

EDITORIAL

# La Salette

VISION & MISSION



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*Dear Co-missioners,*

.The La Salette Missions in Myanmar started with the arrival of 5 missionaries led by Bishop Thomas Newman at Akyab (now Sittwe) in November of 1937. Then two lay La Salettes, Bro. Christopher David and Raphael Chit Hlaing, took their perpetual vows in Akyab in 1956. In 1962, La Salette Apostolic School (minor seminary) began with 33 candidates in Akyab. However due to Government policies of taking over all the schools in the country, the La Salette Apostolic School ended its operations and sent the students back home. The government refused to renew the temporary visas for foreigners and all the young missionaries had to leave the country. The last 2 La Salette Missionaries (Fr. John Blumm and Fr. Charles Gendron) left the country in November 1976 and since then there were no more La Salette missionaries serving in the country. The rest is a history.

In this issue you will read about when the La Salette missionaries re-entered Myanmar and succeeded in re-establishing our mission. It also depicts the present growth and future challenges they face to carry out the mission they have taken upon themselves through the wonderful and continued grace of God.



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## La Salette of Myanmar Region: Mary, Mother of the Mission

### Important events:

In 1992, Fr. Bernard Taylor started recruiting for the La Salettes in the country and sent candidates to the Philippines to be trained as La Salettes. On November 18, 2005, the La Salette district of Myanmar, dependent on the General council, was established by the Superior General in Chanthagone, Paleik, Mandalay, Myanmar. The Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary and three other villages (Chanthagone, Myitnge and Myauk Kine) were put under the pastoral care of the La Salette Missionaries. Later Zaw Gyi and Sinbyu were added.



At the council of the congregation in India in Feb. 2017 the district was raised to the level of a Region. The Regional Chapter took place in May 2017 presided by the Superior General, Silvaro Marissa. Fr. David Kyaw Kyaw Lwin was elected as the Regional superior with Fr. Philip Makha Naw Aung and Fr. Saw Jerome Eiphan as councilors.

### Recent Updates

There are 13 priests as of 2018 in the Region of Mary, Mother of the Mission. Regional Superior is Rev. Fr. David Kyaw Kyaw Lwin, MS, Fr. Philip Naw Aung, MS (Assistant) and Fr. Jerome, MS (councilor). The Superior resides at La Salette Community House at Pyin Oo Lwin. Fr. Philip, MS is the parish priest of Our Lady of



Holy Rosary, Chanthagon, in the Archdiocese of Mandalay and Fr. Valentine, MS, the assistant It is also a Marian Shrine of the Archdiocese. Fr. David Kyaw Zwa Latt, MS is the director of Pre-Aspirants at La Salette Formation House, Paleik in the Archdiocese.

Fr. Jerome, MS and Fr. William, MS are in the diocese of Pyay (Prome) to begin the establishment of a La Salette Shrine at Thanlegyi. This diocese was founded by the La Salette mission-



aries from USA in 1937. Now through the direction of the General Council, the two of them are in the process of landscaping and seeking other possibilities.

Fr. Patrick, MS is the director of Scholastics in Yangon, together with Fr. Nico, MS as Spiritual Director. Fr. Lucas, MS is the director of Justice and Peace Commission at CBCM in Yangon. Fr. Thomas, MS is taking further studies.

Fr. Robert, MS is in the United States. Fr. Bernard, MS and Fr. Nico, MS are also doing Mission Appeals in the USA.

There are nine (9) temporary professed. One has finished Theology and is now in Regency, preparing for Perpetual Profession. Eight (8) scholastics are in Theology (five of them are in Fourth Year, and 3 of them are in second year). Five college students are in pre-aspirancy formation.



### **Present Challenges:**

1. Since 2005 we have been building up our place at the Shrine of the Holy Rosary in Chanthagone. Our first arrangement with the local ordinary was that everything there belongs to the Archdiocese of Mandalay. With the grace of God and the help of many benefactors (including the La Salettes) we have developed it

into a shrine and a retreat and seminar center. It is also the central house of the region. With the present Bishop retiring we will have to give it back to the archdiocese sooner or later.

Now there is an urgent need for a place to accommodate the growing number for annual retreats, community meetings, chapters, etc. We were able to buy land in Nga Yant Chaung quarters Pyin Oo Lwin through the generosity of some

benefactors and the general council. Pyin Oo Lwin is the summer capital and it is at least 10 degrees cooler than Chanthagone. We have decided to build a three and a half story building there for the region. 2. We have been able to get a good sized property in the former diocese of Prome (now Pyay). Even though a lot of work has to be done, we are dreaming of building a shrine to Our Lady of La Salette. This

summer two of our confreres will be assigned there to do pioneering work. We will work to rekindle the devotion to Our Lady of La Salette, which our illustrious missionaries had labored to build for almost 40 years (1937 - 1976)

3. God is good in giving us candidates. We have 11 scholastics and 5 college students, and now are accepting high school graduates. A good formation program depends on mature and well-

formed personnel. We have to prepare some of our members for these positions.

4. As religious we should not have any one-man posts. In the agreement with the ordinaries we have reduced the different ministry areas where a member is all alone. This will be in place by some time this year. To bring out the missionary character of our region (Mary Mother of the Mission) we will need to look for other mission posts here in the country and abroad.



You could continue your support of our Missions by including them in your will.

Should you wish to do so, our legal title is:

North American La Salette Mission Center, Inc.