



### *Editorial*

The International edition of National Geographic magazine's December 2015 issue carried the cover story: Mary-The most Powerful Woman in the World. The Editor in Chief, Susan Goldberg, in the editorial presented Mary as a Global Icon. Speaking of the genesis of the cover story, she said, it "dates to a year ago, when an exhibition opened at the National Museum of Women in Arts. 'Picturing Mary: Woman, Mother, Idea' brought together 74 artworks from the 14th through the 19th centuries, lent by galleries including the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, the Louvre in Paris, and the Vatican Museums. The exhibition drew the largest crowd ever for the Washington, D.C., museum. What is it about Mary? She is the world's most depicted woman, yet among the most mysterious, with more written about her in the Koran than in the Bible."



The Church has always recognized Mary as the most powerful woman on Earth. Our beloved Founder, Servant of God, Fr Peter Marie Mermier has chosen Mary, the Mother of Compassion (Mother of Sorrows) as the patroness of the Congregation of the Missionaries of St Francis de Sales. As we celebrate the feast of our patroness on the 15th of September, we are once again invited to look at Mary, our Blessed Mother, as the perfect model of Christian Discipleship. She is the universal symbol of maternal love, suffering and sacrifice, and a mature and committed disciple. She is also the touchstone of our longing for meaning and fulfilment on our journey of life on earth. The Second Vatican Council in its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church No. 58 states: "the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, associated herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim which was born of her. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as a mother to his disciple, with these words: "woman, behold thy son" (Jn 19: 26-27).

St. John Paul II too reminds us that "Mary Most Holy goes on being the loving consoler of those touched by the many physical and moral sorrows which afflict and torment humanity. She knows our sorrows and our pains, because she too suffered, from Bethlehem to Calvary. Mary is our Spiritual Mother, and the mother always understands her children and consoles them in their troubles. Then, she has that specific mission to love us, received from Jesus on the Cross, to love us only and always, so as to save us! Mary consoles us, above all, by pointing out the Crucified One and Paradise to us!"

Therefore, as we celebrate the feast of Mother of Compassion, we honour her as the faithful disciple and an exemplar of faith. Let us pray that we may be united with Christ in His suffering and death and so come to share in His rising to new life. May we follow the example of Mary and unite our sufferings for the values of the gospel to our Lord, facing them with courage, love, trust, and hope.

**Dr K. Henry Jose MSFS**  
Chief Editor

# Saint Francis de Sales A Saint So Human

## Insight: What is Gentleness?

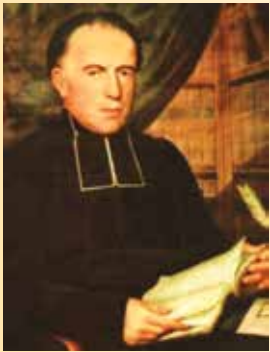
We have seen that absence of anger is not gentleness. Then what is gentleness? Saint Francis de Sales says that “gentleness is the cream of charity”. If charity is compared to milk, then its cream is compared to gentleness. The very essence of charity is gentleness. Love in its most touching, most tender, most compassionate form is gentleness. This is why, though in common parlance gentleness and charity may be identified in spiritual theology, a great difference exists between the two. It is not to discourage

those who want to be gentle. Instead it is to challenge them. It makes one aware what long distance one has to go to become really gentle. May we never be discouraged; but go forward with courage and perseverance, till we become really gentle.



- Fr. Antony Mookenthottam, msfs

## Mermier Bytes



The month of August, commemorates varied events – sacred, secular, civil and religious – that can serve to stoke human sensitivity, offer inspiration and generate purposefulness in one’s personal and social life. This is the month that marks the birthday (28 August 1790) of Fr. Mermier, as also that of his countryman and mentor, St. Francis de Sales, born on 21 August 1567.

Appropriately, then, the Mermier Bytes of this issue focuses on the driving force and life-breath of Salesian Spirituality, namely “LIVE + JESUS”, from which flowed the creative missionary thrust of our Fransalian Founder – “I want Missions”.

The Mermierian Missionary edifice is founded on the twin pillars of Jesus’ evangelical outreach: An all embracing Love of God, which inspires and sustains Love of Neighbour shared with the humans as beneficiary, partner and trustee of His creation. This is the substance:

1. Of the inspiration offered and invitation extended by Saint Francis de Sales to the members of his Salesian Family : “Be what you are, as well as you can, to offer glory to the Master Artisan. (OEA, vol. XIII, pg. 53-54, letter 298, to Philothea, Mme. De Brulart) May this be an inspiration for each one of us to grow in “self-esteem”, while practicing the “little virtues”. He highlighted

this while extolling Our Blessed Mother Mary in her expression at the Annunciation when she exclaimed : “I am the Handmaid of the Lord” (Humility); “Be it done to me according to your Word” (Generosity); and lived her conviction at her Visitation to Eilizabeth right up to the foot of the Cross. For this reason, she is universally acclaimed at her Assumption in Heaven; and,

2. Of the clarion call sounded by the Servant of God, Fr. Peter Mary Mermier : “I want Missions”; his clarion call echoes the command of Christ as expressed in the “Cry” of his people that Jesus heard in his time, and extended to Missionaries of all time to respond in their respective times. For, Francis de Sales it was among the Calvinists in the Chablais and the devotion-seeking Catholics during the ‘reformation’ era; for Fr. Mermier, the call was for “faith renewal” through parish missions, education of the youth and pioneering evangelization; for Fransalians today, religious and lay missionaries, the call is for focus on being Christian and being Church today, as much in the Centre, as in the Periphery.

May our Heavenly Patron and Congregational Founder, whose birth anniversary we commemorate this month, help us shape our own life’s journey individually and as a community of believers in Christ and a congregation of Missionaries, after their example, in their footsteps, with their inspiration, and, through the intercession of Mother Mary Assumed into Heaven.

- Fr Noel Rebello, msfs

## First Batch of MSFS in Indonesia

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Mt. 28:19)

The Visakhapatnam Province is ever eager and enthusiastic to carry out the Mission of Christ faithfully. At the request of Very Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, our Superior General, and his Council,

the Visakhapatnam Province accepted to start a new Mission in Indonesia, under the able leadership of Very Rev. Fr. Chinnappa Reddy, Provincial Superior. The First batch of our Missionaries who volunteered to be Pioneers of this Overseas Mission consists of – Rev. Frs. Maddineni Anand Prasad, Anthony Bhaskar Jayaseelan, Bandi Sagar Santhosh, Swarna Anil Kumar, Thondickal Praveen Mathew and Boilla Ravi Kumar.

On 28th May 2019, they spent in Recollection as part of their Spiritual Preparation for Mission preached by Fr. Dola Velangani Rao, the Councilor in-charge of Mission, at Visakhapuri Mary Matha Shrine, Ross Hill. That evening, all the members of Visakhapatnam Apostolic Community came together at the Shrine to offer Holy Mass, praying for the Pioneering confreres. The Holy Mass was presided over by Fr. Anand Prasad and the homily was preached by Rev. Fr. Sesetti Mariadas, the Provincial Vicar. After the Mass, the Pioneering members were given warm felicitations, with flower bouquets and shawls, by the confreres who had joined the Eucharistic celebration. This was followed by cake-cutting while the song "There shall be showers of blessings, this is the promise of love..." was sung by all. The Apostolic Community wished them Fruitful Ministry. It was indeed heart-touching moment of appreciation for our confreres who courageously came forward to continue the Missionary Legacy of the Province, and of the Congregation at large. The day ended with fellowship meal.



On 29th May 2019, the First Batch started their journey to Indonesia, accompanied by Fr. Dola Velangani Rao, the Councilor in-charge of the Mission. On 31st May, on the day of Solemnity of the Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary, they landed on the Indonesian soil at LARANTUKA at 9.30 am (local time). Rev. Fr. Thomas, the Diocesan Education In-charge of the Diocese of Lantuka, was present at the airport to receive them. They reached Bishop's House at 10 am. Bishop Franciscus was already

waiting for them and he welcomed them warmly in his parlour and expressed his gratitude to the Provincial Superior and the Superior General for accepting the Mission in Indonesia.

The Bishop has plans to entrust to our Pastoral Care two missions—one is Urban and the other Rural. POHAN BAO, a Substation of the Cathedral Parish in LARANTUKA will be bifurcated, erected as a New Parish by the Bishop on 16th September 2019, on the Feast Day of St. Cornelius, and it will be officially entrusted to MSFS, in the presence of the Provincial Superior.

Another Mission is situated in another island called LEMBATA, which involves one hour speed boat journey in the Pacific Ocean from Larantuka. PADA Mission, a substation of Wykomo parish whose pastoral care is entrusted to SVD Fathers, will be bifurcated from the Wykomo parish, erected as a New Parish, and it will be officially entrusted to MSFS, in the presence of the Provincial Superior.

- Fr Dola Velangani Rao, msfs  
- Fr Maddineni Anand Prasad, msfs

## MSFS in Ecuador

22nd June, 2019, was a memorable day in the history of MSFS, Pune Province, as four of our confreres were commissioned to Ecuador Mission, to preach the Good news, to implant the Congregation and to live and disseminate the Spirituality of St. Francis de Sales. The confreres set out on their missionary journey to Ecuador, accompanied by a number of confreres and family friends till the Mumbai Airport. After 45 hours of travel, the new team of missionaries, accompanied by the Provincial, reached Quito International Airport where they were welcomed by our Confreres Fr. John Kennedy msfs the Superior and Fr. Adaikala Rajan msfs on June 25, 2019. On the next day, they travelled to the Bishop's house at Esmeraldas, Ecuador and Fr. Melky Fernandes, the Parish Priest of our mission, was there to welcome with fraternal affection. At the Bishop's house, the Bishop, Most Rev. Eugenio Arellano, and the Vicar General, Very Rev. Fr. Silvino Mina, were eagerly waiting to receive the confreres to the Diocese of Esmeraldas with great joy, and exclaimed that



through the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, God is visibly present in the Diocese of Esmeraldas.

On 29th June 2019, on the feast day of St. Peter and Paul of our

Parish at Limones, the new team of Missionaries were welcomed by over 2000 people, children and youth in procession by boats on the pacific ocean Islands and through the streets of Limones Island that lasted over two hours. Through daily adorations and Eucharist, healing services and pastoral care, a new life has started in the Islands. As of now, Fr. MelkyFernandes is fully involved in the pastoral ministry and the other confreres are learning Spanish

to venture into a new parish. The process of registering our Congregation legally through Episcopal Conference of Ecuador has begun and our confreres have also studying the possibilities of establishing a Fransalian Family Renewal centre and to render Educational service to the orphans and semi-orphans children in the Islands. God bless our missionaries.

- Fr Jayaseelan Selvaraj, msfs

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## KIKUNDE: New Mission in Masai Kusini (Arusha)

The long cherished dream of our Congregation to work in Masai Kusini (South Masai) area of the Archdiocese of Arusha, was fulfilled, when our Fathers Mathew Chavely and Martin Pendanath reached Kikunde mission in Masai Kusini on February 01, 2019, accompanied by Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil and Fr. Jose Eriyanickal. MasaiKusini is a remote area in the Archdiocese of Arusha, consisting predominantly of people of Masai tribe. However, the mission entrusted to us in MasaiKusini is at Kikunde, in the Tanga Region, and consists of people from various tribes. Kikunde is part of Kijunge Parish, which has 3,000 Catholics spread over in five sub-stations. This area was pastorally neglected due to lack of priests and its remoteness. It is 500 kms. Away from Arusha, but is only 140 kms. From Morogoro. During rainy season the area is cut off due to flooding of the rivers. The area lacks proper roads, schools and medical facilities. Kikunde has a small parish church, but it lacks presbytery and parish office. Our Fathers are staying in a two-room temporary house. We require in Kikunde a presbytery, bore-well and installation of solar panels.

On February 02, Very Rev. Fr. Simon Tenges, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Arusha, presided over the Holy Eucharistic celebration and officially entrusted Kikunde Mission to the

Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. He thanked the Congregation for taking up the mission in Kikunde, which has a lot of potential for primary evangelization. Fr. Eustaki Tarimo, the Parish Priest



of Kijunge introduced catechists, leaders of the parish and the office bearers of different pious associations and entrusted them to the new team. Rev. Fr. Thomas Kochuparampil, representing the Provincial, thanked all the fathers, deacons, sisters, leaders and the faithful for the cordial reception, love and co-operation.

- Fr. Martin Pendanath,msfs

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## Malawi Mission in Africa



May 5th 2019 was an unforgettable day in the history of South East India Province of Missionaries of St. Francis De Sales, because that day marked the official taking up of St. Francis De Sales parish, Livingstonia in the diocese of Karonga, Malawi. Rt. Rev. Martin Mtumbuka the Bishop of Karonga Diocese presided over the Holy Eucharistic celebration and concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil, Superior General, Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil, General Councilor for Mission, Rev.Fr. Ignacimuthu, Provincial of South East India Province, Rev. Fr. Amirtharajan, the Councilor for Innovative Ministry, Msfs fathers (pioneering team) and some of

the diocesan Priests. During the felicitation program, our Superior General thanked the Bishop for inviting our Congregation to the Diocese of Karonga. Then the Bishop addressed the people and he officially appointed Fr. Susairaj as the Parish Priest of St. Francis De Sales Parish, Livingstonia, and Frs. Anantharaj and Nelson as the assistant Parish Priests. On 6th after completing the

formalities and signing of the contract, the first local community was also formed and the Provincial appointed Fr.Susairaj as the local superior and was installed as local superior in the presence of Superior General and other fathers.

- Fr Johnson, msfs

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## Silver Jubilee of the Koppal Mission

Jubilee is looking back and looking forward. According to the spirit of Jubilee seen in the book of Leviticus (25:8-28) it is an occasion of remembrance of the past events; of repentance for the faults committed; of redemption of what is lost; of return to the spirit of the founder, to the family; of rejoicing for the graces received; of reception of the freedom of the children of God, of recognition of God's mercy towards his people and of re-dedication looking forward for making 'the Kingdom of God at hand' (Mk.1:16).

With immense joy and thanksgiving we celebrated 25 years of the birth of MSFS Mission at Koppal which took place on 27th January 2019, at a Solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Bishop Henry D'Souza, Bishop of Bellary, and concelebrated by Very Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal, Provincial, South West India Province, Rev. Fr. Thomas Cherukat, Former Provincial, South west India Province, Former Parish Priests, Diocesan Priests and many other confreres.

Bishop Henry was in full appreciation for service and the commendable works of the MSFS missionaries' at Koppal right from the inception of the mission.

Rev. Fr. Benny Koottanal, the Provincial Superior, recalled the struggles and difficulties the Missionaries went through with single minded devotion and dedication.

Rev. Fr. Thomas Cherukat, the First provincial of South West India province, expressed, how God accompanied in the journey of MSFS at Koppal to reach 25 Silver years. He acknowledged the co-op operation, support and guidance given by then late Rev. Dr. Joseph D' Silva, Bishop of Bellary. He also placed on record the pioneering works done by Rev. Fr. Sebastian Conrad.

Fr. Sebastian Conrad recalled that the Silver Sands of the past 25 years, glistened with moments of glory and happiness along with the struggles, commitment and support of the MSFS Community



and parishioners, who worked tirelessly to make this dream a reality. He also took us down memory lane where we had our humble beginnings. He recalled the difficulties the founding priests and the parishioners had to face at that time and how we came out as winners with this beautiful church, standing as a witness to the hard work and generosity of many.

I sincerely thank Fr. Sebastian Conrad the Superior and the community of Koppal for organizing the Jubilee Celebrations of the Koppal Mission.

- Fr Benny Koottanal, msfs

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## Silver Jubilee celebrations at S.F.S. Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Vaniyambadi

SFS Matric Higher Secondary School, Vaniyambadi was founded in the Year 1995 with a vision of disseminating Holistic Education especially, to the underprivileged children, in and around Vaniyambadi. The school that had a humble beginning with 28 students has at present 1062 students. Initially, it functioned in

the Church premises of Vaniyambadi Parish. In the year 1997, it was moved to Janathapuram, Vaniyambadi. In the year 2003, it was raised to Secondary level and in the year 2005, it was raised to Higher Secondary level. Until now, the school has produced 15 batches of Class X students and 13 batches of Class XII students,

who have imprinted their footsteps into various walks of life. The quality Education is its hallmark and is a benchmark for other schools in the vicinity. Since 2017 Friends of Fransalians (FoF) is very active in the school, helping out the nearby Government schools too by way of teaching English and socially engaging through various activities.

The present Management consists of Fr. John Thadews, as Principal, Fr. Johnson Sagayaraj, as Correspondent and Fr. Arockia Charles as Procurator and Bro. Yesu Raj as Regent. They work tirelessly and cheerfully for the growth of the institution.

- Fr Johnson, msfs



## Inauguration and Blessing of St. Anthony's Church at Kadisenahalli, Kolar



“You will succeed, not by military might or by your own strength, but by my spirit, obstacles as great as mountains will disappear before you. You will rebuild the Temple, and as you put the last stone in place, the people will shout Beautiful, Beautiful”. (Zechariah 4:6).

28th May 2019 was a red-letter day in the annals of the history of St. Anthony's Church Kadisenahalli as the new Church was inaugurated and blessed. The opening ceremonies were graced by the Arch Bishop of Bangalore, Rev. Dr. Peter Machado and the Bishop Emeritus Rev. Dr. BernadMoras. Fr A. Jabamalai, the Provincial Councillor represented the provincial in his absence. The procession began from Cluny Convent to the newly built church. The Holy Eucharist was concelebrated by 35 priests with both Bishops as the main celebrants. Fr. A. Jerome MSFS was the facilitator for the whole ceremony. He explained in detail about each part of the liturgy that enabled the faithful to attend it with reverence. There was a big crowd of both Catholics and non-Catholics to participate in the ceremonies. During the homily, Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras invited all the parishners to thank God for the marvellous gift of the new church and to take care of it with gratitude. He also appreciated Rev. Fr. C. Joseph MSFS, the parish priest of St. Anthony's Church, whose hard work, persevering effort and meticulous planning has brought a long awaited

dream to come true. The Archbishop, Most Rev. Peter Machado, specially thanked the MSFS Fathers for their exceptional missionary commitment in the Bangalore Archdiocese. The well prepared liturgy and the melodious singing by the parish choir added solemnity to the occasion. After the Eucharistic celebration the dignitaries were felicitated.

- Fr Benny Koottanal, msfs

## Inauguration of Adult Literacy Centre at Chandrapur, Guwahati

The spread of literacy has emerged as a major factor in economic and social development. In fact, the linkages between education, health and nutrition are mutual and complementary. These linkages result in synergies which can transform vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and diseases into salubrious cycles of learning and health, equity and sustainable development. In keeping with the significance of literacy, on May 15, 2019. Adult Literacy Centre at Garobasti, Gobardhan village in Chandrapur was inaugurated. Mr. Binod Kaman, Community Organizer of Guwahati Municipal Corporation, graced the inauguration ceremony as the Chief Guest. The inauguration began with the lighting of candle and invoking the blessings of Almighty by

Mr. Lipton, teacher of the Adult Literacy Centre, followed by inauguration of the centre, by cutting the ribbon by Mr. Binod Kaman. On the occasion 40 women enrolled for the Adult Literacy cases, from the Garobasti, along with the FAsCE India team were present. In his speech Mr. Binod Kaman lauded FAsCE India for the initiative taken for providing literacy programme for the uplift of women, and in particular the Self Help Group members. He extolled the women for their keen interest to learn reading and writing and urged them to make most out of this opportunity by being sincere and actively partaking in the learning process. And he also remarked “being literate will provide you with self-confidence and enable you to become independent at personal,

social and economic spheres of life". On June 25, 2019, the second Adult Literacy Centre was inaugurated at Government L P School, NizGobardhan village in Chandrapur. During the inauguration ceremony held at premises of the new Adult Literacy Centre in Government L P School, Mr. MonesharSaikia, Headmaster, Government L P School, NeiGobardhan, inaugurated the centre, in the presence of Rev. FrSaji George MSFS, Executive Director, FASCE India staff, newly enrolled members and villagers. There were 43 participants during the inaugural ceremony. The women enrolled for the adult literacy class received study materials from FrSaji George MSFS. A teacher for the centre has been appointed to conduct literacy classes.



- Fr Praveen Joy, msfs

## The life of France-Suisse Province



The provincial retreat 2019 began on Monday 1st July at 11:30 hrs to Friday, July 5th at 20h, at the Convent of the Sisters of Charity,

LA ROCHE-SUR-FORON, France. The retreat was preached by Mgr André DUPUY, Apostolic Nuncio Emeritus and Chaplain of the Sanctuaries of Lourdes. There were 28 participants including two confreres from the region of Chad-Cameroun, who are in France for their pastoral ministry during the summer.

The official installation of the provincial will take place on Sunday, 1st September, at 18:30 hrs, during the parish mass on Sunday evening, at Notre Dame de Lourdes (Avenue de Genève) in Thonon-les-Bains, France. Provincial Congress will be held on Monday and Tuesday, October 7 and 8, 2019, at the Convent of the Sisters of Charity of La Roche-sur-Foron.

- Fr Antony Valiaparampil, msfs

## CONGRATULATIONS TO GENERAL CURIA



Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil  
Superior General



Rev. Fr. Yves Carron  
Asst. Superior General



Rev. Fr. Jacob Karamakuzhyil  
General Secretary for Education



Rev. Fr. Baviri Suresh Babu  
General Secretary for Formation



Rev. Fr. Johnson Kallidukil  
General Secretary for Mission



Rev. Fr. Stephn J.  
General Secretary for Social Apostolates and Innovative Ministries



Rev. Fr. Jose Cheriyanthara  
General Bursar

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW PROVINCIALS



Fr Jean-Yves LE TUE  
Provincial, France-Suisse



Fr Tomy Joseph  
Vice Provincial, USA

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR JUBILIANS

### DIAMOND



Fr Joseph Pulickal

### GOLDEN



Fr Philip Parackal



Bro. Sebastian K

## SILVER



Fr Benny Kootanal



Fr Emmanuel Uppantheadathil



Fr S Ignatius



Fr Saji Tharayil



Fr Siby Mattappalli



Fr S Antony (Tony)



Fr M Jojaiah



Fr R Mathias



Fr Nicholas Bara



Fr Jacob Mattathil



Fr Kusumkant Samir Toppo



Fr Sunny Panthanazhivadakethil



Fr M Sebastian



Fr Santy Kurian



Fr Jose Vechuvettikal



Fr C Sebastin Raj



Fr D Robert



Fr Bernard Manda Sangma



Fr Athnas Kerketta



Fr A Arockiam



Fr George Vattapara



Fr Jiji Konthanickal

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW PRIESTS

### NAGPUR PROVINCE



Fr Manu Joseph T



Fr Rajendra Toppo



Fr Roshan Tigga



Fr V Anto Deepak

### NORTH EAST PROVINCE



Pullattuvaliyaparambil Rojin Joseph



Tigga Alock



Vemballykunel Sibin



Ventino Peter Mutume

### PUNE PROVINCE



Fr Justin S



Fr Maria Anand



Fr S Charles



Fr Sudhir Korada

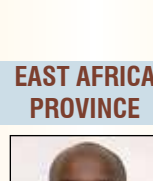
### SOUTH EAST PROVINCE



Fr A Motcha Richard



Fr S Anantha Prabu



Fr Kenneth Maina

### EAST AFRICA PROVINCE



Fr Kenneth Maina

### VIZAG PROVINCE



Fr Putti Anil



Fr Solomn Raj



Fr Joseph Sundar

### SOUTH WEST PROVINCE



Fr Antony Selvam



Fr Joshy N George



Fr Petrus Kerketta



Fr Rakesh Ekka



Fr Staney Rodrigues



Fr Tony Munduchail



Fr Zacharias Peter

### BRAZIL PROVINCE



Ivio Roberto Carlos

## OBITUARY



Bro Cyrille



Fr Anthony D' Souza (Sr)



Fr Armind



Fr Joseph Vichatt



Fr Marayikulam Stephen (Jr)



Fr PC Paul



Fr Puthussery Abraham



Fr Xavier Michael