



XXXII/ 07

01 December 2024

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

December arrives like the gentle closing of a treasured book as the final chapter of the year unfolds, filled with moments of reflection, gratitude, and hope. Each day feels like a precious page, inviting us to pause and cherish the journey we've undertaken. The lights of Advent and Christmas remind us that this is not merely an ending but a season rich with meaning—a time to prepare our hearts for the joy of Christ's coming.

Just as the winter wind hastens the fall of autumn leaves, December seems to slip away faster than the months before it. Yet, within its fleeting days lies the invitation to embrace its blessings: the warmth of togetherness, the gift of giving, and the quiet anticipation of new beginnings. Let us welcome this sacred time with renewed zeal, savouring its opportunities to deepen our faith and rekindle the virtues of love, purity, and hope.

1 December, the First Sunday of Advent, marks the beginning of a season of hope, reflection, and preparation for the coming of Christ. On this special day, let us turn our hearts to the message of peace and unity, praying for an end to conflicts and war in our troubled world. Through the intercession of Mother Mary, let us seek her guidance and protection, asking her to lead humanity toward harmony and understanding. May this Advent season transform the hearts, dispel the darkness of strife, and fill the world with the light of peace and love.

BL. PHILIP RINALDI

Blessed Philip Rinaldi, born on May 28, 1856, in Lu Monferrato (Alessandria), was captivated by the charism of Don Bosco at the age of 22. His early connection with the saint shaped his life profoundly. As a priest, he played a vital role in the formation of aspirants and novices, instilling in them the spirit of Salesian values. In 1899, Fr. Rua appointed him as the director of the community of Sarriá, Spain, and later as provincial leader. In these roles, he significantly contributed to the growth of the Salesian mission in Spain, solidifying its foundations and expanding its influence.

As Vicar General of the Congregation, Blessed Philip's paternal spirit and visionary leadership came to the fore. He established formation centres offering spiritual and social assistance to young working women and spearheaded initiatives like printing works. His guidance and support during a challenging period in the history of the Salesian Sisters



Don Filippo Rinaldi

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Don Filippo Rinaldi

proved invaluable. A fervent promoter of Salesian collaboration, he strengthened the Cooperators and founded the World Federations of Past Pupils for both men and women. His foresight led to the creation of the Volunteers of Don Bosco, a new form of consecrated life in the world.

Elected Rector Major in 1922, Blessed Philip dedicated himself to adapting Don Bosco's spirit to the needs of the time. A master of spiritual life, he prioritised the renewal of spiritual fervour within the Salesian family and fostered Salesian studies. His unwavering trust in God and devotion to Mary Help of Christians underpinned his endeavors. He actively supported missionary efforts, ensuring young Salesians who were equipped to evangelize effectively by learning the languages and customs of the people they served.

Blessed Philip Rinaldi passed away on December 5, 1931, and his remains are venerated in the crypt of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians. Beatified on April 29, 1990, by St. John Paul II, his memorial is celebrated annually on December 5. Following his example, let us strive to emulate his virtues—his faith, zeal, and dedication—so that we too may live out Don Bosco's spirit in our times and circumstances. May his life inspire us to greater holiness and service!

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated annually on December 8th, is a profound occasion that reminds us of Mary's unique privilege of being conceived without original sin. This feast, though often associated with Advent, honors Mary's immaculate beginning in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, by the singular grace and merit of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of humanity. It highlights God's plan to prepare a pure and holy vessel for the Incarnation of His Son.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception, solemnly defined by Pope Pius IX in "*Ineffabilis Deus*" in 1854, asserts that Mary was preserved from original sin from the first moment of her conception. This preservation was not an exception but a preeminent redemption through the merits of Christ. As St. Ephraim of Syria beautifully expressed, "There is no stain in Thy mother," reflecting the early Church's recognition of her purity. Over centuries, theological debates and Marian devotion culminated in this doctrine, a testament to God's providence and Mary's role in salvation history.



As we honor Mary on this solemnity, let us draw inspiration from her profound virtue of purity. St. John Bosco, a fervent advocate of Marian devotion, encouraged his spiritual children to look to Mary as a model of purity and holiness. Mary's immaculate life calls us to guard our hearts and minds against sin, striving to reflect her purity in our thoughts, words, and actions.

Sisters, let us keep these novena days with fervor and devotion, emulating Mary's virtues, especially her purity. This virtue is not merely about chastity but a complete openness to God's will, a heart free from the stain of selfishness, pride, and sin. By imitating Mary, we can become vessels of God's grace in our families and communities, shining as beacons of holiness in a world often shadowed by sin.

May Our Lady, conceived without sin, intercede for us that we may grow in holiness and strive to lead lives pleasing to God! Let us confidently turn to her, our Immaculate Mother, for guidance and strength as we journey towards

our heavenly home.

HAPPY FEAST!



FROM THE DIVINE WOMB, HOPE TAKES ITS FIRST BREATH

Christmas is a tapestry woven with threads of wonder, love, and hope, inviting us to pause and embrace the beauty found in life's simplest moments. The soft glow of candlelight, the laughter shared with loved ones, and quiet moments of prayer serve as reminders of the miracles we often overlook. Amidst the busyness of the season, Christmas whispers a profound truth: ***it is not the grandeur of our gifts but the depth of our love that truly matters.***

The story of that holy night in Bethlehem—a newborn Child lying in a humble manger—teaches us the power of humility, the value of connection, and the boundless mercy of God. Just as the shepherds brought their devotion and the Magi their treasures, we too are invited to offer what is uniquely ours. Whether it is our time, our talents, or our kindness, the greatest offerings are those given with open hearts. Christmas reveals that even the smallest acts of love can shine brightly in a world yearning for light.

The message of Emmanuel, "God with us," reassures us that even in our struggles, we are never alone. May the hope born in the manger inspire us to comfort others, reaching out to the weary, the lonely, and the forgotten! As the carols fill the air and the world glows with festive light, let us remember the transformative power of joy. ***Let forgiveness replace resentment, and let peace find a home in our hearts.*** Like the child in the stable, may we rediscover the beauty of innocence and the courage to believe in miracles!

In the spirit of this sacred season, the story of Ansel, a humble candle maker from a snow-covered village, offers a poignant reminder of Christmas's true essence. Known for his kindness, Ansel crafted candles that brought light to the darkest corners of his community. One Christmas Eve, with scarce resources and weary hands, he made a single, simple candle. When he arrived at the church for Midnight Mass, he hesitated, feeling his offering was too modest. However, the priest placed it at the altar's centre.

As the service began, a fierce wind extinguished all other lights, leaving only Ansel's candle glowing steadily. Its flame illuminated the church and warmed the hearts of all present, ***proving that love and sacrifice, not grandeur, make gifts truly meaningful.*** From that Christmas onwards, Ansel's candle symbolised hope, teaching the village—and us—that even the simplest gifts, given with love, can light the way for others.

This Christmas, let us embody the spirit of Ansel's candle. May we illuminate lives with acts of kindness, carry the light of Christmas into every day, and find renewed faith, gratitude, and joy in sharing our unique gifts with the world. Let us widen the circle of our prayer to include the whole world, especially our Holy Father, Pope Francis, our Superiors, all our Animators, sisters, parents and dear ones, benefactors, and all the members of our Educating Communities. Let us not forget the war-stricken Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Gaza, and Sudan.

Christmas and New Year blessings to all!



Let's celebrate!

01	- INTERNATIONAL AIDS DAY
03	- ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
05	- BL. PHILIP RINALDI
09	- IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (08 Being Sunday)
10	- HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
12	- OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
25	- CHRISTMAS
26	- ST. STEPHEN
27	- ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE & EVANGELIST
28	- HOLY INNOCENTS
29	- HOLY FAMILY



INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON EDUCATION

- ✚ The 4th International Conference on Education, organised by Don Bosco Institute (DBI), Guwahati, is set to take place from December 5th to 8th, 2024. Targeted at school principals and educational administrators, to enhance their leadership to educational excellence, the conference will explore the theme “Creativity and Innovation in Schools: The Principal’s Role.” From our province, Sr. Lisy Jose, Sr. Madhuri Panem, and Sr. Asha Latha Pushparaj will be participating in it.

CONSULTATIONS

- ✚ Consultations for the appointment of Animators of Communities are already sent to you. Let us accomplish this sacred duty with prayerful preparation and responsible proposals.

COMMUNITY AND APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE

- ✚ Our Postulants made a month of Community and Apostolic Experience from 1st to 30th November. Anu Pauly and Rupa Kalukolla were welcomed by the Guntur Community while Julia Makri and Keerthana Rayappa by the Uppal Community. Our thanks to Sr. Bridget Jacob and Sr. Ancy Mathew and their Communities for accompanying the Postulants and offering them an experience in the life and mission of the FMA Community!

CONGRATULATIONS

- ✚ Heartfelt congratulations to Sr. Florence Leivon on receiving the prestigious “Cream Award 2024” for her outstanding academic excellence and exemplary performance at Garden City College. This

remarkable achievement reflects not only her dedication and perseverance but also her unwavering commitment to excellence. Sr. Florence, your accomplishment is a source of immense pride and joy for all of us, and it serves as an inspiration for others to strive for greatness in their endeavours. May this well-deserved recognition motivate you to continue achieving new heights and making a lasting impact in all you undertake. God bless you abundantly!

SINCERE ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS

-  To Sr. Vijaya Injetti at the demise of her beloved sister Mrs. Kumari (37) on 5 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Jyothsna Mattupally who lost her loving father Mr. M. William Francis on 5 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Lucy Michael at the sudden demise of her first cousin Mr. K.C. Joseph (71) on 7 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Sumi Joseph at the sudden demise of her Uncle Mr. Joseph Srakath (73) on 9 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Aliamma Pallipurathukunnel at the passing away of her first cousin. Thomas PT (74) on 12 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Teresa Thomason the demise of her beloved brother Mr. Thomas (73) on 14 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Celine Selvam at the passing away of her eldest brother Mr. Vincent (65) on 26 November 2024.
-  To the Provincial Rev. Sr. Devadoss Margaret, and the sisters of the INM province at the demise of Sr. Peenikkaparamban Elizabeth (87) on 29 November 2024.
-  To Sr. Asha Latha at the demise of her beloved great grandmother Mrs. Papamma (97) on 30 November 2024.
-  To the Provincial Rev. Fr. Silveira Savio and the confreres of INB province at the demise of Fr. Vincent Rasquinha SDB (78) on 30 November 2024.

WE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR OUR SICK: OUR SISTERS AND DEAR ONES

CONCLUSION

On November 26, 2024, India proudly celebrated the 75th anniversary of the adoption of its Constitution, a cornerstone of our democratic identity. On this day in 1949, the Constituent Assembly finalised the Constitution, laying the foundation for a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic. This monumental document came into force on January 26, 1950, marking the birth of the Indian Republic.

Constitution Day, formally recognised in 2015, serves as a reminder of the values enshrined in the Preamble—justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity—and the vision of our founding leaders. This year's commemorations, themed on four pillars—Preamble of the Constitution, Know Your Constitution, Making of the Constitution, and Celebrating the Glory of the Constitution—are a call to reconnect with the principles that guide our nation.

The Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan witnessed the main commemorative function of that day, underscoring the enduring relevance of our Constitution. Dear sisters, let us make known to our recipients the importance of fostering awareness and gratitude for the liberties we enjoy and by praying for our nation to remain steadfast in the principles of justice and harmony. Let us impart the same patriotism to

our students that it may inspire them to understand the rights and duties it guarantees and to uphold the ideals of unity and equality.

As I conclude, I urge you to read the Circular Letter 1043 of Mother Chiara Cazzuola, which speaks on the gift of vocation and invites us to an honest introspection on our mission. Every community is called to embody and perpetuate the Salesian charism, ensuring its vitality for the young. Let us not use the changing times as an excuse but trust in the Lord, who guides history and knows what humanity needs for its salvation. With hope and apostolic fervour, let us invoke the Holy Spirit to illuminate our steps as we prepare for the future.

I also encourage you to meditate on Article 73 of our Constitutions, which Mother recommended:

"In gratitude to God for having called us to the life of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, let us be especially responsible for vocations to our Institute. Let us ask for vocations by incessant prayer and by our own joyful and constant fidelity."

Let this reflection renew our zeal and inspire us to live our vocation with joy, prayer, and faithfulness.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt wishes to you, dear Sisters, esteemed members of the Salesian Family, the educating community, Parish Priests, and Salesians whose invaluable service enriches our mission. May your Christmas be filled with profound joy, and may the New Year bring an abundance of peace. Please convey my warm and affectionate greetings to your cherished parents and loved ones, assuring them of my sincere prayers and remembrance.

Good wishes and prayerful greetings to all in the Family.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sr. Lucy Rose".

Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil
Provincial