



ANNOUNCING CHRIST IN ASIA TODAY WITH ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

THE FIRST ASIAN FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY SYMPOSIUM

AN INITIATIVE OF PMU, FIATS & TAU - ORGANIZED BY ASIAN FRANCISCAN MISSION (AFM)

SYMPOSIUM

PART I

Saturday, 1 August 2026: In-Person Symposium:

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF 2026

800 Years of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi

100th World Mission Sunday

110 Years of the Pontifical Missionary Union (PMU)

50 Years of TAU

08:00 – 8:45 | Registration and Welcome

09:00 – 09:20 | Opening Session

Online Moderators: **Sr. Francisco Nirmala Gnanapragasam, FMM & PMU International Team**

Master of Ceremonies (MC): **Dr. Dolly Thomas**

Lighting of the Lamp

Prayer Song – St. Anne's Novices, Madhavaram

Welcome dance – St. Dominic's Anglo India Higher Secondary School

Welcome Address by the Host: Br. Saji Mathew, OFM, Vicar Provincial

Welcome Address by the Organizers: Br. Arokiam John, OFM

09:20 – 9:40 | Keynote Session

Most Rev. Dr. Ambrose Pitchaimuthu

Bishop of Vellore Diocese, Pontifical Mission Organizations (PMO), India

Keynote address: Announcing Christ in Asia Today with Saint Francis of Assisi: From Missio ad Gentes to Missio inter Gentes in the Service of a Magnificent Humanity

9:45 – 10:30 | Session 1

Theme: Asian Evangelization: Voices from Different Geographical and Social Contexts

Moderated panel discussion with Q&A

His Eminence Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, IMC (Mongolia)

His Grace Archbishop Paulus Budi Kleden SVD (Indonesia)

Fr. Paul Chatsirey, PMS National Director (Laos and Cambodia)

Br. Marcus Fernandes OFMCap, PMS Director (Bahrain)

Moderator: Br. Alphonse Vazhappanady, OFMConv

10:30 – 10:50 | Coffee/tea Break; Refreshments; Networking

11:00 – 12:00 | Session II

Moderator: Br. Arokiam John, OFM

Theme: *The Contribution of the Franciscan Family to Evangelization in Asia*

Presenters & Themes

Br. Alphonse Vazhappanady, OFMConv: *Witnesses of Christ's Endless Love*

Br. Saji Mathew, OFM: *Franciscan Mission in Asia as an Unscripted Encounter and Conversation*

Sr. Sherly Mariyam Joseph Naithparambil, FMM: *Evangelization through compassionate FMM presence in Mumbai to reach to the unreached*

Sr. Jacqueline Mary, SSAM: *SSAM Family in the light of the Franciscan Spirituality*

Moderated Panel Discussion with Q&A

12:05-12:15 | Announcements; 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch Break

13:40 – 14:35 | Session III

Moderator: Sr. Margaret Julie, SSAM

Theme: *Renewing Missionary Spirituality in light of Pope Francis' and Pope Leo XIV's Messages for World Mission Sundays from 2022 to 2026*

Interactive workshop

- Small-group discussions and practical activities
- Reflection on and application of the insights gained from the morning sessions
- Sharing of group reflections

14:45 – 15:30 | Session IV

Moderator: Sr. Rita Vas, UFS

Theme: *Specific Contributions to the Franciscan Mission in Asia: Diverse Perspectives*

Presenters & Themes

Sr Princy Rose, FCC: *Women Franciscans: A Call to be Minors: Multiple Perspectives on the Women Franciscan Mission in Asia—Key Issues and Concerns*

Br Sunnlyal Avarappattu MMB: *Franciscan Brothers: Franciscan Mission in Asia: Primary Issues, Contemporary Challenges, Solutions, and Achievements from the Perspectives of the Franciscan Brothers*

Br Oliver Fernando, OFS: *Secular Franciscans (OFS): Franciscan Mission in Asia: Contemporary Challenges, Witness, and Contributions from the Perspective of the Secular Franciscan Order*

Moderated Panel Discussion with Q&A

15:30 – 15:50 | Coffee/Tea Break

15:50 – 16:10 | Closing Keynote Address

Speaker: **Br. Nithiya Sagayam, OfmCap**

Theme: **Looking Ahead: The Future of the Franciscan Mission in Asia (with Pope Leo XIV's Messages for World Mission Sunday and for St Francis Anniversary in 2026)**

16:15 – 16:45 | Wrap-Up and Closing Session

Invitation to Future Collaboration and Networking: **Br. Arokiam John, OFM with PMO India and PMU International Team**

Summary of the Symposium and Key Takeaways: **Br. John Sekar, OFM**

Acknowledgements: **Br. Joseph Raj, OFM**

17.00 – 17:50 | Break

PART II

Venue: St. Sebastian's Church, Chennai, India

18.00 – 18:45 | Solemn High Mass

Principal Celebrant: **Most Rev. Dr. Ambrose Pitchaimuthu, Bishop of Vellore Diocese**

Liturgy: **OFS Members, St. Sebastian's Parish**

18:50 – 20:00 | Cultural Evening

Master of Ceremonies (MC) – **Dr. Jude Annie Cynthia**

Welcome Address – **Br. Arun Junes, OFM (Parish Priest)**

Welcome Address by the Organizers: **Br. Arokiam John OFM & PMU Team**

Prayer Song – **St. Sebastian's Parish**

Tamil Song – **St. Raphael's Girls High School**

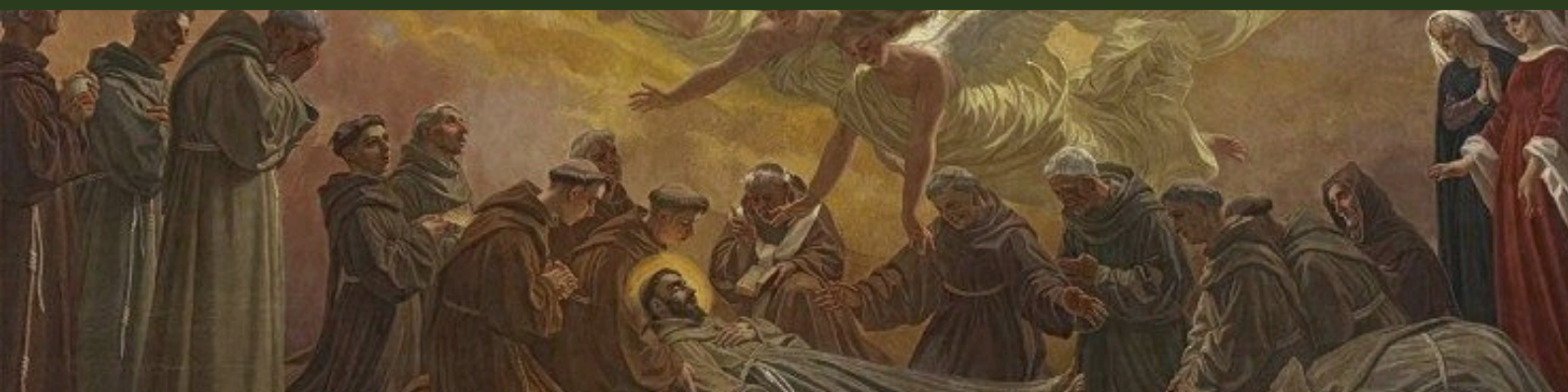
Drama Performance – **St. Anne's Novices, Madhavaram**

English Song – **Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Erukkanchery**

Music Drama – **Stella Maris College**

Dance – **St. Mathias Church, Ashok Nagar**

Vote of Thanks – **AFM, PMO India and PMU International Team**



PART III

Sunday, 2 August 2026: Pilgrimage and Missionary Study Tour (Optional)

8:15 a.m. – **Departure from St. Anne's Generalate, Madhavaram**

9:30 a.m. – **Holy Mass at the Tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle**

Visit to Franciscan and missionary-related sites

Short visit to Chennai Beach (time permitting)

6:00 p.m. – **Return to St. Anne's Generalate**

Registration and further details

Please Contact
Br. Arokiam John, OFM
afm.triduum2026@gmail.com
(Cel: +919840129251)

Venue Address



Venue:

St. Sebastian's Church, Madhavaram, Chennai, India

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/jciqvW1c73hazXF9>



Missio Franciscana Asiatica
Asian Franciscan Mission