



Osai-2017

December



Father's Desk,



Dear Friends

It gives joy to everyone in Samarpanaram community to remember you all at this Christmas. Hope all of you are busy preparing yourselves for a joyful celebration of Christmas and getting ready to celebrate the New Year 2018, thanking God for the blessings, everything that came from God during the last year. Wish you all spirit-filled greetings of the season! I want to thank the scholastics of the new Indian Region for bringing this issue of the OSAI! I would like to make a brief reflection on Christmas!

What is Christmas? Beautifully decorated Christmas-trees? Gifts wrapped in glittering papers? Arrival of a Santa Claus who dances to the tunes of the songs? Listening to the entertaining carol groups who sing beautiful carol songs? Elegantly decorated cribs? But these things were not there when Christ was born!! Then what is Christmas?

Christmas is when Christ who was born in a manger, born again in your heart today! Christ who was God came down to our hearts to reign as king in our hearts! Christmas is the ultimate expression of God's Mercy and compassion to each one of us. He came to live in our hearts. At Christmas God opened the door of Mercy through the incarnation event to let in the entire humanity into God's Heart. That door of Grace is the vulnerable humanity of the Babe of Bethlehem. Come, Let us enter through this Door of Divine Mercy with our fragile human nature. His touch transforms our humanity to reach out, touch and transform the wounded humanity around us. The fire of God's Love turns all that it touches into that same fire which burns and burns without burning out. What Christ needs at this Christmas from us is not necessarily celebrations of all sorts, but he needs our hearts, our compassionate and merciful hearts!

May the Christmas and New year 2018 alight the fire of God's love in you! Wish you a grace-filled New Year which radiates God's compassion and mercy to ourselves, to one another and to the world, thus we become true Oblates!



Fr. Shaju OSFS

Bloom and Let Bloom



As oblates of St. Francis De sales, we are called to bloom where we are planted. At the same time it is also an invitation to each one of us to take the responsibility of making others to bloom in their lives. As a joyful response to this innate call, we light the lives of a few tiny plants as part of our mission in BrissonBalaBhavan, a home cherished in the inspiring thoughts and directions of our beloved founder Blessed Louis Brisson. In this venture we are fortunate to accompany to ignite the lives of twelve little stars and their unique ambitions. Fr.Asish OSFS, the director, of this cheering home, adapts and adopts ample opportunities and possibilities to realize and explore their innate potentials by giving them a multidimensional training in the different realms of their lives.

BrissonBalaBhavan has got it's own distinguished and integrated pedagogy to help the children to grow and mature in their spiritual,intellectual, physical, and psycho-social realms.They are constantly supported and guided by the fathers, brothers, teachers and other supporting staff who belong to the De sales family ofSamarpanaram. The regular participation in the Holy Eucharist at Samarpanram chapel indeed enhances the spiritual depths of the children, at the same time they portray themselves as an inspiration and model for



the people who participate in the Holy Eucharistic celebration. The quest for the enrichment of their intellectual and psycho-social realms of life are met in De sales Academy, School of the OSFS, which molds them with the motto of “Learn to Love”.

The physical training and menial manual works that are assigned to them, assist them to grow as self-confident and self-sufficient persons who can stand erect in our competent world to compete and conquer the desired dreams in their future. The brothers who are assigned for their ministry in BrissonBalaBhavan as part of their formation, make an ardent effort to instill in them the unique values of Christian morality and faith and also train them to bloom in their diverse artistic talents like music, singing, dancing etc... The positive and passionate response and commitment flowing from the children to the Oblates encourage us to be more committed and passionate in our service and it indeed undoubtedly places us in the cradle of immense joy and satisfaction. Hence being a member of this family I believe that BrissonBalaBhavan is one of the best gifts that God has gifted to the family of the Oblates at Samarpanaram to fulfill the charism of the Oblates of St.Francis De Sales.Hopefully our living of Salesian virtues like humility, gentleness, patience, love etc...are helpful in the formation of their character formation. Hence I wish and pray that may the almighty God bless everyone us in this Christmas season that we may grow up to the expectation of our heavenly patron St. Francis De Sales, that we “be who we are and be that well” so that, it may help us to bloom

and may become an inspiration and motivation for let others to bloom.



Bro. Amal

Indian Region

The joy of the celebration is the joy of coming together and sharing the joy, happiness and love with all those who are dear to us. And it was indeed a great gathering that was present on the two days celebrations on the occasion of Indian Mission becoming Indian Region. **The congregation of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales was blessed with lots of events that occurred on 14th and 15th of October 2017, in India.**

The presence of the General Council in the Indian land was an encouraging experience for the new born Indian Region. The celebration of India becoming a Region on 14th October was an exciting one. The day was full of memorable events. **The Final Profession of Bro.**



Nikhil MD, the bicentennial Birthday celebration of our beloved Founder, Blessed Louis Brisson, the change of Status from Indian Mission to Indian Region, and the appointment of Fr. Baiju as the first Indian Regional Superior, had taken place during the Eucharistic celebration on

14th morning which was presided over by the General Superior Rev. Fr. Aldino together with his Council, all the Priests present, and with all our neighboring Religious Communities and the staff of De Sales Academy. After the Eucharistic Celebration there was a Cultural Fest organized by the Brothers of Samarpanaram, BrissonNilayam, Salespuram, and the students of De Sales Academy. The cultural gathering was indeed a memorable event as it had highlighted the life of Fr. Brisson and his goal for the Oblates, through the creative performances by the Fathers and the Brothers, in the form of drama and dances. The cultural fest was followed by the lunch along with a beautiful choir from Mr. Joy and family. And in the evening all the Oblate Fathers and Brothers had gathered in front of the Samarpanaram building, in the lawn, for a small prayer and

the **Blessing of the statue of Fr. Brisson**, by Rev. Fr. Aldino, which was erected in memory of the change of status from Indian Mission to Indian Region. After this we had the distribution of memorial T-Shirts by Rev. Fr. Baiju the newly elected first Indian Regional Superior. Altogether it was the day that filled the hearts of Oblates with joy and happiness.

Yet another important event that marked the history of Indian Oblates was the **Ordination of Deacon Artemius that took place on 15th morning in the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by his Grace Most Rev. Bishop Alex, the Bishop of Kannur**. It was a historical event as it was the first priestly ordination that took place in Samarpanaram campus. The presence of many Religious and the people not only just filled the campus but it filled also the hearts of all the Oblates with great joy and happiness as it showed the sign of support and encouragement to the *new born* Indian Region by their constant prayers for us. These events were not merely the events of mere celebration but they were also the moments of working together as a community which was very much visible in the smooth running of all the programs as planned which was due to the commitment of all the Fathers and Brothers. We are ever grateful to Almighty God and Our Lady of Light who through the intercession of all the Salesian Saints, constantly guide our steps to Live-Jesus and to give Jesus to the others. And we are grateful to all those who had contributed for the growth of the Indian region. May God bind us in the Life to come.



Bro. Thomas

MY LOVE WITH ALL MY HEART

It was indeed a great occasion of immense delight for Samarpanaram community to celebrate its founder's day and declaration of the Indian Region. Yes it was a royal celebration. On this propitious day as part of cultural program, we the brothers of samarpanaram had performed a drama on the theme of "My love with all my heart". The purpose of drama was to convey the message to the people regarding the life history of our blessed founder Fr. Louis Brisson and to present how oblates came into existence in this world. The brothers of Samarpanaram had enacted the different characters in the drama. The wonderful way of giving life to the different characters of the drama by brothers, had enlivened spectators to enjoy the program well. The prominent personalities of the drama were Fr. Louis Brisson, Mother Mary De Sales Chappiues, and St. Leonia Aviat. This drama made a great impact in the minds of the people in the pursuit of understanding Oblates' history. The main goal of drama was to give an understanding of the meaning, purpose, and existence of the Oblates, seen through the eyes of the founder. In this drama we made a great attempt to depict the graceful call of our founder to be an effective carrier of the will of God, listening and accomplishing each tiny murmuring of divine inspiration that had whispered in his ears through the different people especially Mary de Sales Chappiues to establish the long cherished unfulfilled dream of our heavenly patron saint Francis de sales to found a religious congregation for men. At the same time we precisely expressed the perplexed and unwilling response of Fr. Brisson to God's desire which was spoken through Mary de Sales Chappiues, the superior of the Visitation Convent in Troyes.



The triple miraculous interventions of the Divine in the life of Louis Brisson had annihilated all sorts of chaotic thought that had perplexed him to doubt the sufficiency of his ability to establish the congregation of Oblates of Saint Francis De Sales. We also had depicted an instantaneous growth of the OSFS amidst the challenging tempest and hardships of the French

Revolution, which hindered the spreading of the message of God among the people of God. We concluded drama by showing the heavenly journey of our Blessed founder Louis Brisson, to obtain a place in His supreme abode. The success of the drama was well affirmed from the beautiful response of the gathering.



Bro. Vinod

International Scholastic Forum (ISF)

ISF is a virtual international gathering of the Oblate scholastics in various parts of the Oblate world. We come together and discuss various Salesian topics on Skype. We come together with our Scholastic Masters organized by our Superior General, Fr. Aldino Kiesel, our Superior General. Usually a topic is given in advance and we prepare ourselves and share our reflections with all the scholastics in the Skype conference.



Once in three months the ISF come together and evaluate and put forward our ideas. Recently in the month of November we came together and shared our views on the chapter of Bl. Brissontitled “Let us clearly understand that we are Oblates of St. Francis de Sales.” (Chapter February 5, 1896). It was a very good theme of our discussion because we come to know the pulse of our Founder which motivated us to follow his steps as Oblates of St. Francis de Sales. Father General had put forward three reflection questions. Our reflection was around those questions.

Our founder says that our task, our ministry as Oblates of St. Francis de Sales is to convey and realize in ourselves the life of the Saint (SFS), his thought, his intentions, his conduct

and manner of acting, and his soul in its totality. In our contemporary world how can we live SFS in our day to day living?

An Oblate is an active yet contemplative person. Essentially a man of prayer and an interior person, one who lives in the presence of God and offers oneself as a living oblation. We need to live Jesus in our lives always wherever we are, whatever we do, and whatever we say. In one word we need to be authentic Oblates by practicing the Spiritual Directory. The ten articles are very small and simple things, but we need to be vigilant, alert, and we need give extra care to follow them. At times as humans we fail to follow it. Don't stop there nor be discouraged but start all over again. Each effort towards the directory moves our soul to Christ to enjoy His heaven.



Bro. Anand

COUNSELS AND PRACTICES FOR RENEWING AND CONFIRMING THE SOUL IN DEVOTION

Daily & yearly renewal -Just as a clock must be windeddaily and taken apart each year to prevent rust, we must renew our devotion daily and do a thorough examine of conscience each year. We must (1) forsake, reject, and detest all sin, (2) dedicate our whole beings to serve and love God, (3) speedily rise again after any falls. Realize to whom you made this pledge and in front of whom.

Examine your soul's devotion towards:

1. **God** – Do you delight in serving and loving Him? How do you speak of God? How do you find His commands? Do you seek His honor and glory in your works?

2. **Yourself** – How do you love yourself? Worldly self-love?

3. **Neighbor** – Do you love your neighbor from your heart and for the love of God? Focus on those individuals who trouble you, “for with such it is that we practice the love of God towards our neighbor”

4. **Your affections** – Have you desired worldly goods, pleasures, and honors? What affections hinder your heart? What passions rule it? What most distracts it? Look at each passion one at a time

After the examination – Thank God for His help. Humble yourself and beg His help. Make concrete resolution and specify the exact means of carrying it out. Frequently repeat the words of St. Paul that you are not your own.

3 Final and Chief Rules:

- ❖ Renew the pledge given in Part I after the meditations on the **1st day of each month** and when you feel any slackening in your soul.
- ❖ Make an open profession of your desire to be devout. For example, boldly acknowledge that you would rather die than commit a mortal sin.
- ❖ Persevere in this blessed undertaking of a devout life; “look up to heaven and do not forfeit it for this base earth! Look down to hell, and do not cast yourself into it for transitory toys! **Look up to Jesus Christ**, and do not renounce Him for the world”! And should the labors of a devout life seem hard to you, sing with St. Francis: “**Earthly toils are sweet to me, awaiting a blest eternity**”.



Bro. Nikhil

Treatise on the Love of God

(Summary of seventh part)

The seventh part in the Treatise on the Love of God is a sure help to those who want to grow to the perfection on the Love of God. In its chapters SFS makes it clear that it is the love in human hearts which seeks to find its union to the Divine Love. The human hearts are looking forward to unite to its Beloved who is the source of all



life. It is the supreme and sublime love of God. This union happens in the hours of Prayer. SFS says that there has to be also a growth in the love of God that which is manifested in the degrees of union which is realized in prayer. All kinds of union happen by the grace of God, because by human effort alone they can't reach to the sublime Love of God. So the Lover of human souls attracts all those who seek Him.

SFS gives the example of the ships that are carrying iron. This ship is attracted by the magnet mountains on the shore which pulls the ships faster to the shore. But the crew in the ship are thinking that the ship moves faster because of their ability. By Adam's sins the humans may have lost the perfect union with the Divine but our Savior has instituted the Holy Eucharist in order to again express His desire to attract the human hearts to Him. Different individuals approached Jesus for different purposes like some to be healed, some to be taught, and some for the sole purpose of listening to the Lord. But a devout soul's intention is just to find Him, the beloved. The human intellect, the will and all the other faculties are caught up with the Love of God that even if by force its removed still it will from time to time goes back to its sweet savior.

This holy addiction to the soul's Lord is called *rapture*. SFS makes a difference between holy saints' ecstasy to that of the common people's ecstasy, because the first is of superior union by the nature of their closeness to God. In *rapture* God raises human souls to himself and in ecstasy all human faculties are cut short and the human spirit goes out of them to unite to their heart's Lord.

Ecstasies are of three types. First one is of intellect which makes human soul to more taste the divine mysteries and thus leads to ecstasy. The second is the ecstasy of the will in which

human will is attracted by the beauty and goodness of the divine. The third ecstasy is that of activity by which humans completely becomes men of selfless love, self denial and renunciation. SFS also reminds his listeners to bring this love of God to their daily life by living a new life of graces as per the will of God. SFS quotes from St. Paul who said “Jesus died for all of us so that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for God” (2 Cor 5: 15). Jesus died to give us all a new life.

It is the love of Jesus that compels us to love Him. Those holy souls also die for love of their beloved. St. Francis Xavier died holding and kissing the crucifix. St. Peter died writing the profession of faith with his own blood. Their deaths are not of just faith but of active faith (charity). Intensive love caused death of St. Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Sienne and other such holy martyrs.

After receiving the stigmata St. Francis of Assisi had such sufferings of convulsions that he became lean to the skin and bone. Those were sufferings that were terrifying even to the onlookers. This holy souls’ physical pain did not make them to depart their once found scared lover, such is the intensity and the firmness of that union.

SFS gives the imagery of a holy knight who made a pilgrimage to the holy land and died by a heart attack. This death happened while he was imagining and reflecting on Jesus’ passion. SFS says that there has to be also such a Love of God to those holy souls of the saints who will be carried to heaven in body and soul after their death.

Our blessed mother Mary’s heart and soul were united to Jesus in such a way that if one was wounded the other one also was hurt. So also SFS says she would have suffered equally to that of Jesus’ sufferings at His passion.

SFS says five evils block this attraction of human heart to God they are, Sin, Attachments, Sensual pleasures, Pride and vanity, and Self-love. But mother Mary was free of all these. She was preserved from every sin, always poor, pure in spirit, very humble and peaceful mistress of her passions.

Mother Mary had nothing in her that prevented the activity of the love of her son. Hence she united herself with him by an un-surpassing union through the gentle, peaceful and effective ecstasies. SFS concludes “Love had given to this immaculate spouse the supreme sorrows of death beneath the Cross. Indeed it was reasonable that finally death should give her supreme delights of love”.



Bro. Joe

EVENTS

ANNUAL DAY OF DE SALES ACADEMY WAS CELEBRATED ON 9TH DECEMBER -2017

IN OCTOBER 2017 A GROUP OF 18 GERMAN STUDENTS VISITED INDIA AND SMARPANARAM COMMUNITY ALONG

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

JANUARY: 1- Dn. Anil Akkutte

JANUARY: 17 – Dn. Raja Sudheer



MONTHLY RECOLLECTION FOR BROTHERS ON OCTOBER WAS GIVEN BY FR. JAMES

MONTHLY RECOLLECTION FOR BROTHERS ON NOVEMBER WAS GIVEN BY FR. JOY PHILIP (CMI)



Bros. Shabin and Vinod became the Table Tennis Champions of the year in the Bangalore inter seminary competition



B' DAYS & ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES



BRO.THARUN (Nov. 3)



FR.REJI (Nov. 18)



BRO.NIKHIL (Nov. 10)



BRO.ROJINS (Nov.7)



FR. BIJESH (Nov. 12)



BRO.SHABIN (Dec. 17)



BRO. ANAND (Dec. 13)

November, December & January



FR. ASISH (Jan. 1)



FR. BAIJU's ordination anniversary (Jan. 1)

WE WISH YOU ALL



Merry Christmas

HAPPY NEW YEAR



THANK YOU

