**XXVIII/5 October 2020**

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

I am happy to continue our journey on the Identity of the FMA in reference to the constitutions. This month we shall reflect on the ‘***creative fidelity*** ‘of Mother Mazzarello which gave rise to the *“****Spirit of Mornese”* Art. No 2: “In the unique divine plan God enkindled the same experience of apostolic charity in St. Maria Domenica Mazzarello, making her a unique, active collaborator in the foundation of the Institute. Together with our first Sisters she lived our founder's project in creative fidelity, thus giving rise to the "Spirit of Mornese" that must characterize the lifestyle of our communities today. For this reason she is recognized by the Church as mother and “Co-Foundress”.**

Let us reflect together on the contribution of Mother Mazzarello in helping us live the charism of Don Bosco in ‘creative fidelity’. Don Bosco founded the Institute of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians to be “a living Monument “of his gratitude to Mary help of Christians. In his own words ‘to do for the girls that little bit of good which the Salesians have begun to do among boys’. For this he needed a feminine congregation with the same driving force in a specific mission like his.

Mother Mazzarello was a chosen soul whom the Lord prepared in every detail and had brought at the ripe moment to meet Don Bosco to help him in his project of founding a feminine congregation for the education of the poor, abandoned young girls. Mother Mazzarello’s “faithfulness and fidelity to Don Bosco’s spirit was, in fact “Fidelity to the Holy Spirit.”Her Salesianity already existed even before her first meeting with Don Bosco.

The same spirit that raised up Don Bosco had also inspired Mary Mazzarello. Her meeting with Don Bosco did not mean a really radical change of direction, it simply meant more unmistakable, precise awareness of her destination, towards which God was already leading her. She was keen to bring young girls to God, and yet she did not bore them with devotions, recommendations and prohibitions. She put up with any kind of annoyance or upset, she endured and tolerated anything, so long the girls did not commit sin. Don Bosco had divine powers of insight into the souls of the young. We hear such testimony about Mother Mazzarello as well. ‘When the girls found themselves in any doubt of conscience or in moral trouble, it seemed she could read their thoughts, and there was no need of any explanation.’

Don Bosco used loving kindness and was resourceful in finding ways to win over the hearts of his boys to lead them to God. Mother Mazzarello too grew closer to the girls, so that she could sow a word of advice (a word in the ear) in their hearts. If she did not succeed at the first attempt, instead of giving up she would follow them up with loving - kindness. Whenever Mother Mazzarello had to deal with a serious offence, she would not rest and would move heaven and earth, gently but firmly, until the evil had been got rid of.

The humble farm girl from Mornese, without a trace of culture, and unfamiliar with educational methods, had been led by the Holy Spirit’s special light along the very same path as Don Bosco’s. Our saint could not have dreamed of a more suitable instrument that had neither chosen nor prepared, but one whom providence had let him encounter, and whom the Holy Spirit had already made use to raise up in the church an institute that mirrored the Salesian Congregation’s identity and mission, but along femininelines.

The more we study the spirit of Mornese the more we see it bearing the impress of Mother Mazzarello’s rich and very original personality: her way of understanding  and exercising authority and her way of making FMA ideal come alive. It is a ‘Faithful, Creative Fidelity’ since it is perfectly in line with the intentions of Don Bosco, who at first wanted his Directors to confine themselves to spiritual direction, leaving the rest for the sisters themselves to look after. In the later stages of development Don Bosco encouraged Mother Mazzarello to take on the responsibilities in the running of the institute.

Dear Sisters, it is now our turn, the FMA sisters of 21st centaury to live the charism of our, insightful, saintly and visionary Mother, in creative fidelity, considering the signs of the time and the need of the present day youth. The Holy Spirit who was actively at work in Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello is similarly active in our Institute and in every FMA. Let us open ourselves to the urgings and promptings of the spirit in this appropriate time and respond positively, urgently and efficiently for a fruitful outcome in our mission. May our holy Founders intercede for us to Our Blessed lady and obtain for us, audacity, eagerness and fulfilment in whatever we do for the good of the souls. Thus the Spirit of Mornese may characterise the life style of our communities today.

**WORLD MISSION SUNDAY – 18TH OCTOBER**

Pope Francis released his annual Message for World Mission Sunday 2020 on Pentecost Sunday. It’s theme is taken from Isaiah: “Here am I, send me” (6:8). The Pope began his message recalling the words he expressed on the occasion of the extraordinary moment of prayer on 27 March. Even in the disorientation and fear provoked by the current international crisis, Pope Francis says the Lord continues to ask “Whom shall I send?” Even as we touch our frailty in the pain and death we are experiencing, we are also reminded “of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil”. This is where the call to mission emerges as an “invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbour” through °service and intercessory prayer”, he writes.

**Missionaries with Jesus the Missionary**: Just as Jesus completely accomplished His mission by dying on the cross, “we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others”, Pope Francis continues. Our mission, our call, our willingness to be sent originates in His own vocation as “the Father’s Missionary”. “Our personal vocation” is rooted in “the fact that we are sons and daughters of God in the Church”.

**The Church as Missionary:** Pope Francis explains that it is specifically the Church that “continues the mission of Jesus in history”. Thus the baptized members of the Church are sent forth in her name. Through our witness and proclamation of the Gospel, God continues “to manifest His love”. This is how He is able to “touch and transform hearts, minds, bodies, societies and cultures in every place and time.”

**Response to a relationship :**“Mission is a free and conscious response to God’s call”, the Pope reminds us. A call to mission can only be discerned “when we have a personal relationship of love with Jesus present in his Church”. That leads to the question of our preparedness to welcome the Holy Spirit’s presence and action in our lives. That call comes to married couples, consecrated persons and ordained ministers in life’s everyday events. Another question the Pope says we should ask ourselves is if we are willing “to be sent forth at any time or place to witness to our faith” and relationship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit., And the last question is if we are willing to respond as Mary did always “ready to be completely at the service of God’s will?”

**Mission responds to life:** The challenge for the Church’s mission right now is that of “Understanding what God is saying to us at this time of pandemic”, Pope Francis acknowledges. As people die alone or are abandoned, as others lost their jobs, with the necessity of social distancing or saying at home, the Pope says that we are invited “to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God”. This situation can increase our awareness of the need to relate to others, he says. God will touch our hearts through prayer which will always open us to understand others’ needs. Those of us who have not been able to participate in the Church’s liturgical life now understand “the experience of the many Christian communities that cannot celebrate Mass every Sunday”, the Pope said.

**Whom shall I send?:** God’s question expressed by the Prophet Isaiah “is addressed once more to us and awaits a generous and convincing response: ‘Here am I, send me!’ (Is 6:8). Pope Francis says at the conclusion of his message. World Mission Sunday will be a day on which we will be able to reaffirm through prayer, reflection and material help our active participation in Jesus’ mission in His Church. Pope Francis specifies that the collection taken up on 18 October will support “the missionary work carried out in my name by the Pontifical Mission Societies, in order to meet the spiritual and material needs of peoples and Churches throughout the world, for the salvation of all.”

As we are journeying towards the 150th anniversary of the Institute and the centenary preparation of FMA presence in India it is right and fitting to introspect ourselves individually and as communities regarding our missionary fervour and enthusiasm.



01st - ST. THERESA OF THE CHILD JESUS

02nd - FEAST OF THE GUARDIAN ANGELS

04th - FRANCIS OF ASSISI

05th - BL. ALBERTO MARVELLI

07th - FEAST OF THE HOLY ROSARY

18th - World Mission Sunday

11th - St. John XXIII

12th - BL. ALESSANDRINA

15th - ST. TERESA OF AVILA PATRONESS OF OUR INSTITUTE

22nd - ST. JOHN PAUL II

24th - BLESSED LOUIS GUANELLA

28th - FEAST OF STS. SIMON & JUDE

29th - BL. MICHAEL RUA

**BLESSED CARLO ACUTIS - A MODEL OF HOLINESS FOR MODERN YOUTH**

Carlo Acutis was born in [London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London,_England) in mid-1991 to Andrea Acutis and Antonia Salzano. His parents worked in London, Germany, and UK though settled in Milan not long after their son's birth in September 1991.He became devoted as a child to the [Mother of God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_of_God) and recited frequent [rosaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosaries) as a sign of his devotion to her. He became a frequent communicant after the reception of his [First Communion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Communion)  and made the effort either before or after Mass to reflect in front of the [tabernacle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabernacle). Acutis also made his confession once a week. Those around him knew he had a passion for computers.  He also had several models as his guides for life:

Acutis was worried about those friends of his whose parents were divorcing and so he would invite those friends to his home to support them. He defended the rights of the disabled and defended disabled peers at school when bullies mocked them. He contracted [leukemia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leukemia) and offered his pain for both [Pope Benedict XVI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Benedict_XVI) and for the Universal Church. He had asked his parents to take him on pilgrimages to the sites of all the known [Eucharistic miracles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucharistic_miracle) in the world but his worsening health prevented this from happening. Being passionate about computers led Acutis to make a website dedicated to careful cataloging of each reported miracle and he did this in 2005. It was on the website that he said: "the more [Eucharist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucharist) we receive, the more we will become like [Jesus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Christ), so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven".

 He died on 12 October 2006 at 6:45am from M3 fulminant leukemia and he was buried in Assisi in accordance with his wishes.

The formal introduction to the cause came on 13 May 2013 and Acutis became titled as a [Servant of God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servant_of_God). [Pope Francis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis) confirmed his life of [heroic virtue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heroic_virtue) on 5 July 2018 and named him as [Venerable](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venerable).

On 14 November 2019, the Medical Council of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes expressed a positive opinion about a miracle that was attributed to Acutis’ intercession.The miracle happened in 2013, which involved a young boy from Brazil who suffered from a rare pancreatic disease. [Pope Francis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis) confirmed this miracle in a decree on 21 February 2020 which enabled for Acutis to be beatified; the beatification is scheduled for 10 October 2020 to be held in Assisi with Cardinal [Agostino Vallini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agostino_Vallini) set to preside.

May this young saint of our century inspire us in our mission with the young people that many more may follow his ardent love for God, for Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and our Blessed Mother!

**“THE PERSONAL ENCOUNTER”- NEW DOCUMENT OF THE INSTITUTE**

Formation sector from Rome conducted a webinar on 22nd September 2020 for FMA Indian provinces. From our province all the provincial councillors and some of the animators and sisters responsible for formation participated in it. A beautiful presentation was made on the document “Personal Encounter”- published in response to the mandate of General Chapter XXIII. Each Sister will be given a personal copy of this document. Let us accept it with joy and make an in-depth study of the same so as to make this an indispensable means of spiritual growth and sincere search for God’s will. We express our sincere thanks to Sr. Nieves Reboso, General Councillor for Formation and her collaborators, Sr. Maria Fisichella and Sr. Anelfreda Miranda for the effort made for bringing out this document as well as for presenting the same.

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**CONGRATULATIONS**

Hearty congratulations to dear Sr. Margrat Mathai on successfully completing her Ph.D.in MAHARAJ VINAYAK GLOBAL UNIVERSITY (Rajastan) in English on the topic of, “**Socio - Cultural elements in the perspective of Kamala Das and her struggle for the feminine existentialism in the modern world: a critical study”.** You left no stone unturned in these years and we want you to know that we are proud of you. May this degree enable you to reach out better to the mission entrusted to you.

**ONLINE MEETINGS & INITIATIVES**

* CDEW organized a Webinar on Neighbourhood Children’s Parliament (NCP) on 16th September 2020 for animators and sisters in charge of Social Ministry. Sr. Ashalatha Pushparaj shared her experiences with the group. In view of the smooth functioning of NCP and other Social Ministry activities during this webinar the group felt the need to appoint 3 Regional coordinators. They are:
* Sr. Ashalatha Pushparaj for Karnataka
* Sr. Jigi Paul for Kerala
* Sr. Nirmala Rodda for Andhra and Telangana
* Sr. Rosy Lopez attended the Webinar on E- COMMERCE organized by NDF on 19th September 2020
* CDEW SOCIETY in collaboration with CUTS international inaugurated Green Action Week India 2020 and the Sharing Community Campaign on 29/09/2020 by Provincial Sr. Celine Jacob FMA,  Shri Rajasekhar-Panchayat Development Officer (P.D.O) of Doddabanahalli, Bangalore and Sub Inspector of Police Shri. Pradeep Poojary K. Avalahalli.  It was carried out in the presence of SHG women and youth group representatives. This platform invites everyone to become partners in caring our common home by contributing one’s mite towards greenery environment. A model PIPE composting was also installed.
* Awareness program on - three **R’s: Reduce Reuse, Recycle** and how to avoid wastes before it even gets to the households will be given to youth and women of Kaverinagar and Ulsoor.  40 Pipe composting will be planted in 40 families of these 2 places and conclude with 40 youth going for a Bicycle rally to propagate the theme   “Sharing  Community – GAW India Campaign”  for sustainable consumption

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

* 13th October Meeting of Animators and economers – Preparation for the financial policy of the province
* 15th October webinar on Income Generation Programme under Mascheski scheme
* 15th October Finance Commission Meet PCI level
* 21st & 22nd October Provincial Council
* 24th October webinar on NCP for Sisters in charge
* 1st & 2nd November Trimonthly Recollection & animation for juniors

**PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR THE SICK SISTERS & DEAR ONES**

* For the mother of Sr. Leema Rose
* For the speedy recovery of Hassena (aspirant)
* For the mother of Sr. Mercy Thomas
* For the mother of Sr. Lucy Michael
* For the special intention of the nephew of Sr. Anna T. ( on 21st October)

**SINCERE CONDOLENCES & ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS**

* To dear Sr. Teresa Rayapudi at the loss of her grandfather on 11 September 2020.
* To dear Sr. Jessy Ambiyil at the loss of her aunt on 14 September 2020.
* To dear Sr. Sheela Jacob at the loss of her paternal uncle on 22 September.
* To dear Sr. Frinsha Francis at the demise of her maternal grandmother on 24th September.
* To dear Sr. Helen Netto at the loss of her niece’s husband on 30th September 2020.
* To Fr. Joseph Pauria SDB, provincial and the confreres of Kolkata Province at the demise of

Fr. Mathew Vezhambecherry on 30th September 2020.

**May their Souls Rest in Peace!**

**CONCLUSION**

**The month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary. The Rosary is principally composed of the Prayer of Christ, the Our Father, and the Angelic** **Salutation**, **the Hail Mary**. In his 2002 apostolic letter [*Rosarium Virginis Mariae*](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20021016_rosarium-virginis-mariae_en.html) (On the Most Holy Rosary), Pope John Paul II develops this dynamic further:

The Rosary of the Virgin Mary, which gradually took form in the second millennium under the guidance of the Spirit of God, is a prayer loved by countless Saints and encouraged by the Magisterium. Simple yet profound, it still remains, at the dawn of this third millennium, a prayer of great significance destined to bring forth a harvest of holiness. It blends easily into the spiritual journey of the Christian life, which, after two thousand years, has lost none of the freshness of its beginning and feels drawn by the Spirit of God to “set out into the deep” (duc in altum!) in order once more to proclaim, and even cry out, before the world that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour, “the way, and the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6), “the goal of human history and the point on which the desires of history and civilization turn.”

The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety, of which it can be said to be a compendium. It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial Magnificat for the work of redemptive Incarnation, which began in her virginal womb. With the Rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty of the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary, the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer. (Rosarium Virginis Mariae, n. 1)

Many saints testify that the Rosary is a spiritual power house of prayer. When we pray the Rosary it unlocks our minds and hearts to an authentic experience of Jesus. The Rosary becomes an instrument of inner healing which helps to reorient our lives. Dear sisters I encourage you to pray as many Rosaries as possible with great devotion and love.



Affectionately,

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**Sr. Celine Jacob**

**Provincial**