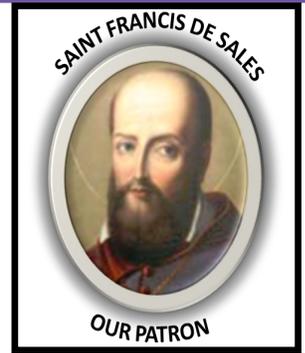


# Missionaries of Saint Francis de Sales

## MSFS - USA Vice Province

### Fransalians



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#### For More Info:

[www.welspringcommunity.net](http://www.welspringcommunity.net)

[www.fransaliantimesusa.org](http://www.fransaliantimesusa.org)

[www.msfstoday.org](http://www.msfstoday.org)

## CHRISTMAS: A FEAST OF LOVE!

Christmas is one of our greatest feasts that brings joy, jubilation, peace, and love into our hearts and lives. We are all excited about Christmas and Christmas celebrations. But there are things that we need to know about Christmas beyond celebrations. Here are some tips for us to reflect and pray over during this time of Christmas.

### First and foremost, Christmas is the feast of God sending us a Savior:

The Incarnation of Jesus as God-man is to save us from the bondage of sin. The Hindu Scriptures describe ten incarnations of God “to restore righteousness in the world whenever there is a large-scale erosion of moral values.” But the Christian Scriptures teach only one Incarnation, and its purpose is given in John 3:16: “God so loved the world that he sent His only Son so that everyone who believes in Him may not die, but have eternal life.” We celebrate the Incarnation today as Good News because we have a Divine Savior. As our Savior, Jesus liberated us from slavery of sin by His suffering, death and resurrection; and thereby He atoned for our sins. Every Christmas reminds us that we need a Savior to free us from our evil addictions and unjust thoughts, impure and uncharitable tendencies.

### Secondly, Christmas is the Feast of God sharing His love with us:

Jesus, as our Savior, brought the “Good News” that our God is a loving, forgiving, merciful, and rewarding God; and not a God who is judging, cruel, and punishing. Jesus demonstrated by His life and teaching how God our heavenly Father loves us, forgives us, and provides for us. All His miracles were signs of this Divine Love. Jesus’ final demonstration of God’s love for us was His own death on the Cross. Christmas reminds us that sharing love with others is our Christian duty, and every time we do that, Jesus is reborn in our lives. Let us face this question, “What does it profit me if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world and He is not born in my heart?” (Alexander Pope)

Let us allow Jesus to be reborn in our hearts and lives every day by sharing our selfless love, expressed in compassionate words and deeds, unconditional forgiveness, the spirit of humble service, and overflowing generosity.

### Thirdly, Christmas is the Feast of the Emmanuel (God living with us and within us):

Christmas is the feast of the Emmanuel because God in the New Testament is a God who continues to live with us in all the events of our lives as the “Emmanuel” announced by the angel to Mary. As Emmanuel, Jesus lives in the sacraments (especially in the Holy Eucharist), in the Bible, in the praying community, and in each believer as His Holy Spirit transforms us into “Temples of the Holy Spirit.”

Christmas reminds us that we are bearers of God with the missionary duty of conveying Jesus to those around us by loving them as Jesus did, through sacrificial, humble, and committed service. Sharing this Jesus with others, and welcoming this Jesus into our hearts and lives will become our best birthday gifts for Baby Jesus!

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2018!*

## Fransalians Annual Retreat 2017 at St. Ignatius Retreat Center, Atlanta, GA

There were 53 confreres signed up for the retreat, and due to natural calamity, some of us could not make it. There were 48 attendees for the retreat, and Fr. George Panthanmackel, MSFS; Provincial Superior of the Northeast India Province, animated the retreat. It was a quality time, and we all enjoyed the retreat and the environment. Thanks to all the confreres and Fr. George for doing a great job with the Fransalians of USA! God bless you all!



*At the Retreat Center*



*At the Provincial House, Loganville, Atlanta, GA*

### **The Congregational Retreat 2018**

The Congregational Retreat of 2018 will be held from Monday, June 11th through Friday, June 15th, in Jacksonville, Florida. It is an important annual event in our religious life, and therefore, I request all of you to mark your calendars to make this a quality family time for us Fransalians working in the United States. Reverend Fr. Mariadas Thumma, the Assistant Superior General, will be animating the retreat. The retreat schedule will be sent out to you soon.

# Jubilee Celebrations!



Group picture at St. Marguerite d'Youville Church, Lawrenceville, GA

On the last day of the retreat in Atlanta, all the confreres were taken on a tour to visit the parishes where Fransalians are offering pastoral services in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in Georgia. At the end of the tour, we all gathered at St. Marguerite d'Youville Church, a parish given to the Fransalians on a long-term basis, that hosted the Golden Jubilee of Fr. Matthew Thayil and the Silver Jubilee of Fr. Mariadas Sessetti. Solemn Mass was celebrated, followed by dinner.



Priests in procession



Jubilarians cutting the cake

## PIF & PEA Meeting in Trichy, India

The PIF & PEA meeting was held in the Provincial House of the Southeast India Province at Trichy, India, from October 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. There were Provincials from all the provinces of India, Africa, and USA. It was a very productive and effective meeting, where we discussed several administrative matters regarding the growth, development, and future of our Congregation. In the meeting, we also discussed matters specifically pertaining to the upcoming General Chapter, which is going to be held in February 2019 in Guwahati, India. It was also an opportunity for the major Superiors to come together with the General Curia of our Congregation.

## Year of the Local Community

Our beloved Superior General has declared the year 2018 as the “Year of the Local Religious Community”. It will be from January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 through January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. The theme is: **REVITALIZING MY LOCAL COMMUNITY: SPACE FOR COMMUNION AND MISSION.**

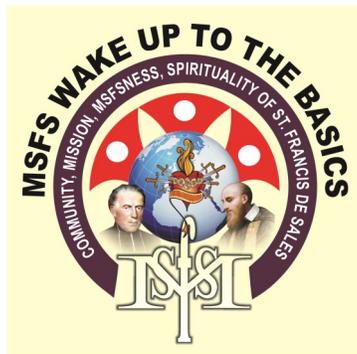
## Spiritual Directory

The Spiritual Directory, consisting of practical guidelines “To Live Jesus” in a daily basis, will be made available by the end of January. Every confrere is requested to have them, as it will definitely enhance our spiritual journey as the priests and religious. We will also try to make it available for the Fransalian Associates in the Vice Province.

## Update on Fransalian Associates

The Fransalian Associates (FA) was officially inaugurated in the USA Vice Province on September 15th, the Feast Day of the Mother of Compassion. In a few parishes, they have already began functioning as groups. I request those of you who have not started yet, please make some honest effort to begin in your parishes and move forward in spreading the spirituality of St. Francis de Sales with the mission and ministry of our Congregation. Without your personal interest and effort, we cannot achieve what we want to achieve. Thank you for your understanding and support.

## 20th General Chapter in the Year 2019



Our 20th General Chapter will begin in the month of February 2019 in Guwahati, Assam, India. The theme is “MSFS, Wake up to the Basics.” We are reminded to reflect upon the salient features of our Congregation, such as Consecrated Life in Communities, Mission, MSFS-ness, and the Spirituality of our patron St. Francis de Sales. It is a study based on three levels, such as **personal study, study in the community, and study in the apostolic communities.** The reports of the studies are to be submitted to the concerned team on time.

## Happy New Year 2018!

Wishing everyone of you a grace-filled happy and joyful New Year! May the baby Jesus continue to bless you throughout your life as wonderful Fransalian priests for the Lord. My prayers and support is assured to each one of you.

*United with His love, your brother,*

*Fr. Tomy Puliyampattayil, MSFS- Vice Provincial, USA Vice Province*