



# PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR - INK

Province of Sacred Heart of Jesus

XXVI/ 5

October 2018

*My dearest Sisters,*

*Affectionate greetings from the Provincial house!*

The departure of our dear Sr. Gracy Mathai from our midst was so sudden yet her memory lives on. Her characteristic smile, timely jokes, humming of tunes, attentive presence, soft spoken words, generous availability, affectionate and simple ways we will miss. Yet the legacy she lives behind will continue to inspire us in the days to come. All of us have experienced the goodness of Sr. Gracy in many ways and we are indebted to her. Let our love, appreciation and gratitude for our dear sister be transformed into sincere prayer. We commend to the Lord the soul of our dear sister who left us for the heavenly abode. May she intercede for us from the eternal shores.

I express my gratitude and appreciation to dear Fr. Joyce Francis Thonikuzhiyil, provincial of SDB Bangalore Province for celebrating the Holy Eucharist, conducting the funeral service and for his prayerful support. Sincere thanks to all the fathers from KJC, Viswadeep and Provincial House. A Special word of thanks to the provinces of INM and INT for sharing our sorrow by their participation at the funeral specially her dear companions.

I take this opportunity to thank sincerely the communities of Navajeevana Bangalore, provincial house, Novitiate and Auxilium Welfare Centre for lovingly accompanying Sr. Gracy in her last days and making all arrangements to bid her farewell in the most fitting manner. I thank everyone who collaborated with us for making the funeral of Sr. Gracy a meaningful, prayerful and hope filled celebration.

## **XV SYNOD OF BISHOPS**

We are in a historical time as the 15<sup>th</sup> Synod of Bishops on the theme “Young People, the faith and Vocational Discernment” is taking place in Rome from 3 - 28 October 2018.

The Synod’s primary aim is to make the whole Church aware of her important task of accompanying every young person, without exclusion, towards the joy of love; secondly, by taking this mission seriously, the Church herself will be able to reacquire a renewed youthful

dynamism; thirdly, it is also important for the Church to take this opportunity to carry out vocational discernment, so as to rediscover how she can best respond today to the call to be the soul, light, salt and leaven of our world. Let us follow the synod and pray for its fruitful outcome and accompany the young with greater commitment and enthusiasm.

## -----LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS -----

### **OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ROSARY - 7<sup>TH</sup>**

October 7<sup>th</sup> is the Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary and the month of October is traditionally the month of the rosary. The devotion of the Holy Rosary is a popular family devotion and at the same time a community prayer. During the apparitions at Lourdes to Bernadette and in Fatima to Lucia, Jacinta and Francesco, Mary instructed them to pray the Holy Rosary. Later the crowds too joined them in reciting the rosary at the place of the apparition. This devotion of the Rosary, as a gift of prayer from the Mother of God, leads us to Christ in a way unique among the devotions in the Church. Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter on the Rosary, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, focuses with particular attention on the special way she is active on the soul as we ponder or contemplate Jesus through the eyes of His Mother. We put ourselves under her maternal guidance and allow her to direct our hearts. The Pontiff tells us that the Rosary mystically transports us to Mary's side as she is busy watching over the human growth of Christ in the home of Nazareth. This enables her to train us and to mould us with the same care, until Christ is 'fully formed' in us. What is happening through this "contemplation of the face of Christ" in union with Mary is far more than just a dry and abstract exercise of thought. The Rosary brings us, through a devoted pondering of its mysteries, into intimate union with the very Person of Jesus.

### **BL. ALESSANDRINA DA COSTA - 13<sup>TH</sup>**

October 13<sup>th</sup> is well-known as the anniversary of Our Lady's apparition and the solar miracle at Fatima, but it is also the anniversary of the death of Portuguese mystic and victim soul Blessed Alexandrina Maria da Costa, whose life was closely connected to the Fatima events. Pope John Paul II beatified Alexandrina in 2004 and decreed that her feast be celebrated on this date.

Alexandrina was born on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1904 in Balasar, a small rural village about 40 miles north of Porto. When she was 14, an attempt on her virtue was to have devastating consequences. In 1918, while Alexandrina, her sister Deolinda, and a friend were in the house, three drunken men broke in, in order to rape them. Rather than submit to the attack, Alexandrina jumped from a window, falling 12 feet on to hard ground. As a result, her spine was irreversibly damaged. Her condition deteriorated, and she became bedridden on the 14<sup>th</sup> April 1924, aged twenty. Alexandrina came to realise that suffering was to be her vocation.

After years of great suffering, on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1955, after a vision of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who told her that She was about to take her to Heaven, Alexandrina received Holy Communion for the last time, and delivered her final poignant message to all humanity, crying

out:- *“Do not sin. The pleasures of this life are worth nothing. Receive Communion. Pray the Rosary every day. This sums up everything.”*

### **ST. TERESA OF AVILA PATRONESS OF OUR INSTITUTE - 15<sup>TH</sup>**

St Teresa of Avila was one of the great Christian mystics. Throughout the Church, St Teresa of Avila is readily acknowledged as one of the great spiritual women who has come to the fore in the history of Christianity. For the ordinary followers of Christ she is an outstanding figure of holiness that continues to inspire people; and to encourage everyone who wishes to grow in their closeness to Christ. Let the life of our patron saint be an inspiration for us and let these thoughts instill our daily life as we celebrate her feast. May the great woman Doctor of the Church—the Doctor of prayer—Saint Teresa of Avila, be a constant inspiration to each one of us in our spiritual pilgrimage to heaven. May she encourage us to pray more and with greater depth, arrive at a deeper conversion of heart.

### **MISSION SUNDAY - 21<sup>ST</sup>**

The 92<sup>nd</sup> World Mission Sunday will be celebrated on 21 October 2018. The message of Pope Francis for this year’s World Mission Sunday, in which he is inviting young men and women who want to follow Christ, to seek, to discover and to persevere in their vocation. Instituted by Pope Pius XI in 1926, Mission Sunday encourages prayers, cooperation and help for missions as well as reminds Christians about the fundamental missionary character of the Church and of every baptized person. In the message addressed to all Christians, but especially to young people, the Pope reminds all that **“we are not in this world by our own choice,”** and hence there is “an initiative that precedes us and makes us exist.” Each one of us, he says, is called to reflect on the fact that **‘I am a mission on this Earth,’** which is why we are here in this world. May the celebration of the World Mission Sunday make us proclaimers and doers of God’s Word.

### **ST. JOHN PAUL II- 22<sup>ND</sup>**

The Feast of St John Paul II is celebrated on 22 October. His prayer had, two dimensions: in the first place, that of the time he kept exclusively for prayer, starting early in the morning adoration, praise and meditation, and then Holy Mass. His saintly life, formed and shaped by his acceptance of grace and his own disciplined habits, his missionary journeys, his obvious love for each person he met, his voluminous writings, of a spiritual and intellectual depth that defies description, and which will guide the Church, the world, and all of our own consciences, through history, one would think until Christ comes again. Let his life be an inspiration to each one of us.

### **BL. MICHAEL RUA – 29<sup>TH</sup>**

Blessed Michael Rua was among the first few with whom Don Bosco shared the idea of forming the 'Salesian Society'. For 36 years he was Don Bosco's closest collaborator in the development of the Congregation. Fr. J.B. Francesia speaks of Fr. Rua as of a man of deep prayer. Always first at his place in church for the community meditation, he would kneel motionless throughout, with his face resting on the palms of his hands, holding a white handkerchief. Nicknamed "The Living Rule" because of his austere fidelity, Don Rua was also known for his fatherliness and

goodness. As the numbers of members and communities increased he sent Salesians all over the world, showing special care for the missionary expeditions. Through his intercession let us pray that like him we may be faithful to Don Bosco.

## ----- COMMUNICATIONS -----

### **INTER PROVINCIAL SECOND NOVITIATE - PHASE 1**

From 15<sup>th</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> December the Second Novitiate will be conducted in Sacred Heart Convent, Bangalore. Sr. Asha Latha, Sr. Udaya Kumari, Sr. Laura Albena and Sr. Siljo Johnson together with few sisters from other provinces will participate in it. Let us support them with our prayers.

### **COURSES**

- Sr. Nirmala Rodda will be attending a counselling course at Anugraha Dindigal from 29<sup>th</sup> September to 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018.
- Twenty sisters will be participating in the Christo Centric retreat at Indore from 22 – 28<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

### **JUNIORS RECOLLECTION AND ANIMATION**

The juniors will have a day of recollection and one day of animation on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> November at Sacred Heart Convent, Bangalore.

### **SALESIAN FAMILY FMA PCI MEET – SR. MARIA LOUISA MIRANDA**

There will be a Salesian Family Meet from 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The participants are Sr. Anna Thoppil, Sr. Ruby Korah, Sr. Rosa Challamkathil and myself together with three lay persons representing Co-operators Mr. Robin from Kunnamangalam, for Past Pupil Miss. Raveena from Secunderabad and Mrs. Omana Denson for ADMA from Palluruthy. The theme of the meet is “Salesian Family: **Dream - Resource - Challenge**”.

### **WORLD CONGRESS OF SALESIAN CO-OPERATORS**

Sr. Sherly Joseph and one co-operator’s representative Mrs. Elsa D’ Cruz from Bangalore unit will be participating in the World Congress of Salesian co-operators from 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October 2018 in Rome.

### **SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS**

Our dear Sr. Anna Thekkekandam expressed her gratitude to each and every one for the prayers offered for her beloved brother Fr. Thomas Thekkekandam SDB who passed away on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

### **PRAYERS REQUESTED**

- ❖ For the good health of our dear Sr. Helen Thonippara & Sr. Annie Kottaram
- ❖ For the elder brother & sister of Sr. Bridget Thonippara
- ❖ For the mother of Srs. Lucy Michael, Maria kandamkaryil & Sr. Valsa George
- ❖ For the father of Srs. Miriam and Rani Jacob
- ❖ For the sister-in-law of Sr. Teresa Thomas
- ❖ For the brother of Srs. Catherine & Mary Aayila
- ❖ For all the urgent needs of the province
- ❖ For all the elderly and ailing sisters and dear ones of our sisters

### CONDOLENCES AND ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS

- To dear Sr. Lissy Jose at the passing away of her paternal uncle Mr. Antony Mechery (69) on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
- To dear Fr. Jose Mathew and the confreres of INN at the demise of Fr. Brian Diamond SDB (85) on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and Fr. Jose Varapilly on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018.
- To dear Fr. Paul Olphindro and the confreres of INS at the loss of Fr. Thomas Thekkekandam SDB (82) on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
- To dear Sr. Anna Thekkekandam at the sudden demise of her dear brother Fr. Thekkekandam Thomas SDB (82) on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018.
- To dear Sr. Saritha Joseph at the loss of her beloved mother Mrs. Julia Joseph (81) on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2018.

### CONCLUSION

We continue our reflection on Holiness as recommended by Pope Francis:

St. Paul writing to the Christian Community at Thessalonica says, “This is the will of God, your sanctification”. A Christian, all the more a religious cannot think of her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness. We commemorate daily one saint or other and at times more than one saint in the Church’s calendar. *‘Each saint is a mission*, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel’, says Pope Francis in Gaudete Et Exsultate. It would be a pleasant exercise and very enlightening too if we could spend some time delving into the life story of each saint and discover what aspect of the Gospel each saint lived during his/her earthly sojourn.

*What aspect of the Gospel is each saint whom we commemorate daily revealing to the Church and to the world? (Share)*

This mission can be understood only through Jesus Christ who gives fullest meaning to this mission. **Holiness as Pope Francis says is experiencing the mysteries of Christ in one’s life.** It consists in ‘uniting ourselves to the Lord’s Death and Resurrection in a unique and personal way, constantly dying and rising anew with Him’. What does this mean practically? We must reproduce in our own lives various aspects of Jesus’ earthly life: his hidden life at Nazareth, “where he increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour” as Luke puts it; his life in the community which consisted of friends and foes, all types of people; his closeness

to the poor and the outcast, “ and he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd”; his poverty “I have nowhere to lay my head” and other ways in which he showed his self-sacrificing love. When we contemplate on these aspects we will be led to re-live them in our choices and attitudes. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: “Christ enables us to live in Him all that he himself lived and he lives it in us”.

The Father’s plan is Christ and ourselves in Him. It is Christ who loves in us for ‘holiness is nothing other than charity lived to the full’. How shall we measure the degree of holiness in us? Pope Benedict XVI says “the measure of our holiness stems from the stature that Christ achieves in us, to the extent that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on his”. Every saint according to Pope Francis is a message which the Holy Spirit takes from the riches of Jesus Christ and gives to his people. Can we pause and ask ourselves this question:

*What message am I giving to those who live around me?*

**May we become the message of Christ to everyone we meet!**

*Yours affectionately,*

*Sr. Celine Jacob*

*Sr. Celine Jacob  
Provincial*

***WISH EVERYONE A FERVENT MONTH OF HOLY ROSARY***

