



**Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice**

*Salesiane di Don Bosco*

**Sacred Heart of Jesus Province - INK  
Bangalore - India**



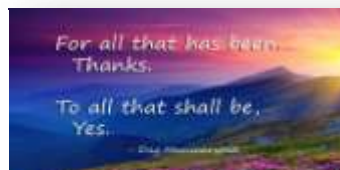
**PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR**  
**SACRED HEART CONVENT, BANGALORE 49**

**XXVIII/7**

**December 2019**

## **My dearest Sisters, Affectionate and Prayerful Greetings from the Provincial House! Bangalore!**

The year 2019 is drawing towards its close, and we have every reason to be really thankful. Let us express our gratitude to God for all the blessings and gifts received. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. For last year's words belong to last year's language, and next year's words await another voice and to make an end is to make a beginning. Let us embrace the coming year with a living hope for everyday life.



### **ADVENT**

We have entered in to the new liturgical year with the season of advent. In this new liturgical year the Gospel of Mathew will be the primary gospel proclaimed. We begin this season of Advent in a spirit of expectation. During this time we look forward not just to the birthday of Jesus at Bethlehem but also for his second coming at the end of time. Advent is a quiet time where we step back to the fundamental experience of Israel the experience of trustful waiting on the Lord's deliverance. It is a desert time when we try to empty our minds of the clutter of the past and when our hearts learn from the prophets what the deepest needs of our lives are. Advent reawakens hope and longing for a better future, a future for the redemption for the entire people. It is a season of great awakening, preparation, and great expectation of the birth of the Messiah . It is season of prayer when all Christians must turn to God in prayer. Therefore with the psalmist I pray for all of you “ Peace be to your homes! may peace reign in your walls, and in your palaces, peace!” In faith and hope we begin advent with its first candle. With Mary and Joseph we wait for Christ. The candles light the way for us. The coming light of Jesus lights both our waiting and our journey in life. May the light of Jesus shine into our darkest corners of our life.

### **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**

We are already half the way of the novena to the feast of Mary Immaculate, a feast very dear to the entire Salesian family. In the Immaculate Conception of Mary we are invited to recognize the dawn of the new world, transformed by the salvific work of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The dawn of the



new creation brought about by divine mercy. For this reason the Virgin Mary, never infected by sin and always full of God, is the mother of a new humanity. She is the mother of the recreated world. The Immaculate Conception signifies that Mary is the first one to be saved by the infinite mercy of the Father, which is the first fruit of salvation which God wills to give to every man and woman, in Christ. For this reason the Immaculate One has become the sublime icon of the divine mercy which conquered sin.

Celebrating this feast entails *two things*. **First:** fully welcoming God and his merciful grace into our life. **Second:** becoming in our turn artisans of mercy by means of an evangelical journey. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception then becomes the feast of all of us if, with our daily “yes”, we manage to overcome our selfishness and make the life of our brothers and sisters ever more glad, to give them hope, by drying a few tears and giving a bit of joy. In imitation of Mary, we are called to become bearers of Christ and witnesses to his love, looking first of all to those who are privileged in the eyes of Jesus. Feast of the Immaculate Conception has a specific message for us: it reminds us that in our life everything is a gift, it is all mercy. May the Blessed Virgin, first fruit of the saved, model of the Church, Holy and Immaculate Spouse, loved by the Lord, help us to ever increasingly rediscover divine mercy as the distinguishing mark of Christians.

## STRENNA 2020 - “GOOD CHRISTIANS AND UPRIGHT CITIZENS”

In the Strenna 2020, the Rector Major emphasizes that “as a Salesian Family we must be attentive to the great human challenges of our world, such as honest people, living a committed citizenship that seeks the good of all. Salesian Family which is committed to the same cause needs to pay attention to human rights and, in particular, the rights of children who tend to be the most fragile. We need to emphasize on the encyclical *Laudato Si*, which exhorts every human being to care for Creation. The Strenna 2020 offers us the opportunity to rebuild what Don Bosco taught and lived with his young people.

Fr Ángel explains that he has chosen these words of Don Bosco at a time when it is so difficult to be apostles and missionaries to the young, and we run the risk of not educating young people to ‘a strong sense of citizenship, social justice and gospel values that lead them to



*“Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven” (Mt 6:10)*

to the migrants, and creation and care of the "common home" that is given to us. He says that this educational commitment of ours is an expression of Jesus’ words: ‘Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven’ (Mt 6:10).

The Rector Major makes a direct reference to Don Bosco and the Oratory where we need to go back to the original sources to understand Don Bosco’s thinking and ways of acting with and among young people as he prepared them for life in the 19th century Italy of his day. We need to ‘teach politics’, but the way Don Bosco did it, in an inoffensive way. His teaching was to the advantage of governments anywhere in the world, wherever the ‘work of the Oratory’ was established and tended

to 'form good citizens'.

Taking the two main parts of Don Bosco's saying: 'Good Christians', 'upright citizens', the Rector Major unpacks the meaning of each. 'Good Christians' are those who listen to God, are guided by the Spirit. For us to be educators and evangelizers of the young today means telling them, from our own experience, how God loves them, and we do this through our Salesian spirituality that opens their mind and heart. Here, the Rector Major cites the example of Fr. Tom Uzunnalil, a prisoner in Yemen for 557 days, who was an effective witness through his prayer, endurance, goodness and silence.

This 'going out of ourselves' is further developed in the section on 'Upright citizens'. Young people await us in real life. Uprightness and honesty are seen especially in terms of 'keeping ourselves free from corruption' or, put more positively, 'creating a more visible culture of social ethics.' The presence of Mary reminds us of two dimensions that is love for God and love for humanity. She is the Mother who helps her children to fully live up to their commitment to God and the created world. Dear Sisters I exhort you to study, assimilate and live the Strenna in our life and mission.

## ----- **CELEBRATIONS** -----

### **ST. FRANCIS XAVIER**

St. Francis Xavier travelled from countries to countries spreading the Good News wherever he went. He baptised many of the local communities and common people whom he encountered along his missionary journeys, and gained for the Lord many more souls. He encountered many difficulties and challenges along the way, and yet he persevered. He performed many miracles and wonders throughout his missionary journeys, and he even calmed a turbulent sea which threatened to sink his boat while he was on a missionary journey. He healed many of the sick and cast out demons. Francis approached people with the Gospel by becoming one among them. Arriving at Goa, he began his work of catechizing the Portuguese. From there he travelled to Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Japan. In a letter from India he wrote, "I looked or desired for nothing here but to wear myself out with work and sacrifice for the Lord". Let us ask this great saint to intercede for us and make us ardent missionaries like him.

### **BL. PHILIP RINALDI**

Don Bosco's third successor, Fr. Philip Rinaldi, was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1990 and on 5<sup>th</sup> December we commemorate. Don Francesia wrote "Don Rinaldi was only missing the voice of Don Bosco: he had everything else!" He was a master of Salesian ways and spirituality, and brought about a renewal in the interior life of the Salesians with absolute confidence in God and unlimited trust in Mary Help of Christians. He took great care of the missions and sent many young Salesians to learn languages and customs so that they could be more immersed in local culture and spread the gospel more effectively. Through his intercession let us pray for the Volunteers of **Don Bosco** and for an increase of vocations in this branch of the Salesian family whom he founded.

### **ST. STEPHEN**

Saint Stephen's love of God kept him from yielding to the violent mob. His love for his neighbour made him pray for those who were stoning him to save them from punishment. Love inspired him to bring back those who erred, to the love of God. Love is the source of all that is good. He who walks in love can never go astray nor be afraid. Love guides, protects and brings us to the Lord Jesus. Let



us follow the example of St. Stephen in forgiving the offenders. Stephen died as Jesus did: falsely accused and brought to unjust condemnation because he spoke the truth fearlessly.

### **HOLY FAMILY**

Families become holy when Christ Jesus is present in them. Jesus becomes truly present on the altar through the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass. Similarly, Jesus becomes truly present in a family when all the members live in the Christian spirit of love and sacrifice. This happens when there is mutual understanding, mutual support and mutual respect. On this feast of the Holy Family, let us gratefully remember and pray for our own parents and family members. Let us pray for the grace of caring for one another in our own communities, families, and for all families of the universal Church. May God bless all our families in the New Year.

### **HOLY INNOCENTS**

The Holy Innocents were the victims of human greed, ego and pride, the outcome of man's attachment to worldly glory and the temptations of the world. Many of us may have wondered, why God allowed those infants in Bethlehem to be killed. Surely he could have intervened and prevented the infants from being killed. But this is where we need to understand that, the cause of this sad tragedy was our attachments to sin and our refusal to obey God's will. God gave each one of us free will and the wisdom to discern His will. Yet, by our own conscious choice and abuse of our freedom, we chose to be selfish and entertain the wicked temptations which Satan put on our way. Throughout the history of mankind, there had been countless occasions when people suffered, because of the tyranny of those who had power, glory, prestige and dominion over others. Are we willing to resist the attraction of the worldly desires and to get rid of our pride and ego.

## **----- COMMUNICATIONS -----**

### **CONGRATULATIONS & ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS**

We congratulate and assure our prayers to all our Salesian Brothers who will be ordained to priesthood in the coming days. May Jesus, the High Priest and Good Shepherd grant each one of them the grace to be priests according to His heart.

### **ANNUAL EVALUATION AND NDF MEET**

Sr. Rosy and Ms. Mini will be attending the Annual Evaluation meeting of CUTS International Green Action Week 2019 at Jaipur on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

Sr. Rosy Lopez, Sr. Agnes Fernandez and Sr. Leema Rose will be attending the FMA-NDF 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meet at Yercaud from 12 -14<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

### **PROVINCIALS' RETREAT IN SRILANKA- A TIME FOR INTERIOR RENEWAL**

Kindly accompany with your powerful prayers all the FMA provincials of India as they make their annual spiritual retreat in Sri Lanka (30<sup>th</sup> Nov. 08<sup>th</sup> Dec) that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit to live the richness of our Charism and to promote it to the communities.



## CONDOLENCES & PRAYERS

- ✚ To our dear Sr. Dayana Rodrigues at the loss of her paternal uncle Mr. Hilary on 06<sup>th</sup> November 2019.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Valsa George at the demise of her beloved mother Mrs. Rosamma on 09<sup>th</sup> November 2019.
- ✚ To Sr. Helen Netto at the sudden death of her nephew Mr. Suresh Gomez on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019.
- ✚ To Sr. Rose Ezarath and all the sisters of INC province at the demise of Sr. Alice Olickal, on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019
- ✚ To dear Sr. Rita Dora Thomas and all the sisters of INB at the sad demise of Sr. Celine (Eliamma) (missionary to Ethiopia) on 01<sup>st</sup> December 2019.

## CONCLUSION

Christ is born for us; let us rejoice in the day of our salvation! Let us open our hearts to receive the grace of this day, which is Christ himself. Jesus is the radiant “day” which has dawned on the horizon of humanity. A day of mercy, in which God our Father has revealed his great tenderness to the entire world. A day of light, which dispels the darkness of fear and anxiety. A day of peace, dialogue and, above all, reconciliation to the warring nations. Where God is born, peace is born; and where peace is born, there is no longer room for hatred. Where God is born, hope is born; and where hope is born, persons regain their dignity. Yet even today, great numbers of men and women are deprived of their human dignity and, like the child Jesus, suffer cold, poverty and rejection. May our closeness today be felt by those who are most vulnerable. Where God is born, mercy flourishes. As we contemplate the Babe Crib, let us gaze on the open arms of Jesus—the merciful embrace of God. We hear the voice of the Child who whispers to us: “Peace.” Christmas is **JOY – Rejoicing!** At Christ’s birth the angels sang ‘Joy to the world...’ He brought joy to the humble shepherds, to the three great men from the East, to Joseph and Mary.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas full of love and great joy

Yours affectionately,

*Sr. Celine Jacob*

*Sr. Celine Jacob*  
*Provincial*

