear Confreres:

We celebrate Christmas, the birth of Jesus, the incarnation of God's Word of love. We proclaim and affirm, once again, that we are a privileged people, a people blessed and graced by God's unconditional love revealed in Jesus. As we celebrate Christmas, we contemplate the deepest and the most profound presence of God in our life. We contemplate the depth of God's Love for us.

Christmas Proclaims that we are born in an age of faith - may be weak faith, shallow faith, irrational faith, superstitious faith – But, Faith with all its limitations. Christmas reminds us that we are fortunate heirs of devoted ages of faith. We have a heritage of faith. We have roots - we have connections with believers before us and around us; far away and near! Above all, we have this profound and intimate connection with our God. Our God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. He is “Emmanuel”, “God-With-Us”.

We often burden ourselves with thoughts of past failures and mistakes or fears about the future and future problems. If we feel alone in our struggles with such issues, it just may be because we have not come to know God as “Emmanuel”, here and now. Emmanuel is God's word that carries a power which no other word carries. This word has the power to change our attitudes, convert our minds, transform our hearts and change the course of our life. It can dispel fears, instill hope, awaken courage, and inflame weakening faith.

We are blessed and “Graced” and privileged to know “Emmanuel”. When fears threaten to overwhelm us or keep us from being authentic witnesses of the Gospel, knowing “God-with-us” transforms our fears and failings into courageous faith. When situations seem impossible, “Emmanuel” enables us to trust and face the impossible. When friends are few and sometimes far away, “Emmanuel” assures us that we are never alone. When sickness sets in, when death approaches, when it is difficult to see beyond pains, sufferings, and uncertainties, “Emmanuel” inspires us to trust and hold on.

Throughout our lives, in good times and in bad, it is the word, “Emmanuel” – “God-with-us” that keeps us faithful on our journey of life and leads us to holiness, to perfection, to wholeness. May you have the most profound experience of “God-with-us”, Emmanuel, wherever you may be. And may that experience be your hope and your strength. Be grateful for today and every day, for the miracle of life, for the amazing grace and blessing of your history, for the men and women who gave you spirit and tradition and for today, be especially grateful for the birth of Jesus and the hope that He proclaimed.

**I wish you a very Happy, Holy, Grace-filled, Joy-filled, Love-filled, Peace-filled Christmas!**

## Year Dedicated to Consecrated Life

Activities and events that are envisioned to celebrate and honor the year dedicated to Consecrated Life and Mission were announced in the circular dated November 27, 2014. One of those events was our retreat on Consecrated Life and Mission.

**Please mark your calendar: Retreat 2015 on Consecrated Life and Mission will be held from Monday evening, September 14, 2015 to Friday noon, September 18, 2015 at Montserrat Retreat Center in Dallas.**

## New Arrival:

**Fr. Kola Prakash Rao** from Visakhapatnam India Province has arrived in Kansas for pastoral ministry in the diocese of Dodge City, Kansas. I will send you further details after he receives his assignment.

## Fransalian Times USA

**Fransalian Times USA** is the quarterly newsletter of the Vice Province. The first issue has been released in December 2014. I am deeply appreciative of the initiative that Fr. Tomy Joseph Puliyanampattayil has taken. The newsletter is the product of his initiative and hard work. Thank you, Fr. Tomy, for your gift to the Vice Province.

I encourage all of you to send Fr. Tomy News and Events from your ministry so that he can keep us informed and updated on the happenings in your place of ministry.

If you have not received this new letter, please let me or Fr. Tomy know and we will gladly send it to you again.

## Congratulations:

**Fr. Tom Thomas Pannalakunnel** has successfully defended his doctoral dissertation and graduated from Argosy University, Schaumburg, "Magna cum Loude". The title of his study was "Changes in substance craving and other psychological components after treatment in a religious-based program".

**Fr. Binu Kuriachen Edathumparambil** has successfully defended his doctoral Dissertation and has graduated from the University of St. Louis, MO. The title of his doctoral dissertation was "Strangers to Spouses: A Study of the Relationship, Quality in Arranged Marriages in India". The study explored the relationship quality in arranged marriages in India.

**Dear Father Tom and Fr. Binu, your confreres in USA Vice Province rejoice with you and thank God for your accomplishment. Hearty congratulations and prayerful wishes form all of us in ministry USA.**

## Let us pray for our confreres....

**Fr. John DeVore** had a fall, broke his wrist and is now resting and recuperating. It takes a long time to heal at his tender age of 89.

**Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhiyil**, Provincial of Nagpur India Province is being treated for liver infection caused by Hepatitis A.

**Please keep all our ailing confreres in you prayer.**

## Father Paul L. Sankoorikal

**Father Paul L. Sankoorikal, passes away on Friday, December 19, 2014, at Gundersen Health System in La Crosse at the age of 80. He was a priest for 55 years.**

Most of us knew him as Father S.L.Paul. He was born on July 22, 1934, in India to Lonappan C. and Chinnamma (Kanjooparambil) Sankoorikal. He had his theological studies at the Papal Athenaeum in Poona, India, undergraduate studies at the University of Kerala, India and his graduate studies at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Mo.

**He was ordained a priest of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales (MSFS) on Sept. 28, 1959. Father Paul was a dedicated, selfless, hardworking missionary. He gave himself fully to the ministry that he assigned. As a Missionary of St. Francis De Sales, he served in the following places:**

Fr. Paul served as a Chaplain to the Adoration Convent in Changanacherry, India, (1960); Hostel Rector at St. John Berchmans College in Changanacherry, India, (1961); Teacher and Hostel Rector at St. Aloysius High School in Visakhapatnam, India, (1963); Assistant Pastor at St. Augustine Parish in St. Louis, MO, USA (1964); Assistant Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in St. Louis, MO (1965); Chaplain at Mount Providence in St. Louis, MO (1967); Associate Pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in St. Louis, MO (1971); Associate Pastor and Chaplain at St. Lawrence Parish and Visitation Monastery in Snellville, GA., (1974); Superior of the MSFS Community, Pastor of Mission Center, Principal of Don Bosco High School and Director of the Mission Dispensary in Silapathar, Assam, India, (1976-1980); Assistant Pastor of St. Luke Parish in St. Louis, MO, USA (1980); Associate Pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Parish in Alton, Ill., (1981); Administrator of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Ste. Marie, Ill., (1981); and Associate Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Taylorville, Ill., (1981). He began his service as chaplain at St. Francis Medical Center in La Crosse, Sept. 14, 1982 till his retirement in 2006.

**Fr. Paul was granted an Indult of Secularization from the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales on May 18, 1992, and was incardinated into the Diocese of La Crosse on Aug. 5, 1992.**

Father Paul died on Friday, December 19, 2014. His funeral Mass was celebrated at 3:00 P.M. Tuesday, December 23, 2014 at Christ the King Chapel in Holy Cross Diocesan Center, 3710 East Ave. S., La Crosse. Bishop William P. Callahan, bishop of La Crosse, was the main

celebrant, 20 priest concelebrated and a goo number of people who knew him, including two of his nieces and Fr. George Thayilkuzhithottil, msfs of North East Province who is currently in ministry in the diocese of La Crosse, WI. Burial will be held at 10 A.M. on Wednesday, December 24, 2014, in the Catholic Cemetery.

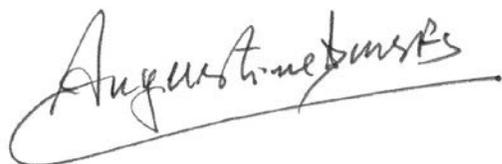
I have known Fr. S. L. Paul for many years and have worked with him raising funds for our missions in North East India. He was a good and faithful religious missionary priest, a dedicated MSFS confrere, deeply committed to the mission of our congregation. He lived a simple and selfless life, giving priority to the needs of the mission rather than his own. Many factors, known only to a few, led him to leave the congregation and get incardinated in the diocese of La Crosse, WI. Even after becoming a diocesan priest, he continued to raise funds and support our missions in India and Africa. His heart was in the missions. Let us thank God for his life and service to our missions. May he enjoy eternal peace and the communion of saints!

### **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,  
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**Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. (SFS)**

