

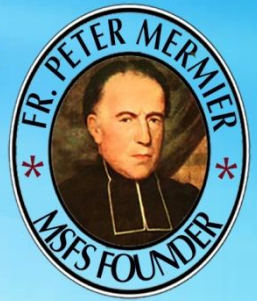
# MISSIONARIES OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

## GUWAHATI PROVINCE

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March 23, 2020

### **COVID-19 and CORONAVIRUS; A PANDEMIC that separates us!**

**Dear Confreres,**

A pandemic is an infectious disease that spread in multiple countries around the world at the same time. The last time a pandemic occurred was in 2009 with swine flu, which experts think killed hundreds of thousands of people. Pandemics are more likely if a virus is brand new, able to infect people easily and can spread from person-to-person in an efficient and sustained way. Corona virus appears to tick all of those boxes. With no vaccine or treatment that can prevent it yet, containing its spread is vital.

In a short time, we have learnt that the impact of COVID-19, popularly known as CORONAVIRUS, is much more than what we can think of. A tiny VIRUS has almost separated us from each other. This is one of our darkest moments in public health. The challenges we face are many. It is devastating the economy. We are aware that it is not the time to panic but a time for composure and calmness. It is not the time to blame but a time for harmony and peace. It is a time to prepare, to safeguard and to pray. It is not the responsibility of the Government alone but the responsibility of every individual to get our country, our state and our parish out of the impending danger of COVID-19. Let us strive together to create a healthy Society.

Farshad Asl summarises our present situation very bluntly "I am not worried about COVID-19; I am worried about those who refuse to change because of it." These days we get a lot of Emails precautioning us to take care of ourselves and help others to equip themselves against the spread of the Virus. Please note of the following:

# There will be no public liturgical services in all our MSFS Parishes, Churches and Chapels. In this regard we follow strictly the guidelines of the local Bishop. Retreats, Novenas, Conventions and Spiritual Exercise in our churches and community halls are to be cancelled.

# Please follow strictly the orders, guidelines and recommendations of civil and ecclesiastical authorities of your local areas.

# Please cooperate with the civil authorities to get the epidemical situation under control.

# Please take precautionary measures strictly in all our institutions and parishes.

# Advice people to take precautions.

# If you need any assistance in taking precautions please contact Fr. Saji George Puthiyakulangara, Director of FAsCE India.

# Avoid believing and spreading rumours.

# Avoid travelling unless out of extreme necessity.

# Reach out to people as much as possible without harming yourself. Take care of yourself first and then the people.

# If possible, make sure the participation of Sunday Mass through YouTube Channels. Communicate to the people the You Tube links.

# Some of our people, may be now more than before, in need of financial assistance. Please do whatever is in your capacity to help them.

# Please celebrate Mass privately without publicity and without the presence of the public.

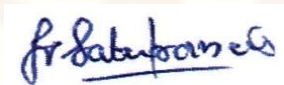
# Please pray specially for the people and health workers.

# Please take care specially of your personal hygiene.

Let us connect ourselves and the people to God. Fears and uncertainties are temporary. The pandemic of corona virus crises, calls for not only clean personal hygiene but also personal purity. The crisis leaves us alone with confusion and doubt. We have to follow a higher path, the path of patience, alertness, courage, understandings and love. Let us keep ourselves close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary and let us intercede for the special protection of St. Francis de Sales. May the Servant of God Fr. Peter Mary Mermier guard us from above.

With lots of love and regards

Yours in Christ the Lord



Fr. Sabu Francis MSFS  
Provincial, Guwahati Province

#### WALKING ON THE PATH OF THE PATRON

*They who wait upon the sick are at the foot of the Cross with our Lady and St. John, whose compassion they imitate; the sick man himself is on the Cross with our saviour, whose passion he imitates. SFS*