



**Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice**

*Salesiane di Don Bosco*

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



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

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**My dearest Sisters, Loving & Prayerful Greetings from the Provincial House Bangalore!**

I am happy and thank God that almost all the sisters have reached the new communities safely and has taken up the Apostolic assignments according to the present day situations. For most of the people around the world today, the recent COVID-19 outbreak is a symbol of how fragile and unpredictable our lives can be in an unusual state of affairs. The virus which has changed the way in which most of us live, work or performs our basic day to day functions is continuing to increase its grasp at an alarming rate with the impact being felt at multiple levels resulting in economic slowdown, educational and business disruption, trade hindrances, travel obstructions, public seclusion and so on.

With respect to the continuity of education, business, companies and Institutions around the world has switched over to online/virtual modes of working while global mobility has come to a standstill. In India, various states have been exposed to a situation of complete lockdown which has led educators and employers to ponder upon how they can keep their wards safe, contain the spread of the virus and continue their operations effectively during this unprecedented crisis.

**How can we cope up with the challenge?**

While health officials continue to get a grip on multiple outbreaks across the country, it is important for us to step up and rise to the challenge by going beyond the traditional way of thinking and follow some basic guidelines to maintain connectivity, motivation and positive mind. Already the past four months have been spent with much prayer, reflection on the Word of God and bonding together as community as well as reaching out to the poor and marginalized families and migrants. Now as we have entered into the new scholastic year, inspite of the uncertainties that clouds our minds we go ahead with great hope to reach out to our staff, students and parents first of all to accept the hard realities with equanimity by realizing God who is operating in us. There was no era without challenges that is what the world history teaches us.

Now the question is how to face COVID and Post COVID situations in a serene manner personally and as communities. How to respond positively and gain strength and resilience?

Personally choosing sufficient time to pray and meditate on the word of God thus finding real interior joy.

Spending substantial time to read books that will enrich our mind and heart and which will enable us to do our mission with efficacy and efficiency.

To look out and attend webinars those available under different categories by various individuals and N.G.O's thus enhancing our capacity in the different areas of our mission.

Using virtual platforms to have discussions and meetings with our collaborators and students in order to maintain motivation and enhance productivity. Digital platforms are a big advantage in this case and can help people stay updated and feel connected even while working from home.

Making effort to spend quality time for deep sharing and lively recreation in the community.

It is important to understand that this is first and foremost a human crisis and hence having an empathetic and supportive approach towards everyone.

Enabling proper access to technology by ensuring the required equipments are in place.

It is useful to have time-to-time updates and information on ways of working within the same sector so as to enrich one another with better performance.

Apart from this, following the necessary precautions and bringing in basic health measures such as proper sanitization & deep cleaning of all areas, etc. is an imperative during the present times and everyone should make it a part of their effort towards safeguarding the health & safety for all. Obviously, these are challenging times for all of us but the one thing we know is that our best response relies on empathy, cooperation and community building.

**Let us continue to pray for the eradication of Corona Virus from the face of the earth and for all the people who are affected by it as still the number is rising every day.**

## -----CELEBRATIONS-----

### DEVOTION TO THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS

The month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood. The feast of the Precious Blood of our Lord was instituted in 1849 by Pius IX, but the devotion is as old as Christianity. The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood."The Precious Blood which we worship is the Blood which the Savior shed for us on Calvary and reassumed at His glorious Resurrection; it is the Blood which courses through the veins of His risen, glorified, living body at the right hand of God the Father in heaven; it is the Blood made present on our altars by the words of Consecration; it is the Blood which merited sanctifying grace for us and through it washes and beautifies our soul and inaugurates the beginning of eternal life in it." During this month Catholics are encouraged to meditate on the profound sacrifice of Jesus and the pouring out of his blood for humanity. Let us pray that the precious blood of our Redeemer may become within us a fountain of water springing up to eternal life.

### ST. THOMAS – THE APOSTLE OF INDIA – 3<sup>rd</sup>

But Thomas said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." Let's not be so quick to judge Thomas' faith. He like the other disciples were grieving the death of their best friend. His hopes were dashed to pieces. Can we blame him for being so sceptical about this news that the Risen Christ appeared to them? Thomas wanted more than just the word from the others. Jesus rose from the dead with our wounds on his body. Our wounds in God's power to raise Jesus from the grave had been redeemed and rendered powerless. Thomas experienced God's healing of his faith. Jesus showed him that God had taken his wounds

seriously. God loved Thomas and all of us so deeply, that Jesus offered our wounds to God so, that they could be transformed in the Resurrection. A contemplative knows that we have wounds. The wounds and pain will change our lives. We will be challenged in our faith. The mysticism of the Resurrection is that God shows us that our wounds can go to the very heart of God, who will love us and walk through them with us. Our wounds are an opportunity to strengthen our faith by drawing closer in relationship to God through the death and Resurrection of Christ. May we with Thomas dare to ask the Risen Christ to affirm and heal our faith by touching Jesus' wounds and cry with Thomas, "My Lord, and my God."

### MARIA GORETTI – 6<sup>th</sup>

Maria had complete fidelity in God. Through the witness of her life, she helps us remember that we are called to offer ourselves to the Father. This young martyr reveals to us our call to holiness and is a model for adolescents and young people. She had a pure heart and she kept her body pure. Through her life, we see how to be unafraid, to take a stand against our culture and to be courageous witnesses by love, purity and virginity. Maria was a silent witness of heroic virtue. Before she died, she forgave her attacker, Allesandro. He was sent to prison for her death. One night, Maria appeared to him in his prison cell and smiled at him. She was surrounded by lilies, the flower symbolic of purity. From that moment, he was converted and his heart was filled with peace. After serving his sentence, he lived in a Capuchin monastery, working in the garden. He asked forgiveness of Maria's mother and he went with her to Christmas Mass. There, he acknowledged his sin and asked forgiveness from God and the community. Forty years later, on June 24, 1950, Maria was canonized at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Alessandro's heart was converted, a miraculous fruit of Maria's life of forgiveness!

### BL. MARIA ROMERO – 7<sup>th</sup>

BL. María Romero Meneses, knew how to reflect the Face of Christ which He made her recognise in the sharing of the bread. Born in Nicaragua, she received her religious formation in El Salvador and passed the greatest part of her life in Costa Rica. Maria was an active contemplative. She enjoyed a deep and intimate prayer life. Based upon her love for God and desire to do His will, she lived out her faith through her actions. Like St. Mother Teresa, she saw God's face in the face of the poor and helpless. She desired to quench His thirst and to console and comfort Him by loving her neighbour. She effectively served the poor by building them homes, educating them, feeding and clothing them, providing for their medical needs, and encouraging her students to follow in her footsteps. She was an exemplary religious, apostle and mother of the poor people. As we commemorate her let us imitate her passion for God and love for the poor.

### OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL- 16<sup>th</sup>

The Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is known to many Catholic faithful as the "scapular feast," associated with the Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a devotional sacramental signifying the wearer's consecration to Mary and affiliation with the Carmelite Order. A tradition first attested to in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century says that Saint Simon Stock, an early prior general of the Carmelite Order, had a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary in which she gave him the Brown Scapular which formed part of the Carmelite habit, promising that those who died wearing the scapular would be saved. Our Lady of Mount Carmel reminds us to strive for humility. She points out that the word "humble" is related to the Latin word "humus," for earth. Being down-to-earth, then, is being humble, and being humble is being like Mary. When I'm like Mary, my garden blooms fragrant with graces and blessings. Let us inculcate in them devotion to our Blessed Mother, who has promised to protect those who wear her scapular with devotion.

## STS. JOACHIM & ANNA – 26<sup>th</sup>

Joachim and Anne were the parents of Mary and the grandparents of Jesus. This feast reminds grandparents of their responsibility to establish a tone for generations to come: They must make the traditions live and offer them as a promise to little children. But the feast has a message for the younger generation as well. It reminds the young that older people's greater perspective, depth of experience, and appreciation of life's profound rhythms are all part of wisdom not to be taken lightly or ignored.

## ST. ALPHONSA- 28<sup>th</sup>

St. Alphonsa teaches us about the price that we need to pay for being a true disciple of Jesus Christ. The pains, the struggles and the discipline that we undertake are the prices that we need to pay to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. A well solid grounded life in Jesus Christ costs a lot. The pains and struggles of life are always something like shedding the blood. Still, it is better to choose Jesus always.

**In short, the life of saint Alphonsa could be summarized as follows:**

- A saintly life that could explore and cater the seed of divinity in her.
  - She accepted life as it has been designed for her by the Almighty.
  - She was aware that the struggles of life blessed by the grace of her Lord will add beauty to her Christian existence.
  - She has succeeded in communicating the rhythm of the gospel through her committed religious life.
- May St. Alphonsa be a model and inspiration to each one of us in our daily life to reach Holiness.

## IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA -31<sup>st</sup>

Ignatian spirituality teaches us to discern the footprints of God in our own experience. It shows us how to look back on our lives, to sift through our memories in order to see the way God has been dealing with us over the years. It teaches us how to find God in the present moment—in the relationships, challenges, frustrations, and feelings that we are experiencing today. The tools and methods of Ignatian spirituality instill in us habits of prayerful, thoughtful reflection. The in me and we are to *choose*—to freely unite ourselves with God. May His saintly life goal of the spiritual life, as Ignatius conceived it, is to choose what better leads to God's deepening life inspire us to follow Jesus more closely and love Him more than everything.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

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### WELCOME HOME

We warmly welcome back to the province Srs. Sumathi Bulla & Frinsha Francis after successfully completing their Juniorate in ING Province. Hearty Welcome to dear Sr. Bincy Thomas who will be back soon to the Province after having completed two years of Salesian Spirituality course in Rome. We wish her a fruitful mission in the Novitiate.

### APOSTOLIC PLAN

In order to revitalize the different sectors of the mission, during the Team meeting the team members have made few concrete proposals for the coming three years. I urge all the communities to take it up and do what is expected of us so as to become vibrant missionaries of the young and needy.

### INTENSE JUNIORATE

Nine of our junior sisters will be doing the intensive Juniorate in Sacred Heart Convent, Bangalore. The first three months they will be attending the theology classes in Visvadeep. They will be initiated to this important stage of their formation on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Instead as the exams of Sr. Rwisumwi Wari who is completing her Degree in Auxilium College Udalguri, is getting delayed she may join the Intensive Juniorate in Shillong Province. Let us accompany them with our prayerful support.

### **PREPARATION FOR THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS**

We have already initiated the journey in preparation for the Centenary celebrations, reflecting on the theme **with Mary through the course of the century (1922-2022) and beyond**. Let us thank God with Mary for the marvellous works accomplished by all the FMAs in the length and breadth of our county past 100 years. I exhort each one of you to intensify the study of the Diamond Years Vol.1 and to have the faith sharing on the profile and the articles on Identity. Let us also refer the book of Carlo Colli SDB “*Pact of our Covenant with God* for deeper reflection and insights.

### **SINCERE CONDOLENCES & ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS**

- ✚ To Fr. Provincial and the Confreres of Tiruchy Province at the sudden demise of Fr. Thommai Antonyrajan (56) on 14 June 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Aliamma Joseph at the sudden demise of her cousin brother Mr. Abraham on 21 June 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Rosy Lopez at the unexpected death of her nephew Bro. Peter Nikson on 27 June 2020.

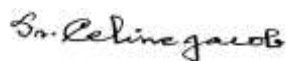
*May their Souls Rest in Peace!*

### **CONCLUSION**

I conclude with the words of our Mother in her Circular 999. This unprecedented time of human history, crossed by a serious environmental, ethical, economic, existential crisis, and now aggravated by the experience of the pandemic, poses questions on ‘what to do’, how to act, which prospects are opening before us. Above all, we are invited to discern who we are and who we are called to be. Immersed in this complex scenario of contemporary society, with renewed faith we are certain that the Lord is present with His Spirit. This is the only true strength, to believe in His presence that is the gift to recognize and receive as the condition to revive hope in us and around us. The Holy Spirit chooses us as His collaborators. We are invited to deepen the sense of this call.

I wish you God’s blessings and pray for each one of you that you may be directed by the Spirit in all that you do.

*Yours affectionately,*



*Sr. Celine Jacob*  
*Provincial*