



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/3

August 2020

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

War in literal term is armed forces fighting between two or more countries. Now so many countries are fighting with the unseen and unknown enemy and that is none other than Corona virus, the pandemic. The whole world is trying their level best to solve this problem, but so far the scientists have not discovered the vaccine to combat the virus. Who are we before God? At times we think that we are in control of the world but we failed to realize that we are just a mere breath. Why this kind of a pandemic has overtaken the world? One of the reasons could be the sin of unseen virus which has spread widely in our universe. I feel that all of us as individuals and as groups must have contributed this sin virus in one way or the other. This is a privileged time for us to introspect ourselves and make necessary purification during this lockdown period so that we can positively contribute towards the wellness and safety of the whole universe.

The world we live is going through lots of struggles in the form of deadly pandemic, restlessness, and disturbances of many other forms. When science and medicine are trying to figure out causes and solutions, we know that the ultimate solution is with Our Lord. Looking at Jesus, as our model, we are called to unite our suffering with his in a spirit of love. It is only love that can overcome the evil of suffering, make our human lives meaningful and fruitful. Suffering then becomes a means of discipline and growth. *If there is no pruning of the branches, there will be no abundant fruit (Jn. 15)*

Let us raise our hearts and minds towards heaven interceding for all those who are affected by COVID 19 and all those who care for them, in particular let us remember our Salesians and our dear ones who are affected. Let this pandemic also teach us to regulate our lifestyle, living by essentials, doing some manual work, avoiding any kind of waste, appreciating home products and showing compassion to the poor and needy and reaching out to them as far as possible.

HISTORICAL CIRCULAR: NUMBER 1000!

Mother says; It is interesting to highlight how the sisters themselves at the time of Mother Catherine Daghero, in the General Chapter of 1913, had explicitly requested to receive the circular every month. The first to have number 1 is that of 24 November 1914. From then to now, this channel of communion has not been interrupted, and has increasingly strengthened the sense of being in a Religious Family that belongs entirely to Mary and owes Her everything.

In this circular, she also announces the opening of the second year that prepares us for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of our Institute that for 2020-2021 invites us to *Accept a mandate: 'I entrust them to you'*. On 5 August 2019 at Mornese, I officially opened the triennial of preparation for the 150th of the foundation of our Institute (cf. *Circular 989*). This year as well, I will be in Mornese to open with deep joy the second year, 2020-2021 that invites us to *Receive a mandate: 'I entrust them to you'*.

From that first mandate to Mary Domenica Mazzarello God's *dream* for the Institute began to take shape. From that moment on, the charism continues to develop through the years, to grow, and to gain more and more vigor through its acceptance by the sisters and the communities that express creativity, apostolic ardor, and live this experience in synergy with all those who share the educative mission in the spirit of preventive education. *'I entrust them to you'* is not a slogan, but a *living word*, a *mandate* that challenges, sets in motion, sometimes also disquiets due to the responsibility it entails.

We ask ourselves, who is entrusted to us today? Which conditions does this mandate require so that from generation to generation, it will be a fruitful womb of new life *for all of us and for the new generations*? What can 'Mornese' say to the youth of today? And 'Mornese' is in every part of the world where we are present!

It think these questions can accompany us throughout the whole year and be motives for reflection also with the educating community, and especially with the young people and with the members of the Salesian Family. Many realities have taken on the challenge to involve the laity, adults, and young people, "in rediscovering Mary Domenica's richness as a young woman and in the prophetic dimensions of her spirituality and educational mission" (*Circular 989*). Thus, to discover her in her total availability to accept the unforeseen mandate that would mark her future with new fruitfulness.

-----CELEBRATIONS-----

FOUNDATION DAY – 5th

05th August is a memorable day for the whole Institute as it was on this beautiful day 148 years back Mother Mazzarello and her companions, made their first Profession in the presence of Don Bosco in the little Chapel of the Collegio in Mornese. It's a day of gratitude and fidelity. Sure of being guided by the fidelity of God, we open our eyes to hope and "revive" the gift of Salesian vocation. It is an



opportunity to return to the evangelical and charismatic sources, to the motivations that give a meaning to the Salesian life and mission. It is a graced event that leads us deeply into the roots of the Salesian vocation. The celebration of August 5 is an occasion to "renew the certainty that Mary walks with us, 'she supports and accompanies, protects and embraces us'" (Christus Vivit, 45). The renewal of the 'Yes' of every FMA that happens in every time and place, is an event of communion. May we live the preparation for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Institute and GCXXIV "with gratitude and awe in contemplating the richness of sanctity, of educational passion, of missionary creativity that flourishes in the Institute" Many of the FMA Provinces in the world still keep this day as the day of Profession. In fact our sisters in Shillong, Guwahati and Chennai province will be having the First and Final Professions on 5th August. It is a day to be remembered and treasured by every FMA since it is the birth day of our Institute. A special remembrance of all the sisters who celebrate the anniversary of their profession.

ST. JOHN M. VIANNEY – 4th

John Vianney, a humble parish priest is regarded by the Church as one of its great figures because he was faithful and obedient. He spent long hours in church before the Tabernacle, he inspired the faithful to



imitate him by coming to visit Jesus, knowing that their parish priest would be there, ready to listen and offer forgiveness. Later, the growing numbers of penitents from all over France would keep him in the confessional for up to 16 hours a day. It was said that Ars had become “a great hospital of souls”. He is, for us today, an example of how God works wonderfully through those who dedicate their lives to him and who seek to do his will. Let us remember with gratitude and pray through the intercession of St. John Vianney for all the parish priests.

TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD – 6th

The Transfiguration gives us a brief and fleeting glimpse of Jesus in all his glory. It is a taste of what is to come. It is offered to us encourage and challenge us in our daily lives.



It reminds us that our lives are far more than what see, hear and experience every day. It is not just a matter getting through the day. Being a follower of Jesus is about living with meaning, purpose and hope. The transfiguration not only offers us a glimpse of Jesus in all his glory, it also offers each of us a foretaste of what God promises each of us in the fullness of the Kingdom.

MARY'S ASSUMPTION & INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA – 15th

For Christians in India, August 15 marks two important celebrations. The Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven and Independence of India. These twin celebrations, but remind us of one great truth of liberation. India's soul has been craving for liberation from falsehood to reality, from darkness to light, from death to everlasting life. All these became feasible and real for every human being with the resurrection of Jesus, who is the way, the truth and life. And Mary, the mother of Jesus, was privileged to be the first human being to enter into the promised glory with Jesus. Mary is crowned the queen of heaven and earth, a shining star of true liberation India became a nation on August 15, 1947. The glorious past of India as the greatest nation in the world politically, religiously and economically was obliterated by 200 years of British occupation. However, the spirit of the nation was incarnate in the man called Mahatma Gandhi, who restored the pride of mother India through the path of non-violence and self-sacrifice. This great man drew inspiration from the Gospel. Every Indian Christian has reason to be proud of Mother Mary and Mother India The feast of Mary's Assumption challenges us to imitate her self-sacrificing love, her imperishable faith and her perfect obedience. Therefore, on this feast day of our heavenly Mother, let us offer ourselves on the altar and pray for her special care and loving protection in helping us lead a purer and holier life and to irradiate this deadly virus from this World.



BL. MARIA TRONCATI – 25th

On 25th August we celebrate Blessed Maria Troncatti, a Salesian Sister, who trained and worked as a Red Cross nurse in military hospitals in the First World War, and was a missionary in Ecuador for many years. She was part of an initially tiny group of Sisters engaged in evangelization and care for the Shuar people of the Amazon forest, looking after their physical needs as nurse, surgeon and dentist, and their spiritual needs as catechist, evangelizer and role-model. The work she began in an isolated and dangerous environment continues today.

BLESSED MARIA WAS KILLED IN A TRAGIC PLANE CRASH ON 25th AUGUST 1907. SHE WAS BEATIFIED IN 2012. LET US PRAY THROUGH HER INTERCESSION TO INCULCATE IN US ARDENT LOVE FOR GOD AND NEIGHBOUR.

BI. ZEPHYRINO NAMUNCURA – 26th

Zepherino Namuncurá, was eighth of the 12 children of the chief of the Araucano Indians of the Argentine Pampas, Chief Manuel Namuncurá. He was educated at the Salesian Mission School in Buenos Aires. The spiritual dimension of life grew in the boy, and he began to yearn to become a Salesian priest so that he would be able to evangelize his people.

He chose Dominic Savio as a model and by his efforts to adapt to a totally new culture, over a period of five years he himself became another Dominic Savio. He was exemplary for his piety, charity, faithfulness to daily duty, and self-sacrifice. This boy who at first had found it so difficult to “get in line” or “obey the bell” little by little became a true model. As Don Bosco would have wished, he was exact in fulfilling his duties of study and prayer. He was a referee at recreation: in any dispute his word was accepted. As we commemorate him let us imitate his spiritual dimension of life.



-----COMMUNICATIONS-----

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Dear Sisters, I am sure that you have already gone through the **APOSTOLIC PLAN** which was already sent to the communities. As we are going through this crucial situation we are unable to carry out all that we have planned. Being in the first year of our journey towards the centenary, the provincial Council has planned to have three webinars in order to help all the sisters of the province to deepen and live the Salesian Pedagogy and Spirituality. Kindly participate in it actively and fruitfully.

Trimonthly Recollection

Instead of the usual one day trimonthly recollection, for the month of August I propose all to make two days recollection by joining the Biblico Charis Retreat 2020 an Online English Retreat for Religious Sisters 17th to 23rd August 2020. You could choose any two days according to your convenience. Kindly plan with the animator and fix the date. Those who wish to make all six days you are most welcome. The temporary professed sisters will have one day animation besides two days of retreat. The link will be passed on to you in the FMA INK Animators group. Kindly do the registration without delay. Let us make use of the abundance of spiritual food that is available to us and grow spiritually.

Spiritual Animation Online

Keeping in line with the objectives of the formation sector there are three **Webinars** organized on the theme: ***Deepening and living the Salesian Pedagogy and Spirituality -***

- **First Webinar** - **8 August**
- **Second Webinar** - **12 September**
- **Third webinar** - **10 October**

Animation on every 13th of the month

Every 13th of the month from November 2020 we will have a special animation on **Effectiveness of the Leadership of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello.**

Centenary Preparation

Theme: 2019 – 2020

Give thanks: “Let us truly thank the Lord who gives us many graces” (L 37, 10)

Living our FMA Identity with Gratitude

Study of Diamond Years Volume - 1

We are expected to complete the study and assimilation of Diamond Years **Volume – 1** to imbibe the Missionary Spirit, and deepen the history of our Institute in India and revive the missionary fervour. I remind all the communities to make this study an interesting and enriching experience for all the sisters and to prepare a short and simple summary on the insights you have received. You could present it in any form using your creativity. Kindly send it to the Secretary before 30th November 2020. The aim of these three years celebration is the spiritual renewal of each and every FMA and all those who have adopted the spirituality of St. John Bosco and St. Mary Mazzarello, hence let us try to become enthusiastic missionaries like our pioneers.

YEAR-LONG CELEBRATION OF LAUDATO SI

On May 24, 2020, the fifth anniversary of his path-breaking and incisive Encyclical letter ‘Laudato Si’ – On Care for our Common Home, Pope Francis said that the document sought to “call attention to the cry of the Earth and of the poor.” Speaking on that occasion concerning the present day crisis, the Pope said the corona virus has highlighted the importance of “caring for our common home,” and voiced hope that reflections surrounding the Laudato Si’ anniversary will “help to create and strengthen constructive attitudes for the care of creation.”

In fact, the outbreak of a pandemic makes us reflect on the message the encyclical offers that can provide “the moral and spiritual compass for the journey to create a more caring, fraternal, peaceful and sustainable world.” Today COVID 19 has mightily demonstrated that we are all deeply interconnected and interdependent. We have, in fact a unique opportunity to transform the present groaning and travail into the birth pangs of a new way of living together, bonded together in love, compassion and solidarity and a more harmonious relationship with the natural world, our common home.

While inaugurating the Laudato Si’ year on May 24th Pope Francis invited all people of goodwill to care for our common home and our most vulnerable brothers and sisters.” Let us joyfully accept Pope Francis’ invitation and plan concretely how to care for our common home.

CHARITY OF CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

As we are journeying towards the Centenary, these months we had been reflecting and assimilating the IDENTITY OF THE F.M.A., hence I thought of reflecting with you this month on the spiritual heritage that Don Bosco gifted to us, the Charity of Christ, the Good Shepherd. We F.M.A. are called to be a response of salvation to the profound hopes of girls and young women by becoming the sign and expression of God's foreseeing love among them. Let us try to understand little more deeply **the qualities of Good Shepherd** so as to emulate it in our relationships in the community and with every one whom with whom we interact.

More than eight times in the Old Testament, God is portrayed as the shepherd of his people. In the Gospels, Jesus Christ is described as the Good Shepherd. There are no better teachers or models than Jesus himself. In *John 10:11*, Jesus described himself as "the Good Shepherd." The qualities that made Jesus the Good Shepherd are the same qualities that should still characterize us Salesian educators.

Simon Peter encouraged elders to "be shepherds of God's flock" [under their care so that], "...when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (*1 Peter 5:2-4*). The good shepherd knows his sheep because "...the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name..." (*John 10:3*).

- **Taking time to listen**

The Bible says that Jesus knew what was in men's hearts. A good educator takes time to listen to people, learns as many of their names as possible, and takes a keen interest in their everyday activities. The good shepherd leads the sheep: he "leads them out" (*John 10:3*). Jesus never *forces* He *invites* us to follow Him. A good educator does not manipulate or threaten anyone. The people have such love and respect for him that they instinctively follow. That is why integrity and consistency represent essential virtues for us.

- **Offering protection**

The good shepherd also protects his sheep. Jesus said, "I am the gate for the sheep" (*John 10:7*). He spoke in a vernacular common to that time. A good shepherd led the flock into a protected enclosure and then slept in the opening of the sheepfold. He became the gate and personally blocked the entryway. Any wild animal seeking to harm the sheep could only enter through the gate guarded by the shepherd. Jesus taught: "The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep" (*John 10:12-13*).

- **Sacrificial actions**

Five times Jesus speaks about laying down his life for the sheep (*John 10:11, 15, 17-18*). The good shepherd chooses personal sacrifice for the welfare of his sheep. Most importantly, the good shepherd loves his sheep and sacrifices himself. As John puts it, "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." Christ demonstrated His love for us by dying while we were still sinners. The same is true of shepherd-leaders. They willingly experience personal sacrifice for the benefit of those they lead. It's not about the leader; it's about those being led.

- **Example**

The shepherd "goes on ahead of [the sheep], and his sheep follow him" (10:3-4). Any true educator will lead by example. It is not a case of "do as I say, not as I do." True educators must be worthy models to follow.

- **Trustworthy**

Sheep follow the good shepherd "because they know his voice" (10:4). This is learned over time from the consistent and caring treatment of the sheep by the shepherd. An educator needs to cultivate a deep sense

of trust within those he or she leads. This is a quality in which one's voice evokes the character and care of a shepherd-leader.

- **Provision**

A shepherd provides good pasture (10:9). In Psalm 23, a 'sheep' says of the Shepherd:

- 🌿 I shall not be in want.
- 🌿 He makes me lie down in green pastures.
- 🌿 He leads me beside quiet waters.
- 🌿 He restores my soul.

True educators provide for the real needs of those they lead. He/ She acts in a way that gives “life” to those he or she leads (10:10).

- **Concerned**

The shepherd has a personal risk in the well-being of the sheep. A hired hand will abandon them when the going gets tough or dangerous—for him, it's only a job. The shepherd is concerned in the sheep and sticks with them through thick and thin (10:12). So it is with true educators. They are personally concerned in those they lead.

- **Relational**

I know my sheep and my sheep know me” (10:14). The true educator takes the time and energy to build solid and genuine relationships with those he or she leads. Those led are not viewed as mere employees, servants, or objects; each is known and treated as an “image of God.”

- **Visionary**

Jesus had a vision of the future and lived for the fulfilment of that vision. In this case, it was increasing the size of his flock – those who would become his genuine followers (10:16). True educators have a clear vision for the future and live toward it.

Looking at these qualities we come across some interesting characteristics of the Good Shepherd that Don Bosco assumed in his own following and imitation of Jesus Christ. We may recall that in the dream at the age of nine the image of the good Shepherd shaped his vision of the mission to the young. Don Bosco achieved to an exceptional degree the personal knowledge of his youngsters, each of whom felt that he was known and loved personally, to such an extent that they argued about who was first in their father's affections—they all felt they held that place. We remember the “word in the ear “and the knowledge of each one's situation: “he could read the minds” said the youngsters, full of admiration. This was due in great part to his presence among them, a typical presence that goes by the Salesian name of *assistance*: not only physical but more especially personal, affectionate and anticipatory; the human expression of God sees you. He goes looking in love for the lost sheep. Don Bosco's pedagogy is identified with all his activity; all his action is identified with his personality; and all of Don Bosco's personality is definitively summed up in one word: heart!

If we want to live our identity to the full, our heart should never stop loving. Let us try to imitate the qualities and the sentiments of the Good Shepherd in the spirit of Don Bosco our father and founder.

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR THE SICK SISTERS & DEAR ONES

- For the mother of Sr. Jigi Paul
- For the nephew of Sr. Crocetta Thomas
- For brother of Sr. Celine Jacob
- For all the urgent needs of the province
- For all the elderly and ailing sisters and dear ones of the sisters

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.

SINCERE CONDOLENCES & ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS

- ✚ To dear Sr. Rosy Lopez and Sr. Agnes Fernandez at the loss of their cousin brother Mr. John Gomez on 9th July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Seena Devasia at the loss of her dear grandmother on 14 July 2020.
- ✚ To Fr. Joseph Pauria SDB, provincial and the confreres of Kolkata Province at the sudden demise of Fr. Mathew Manianchira (75) on 17 July and Fr. Jose Aymanathil (73) on 19 July 2020.
- ✚ Sr. Nirmala Lazar, provincial and the Sisters of the Province of Chennai, at the passing away of Sr. Victorina Gnanapragasam (45) on 21 July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Josephine Savarimuthu at the loss of her dear brother Mr. Dominic Savio on 24 July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Fr. Kuruvachira Jose SDB, Provincial of IND and Confreres at the sudden demise of Fr. Joseph Kaippallimiyalil SDB (56) on 27 July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Ancy Mathew at the loss of her cousin sister on 29 July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Kasu Sleeva Showrilu at the demise of her brother-in-law on 30 July 2020.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Suni Antony at the passing away of her maternal aunt on 1 August 2020.

May their Souls Rest in Peace!

Wishing you Happy Independence Day and very Happy Feast of Assumption of our Blessed Mother!

Sr. Celine Jacob

*Sr. Celine Jacob
Provincial*

