



XXXII/10

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My dearest Sisters,

Loving & Prayerful Greetings from Provincial House, Bangalore!

As we step into the month of March, we are invited to embrace a season of renewal and transformation. March marks the beginning of Lent, a time for deep reflection, penance, and spiritual growth, as we prepare our hearts for the joyous celebration of Easter. It is a month that calls us to examine our lives, seek repentance, and open ourselves to the transforming grace of God. Let us use this sacred time to draw closer to Him through prayer, fasting, and acts of charity, trusting that He will lead us on a path of true conversion and renewal.

May this month be a reminder of the grace and opportunities God offers for growth in faith, and may it inspire us all to live more fully in His love and service.

SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

THE GREATNESS OF ST. JOSEPH



St. Joseph, known as the patron saint of workers, families, and the universal Church, lived a life of quiet yet profound faithfulness, humility, and devotion. His actions often speak louder than words, inspiring many to deepen their devotion to him. One of the most remarkable instances of St. Joseph's faithfulness comes from the moment he learned that Mary, his betrothed, was pregnant with Jesus. At that time, he could have chosen to distance himself from her, as the situation could have been interpreted as a scandal. However, Joseph was a man of deep faith and compassion. When an angel appeared to him in a dream, telling him that the child, Mary was carrying was the Son of God and that he should take Mary as his wife, Joseph immediately obeyed. His quick and faithful response to God's command demonstrated his deep trust in God's plan, despite the uncertainty and potential hardship he might face. This shows us the importance of trusting God's plan for our lives, even when it is beyond our understanding.

Role as the Protector of the Holy Family

After the birth of Jesus, King Herod sought to kill the child. In another moment of faith, St. Joseph was warned by an angel in a dream to flee to Egypt with Mary and the child Jesus. This call to action required great courage, but Joseph acted without hesitation. He immediately took his family into exile, safeguarding them from the threat of Herod's wrath. St. Joseph's unwavering faith in God's guidance and his protective love for his family show a deep sense of responsibility and trust in God's providence.

This incident highlights the virtue of being ever-vigilant in our duties to protect those entrusted to us, and how God's guidance will lead us through difficult decisions, even in times of uncertainty.

St. Joseph's Quiet Strength and Humility

Throughout the Gospels, we see that St. Joseph never speaks a single word. His faithfulness is expressed not through grand gestures or speeches but through his consistent actions. Joseph's silence is often interpreted as a symbol of humility, teaching us that true faithfulness to God is not always in outward expressions but in humble service and quiet obedience. In a world that values visibility and self-promotion, St. Joseph reminds us of the importance of humility, and how our true worth is often revealed in the small, faithful acts of service we do for God and others.

His quiet role as a father and protector speaks to the importance of leading with love and care, without seeking recognition. St. Joseph teaches that faithfulness can be shown through steadfast actions, even in the most humble of circumstances.

Joseph's Patience in Building a Life for Jesus and Mary

As a carpenter, St. Joseph worked tirelessly to provide for his family. This job, though not prestigious, was carried out with immense dedication and devotion. St. Joseph didn't seek out fame or riches; his life was one of hard work, supporting his family in whatever way he could. His example of patience, diligence, and faithfulness in the mundane moments of life serves as an inspiration for those who struggle with the monotony of daily work.

This aspect of St. Joseph's life encourages the faithful to embrace their own work, no matter how ordinary, with a sense of purpose, offering it to God as a form of service. Through this, he teaches that our work, when done with love and devotion, becomes an act of faithfulness.

St. Joseph's Role in the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple

When Jesus was twelve years old, Mary and Joseph went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. After the feast, they unknowingly left without Jesus and realised he was missing only after a day's journey. They returned to Jerusalem in great distress and eventually found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers. When they asked why he had stayed behind, Jesus replied that he must be about his Father's business. St. Joseph and Mary, though confused, accepted this response.

This moment illustrates St. Joseph's trust and faith in God's plan, even when it seemed unclear. He did not demand Jesus' obedience but trusted in God's greater purpose for His Son. It reflects St. Joseph's deep devotion to God, always trusting that God had a plan, even when it wasn't fully understood.

St. Joseph's life was marked by an unwavering devotion to God and his family. His faithfulness in moments of uncertainty, his humble work as a carpenter, and his dedication to his role as the protector of Mary and Jesus all speak to the virtues of faith, obedience, humility and love. He shows us that faithfulness doesn't require grand gestures but is often demonstrated in quiet, consistent actions and in trusting God's plan even in times of trial. For us religious, St. Joseph serves as a powerful model of what it means to be devoted to God in our everyday lives, and his example encourages us to live with faithfulness, humility, and trust in God's guidance.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On March 8th, International Women's Day 2025, let's embrace the call to *Accelerate Action for Women's Equality*. This year, the focus is on the urgency of progress—to dismantle the systemic barriers and biases that hinder women's advancement across all spheres of life. It's time, dear sisters, to uplift our power and energy and ignite a collective movement toward a more equitable world. We have the strength, determination, and resilience to take swift action. Let's stand together in solidarity, breaking down the walls of inequality in our workplaces, communities, and



beyond. From advocating for equal pay to supporting women in leadership, we have a duty to create spaces where women's voices are not just heard but celebrated.

Though the path to full gender parity is long, we can accelerate the journey by supporting the efforts of those organisations already making strides. Our contributions—whether through time, resources, or advocacy—can amplify the work being done to help women and girls thrive. On this day, let's commit to accelerating action by challenging discrimination, supporting women-focused initiatives, and fostering an environment of empowerment and solidarity. Together, we can make a world of difference today and in the generations to come.



05	ASH WEDNESDAY
07	SAINTS PERPETUA AND FELICITY
08	INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
19	ST. JOSEPH
25	ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD



COMBINED COURSE

Sr. Devamani Gummadi and Sr. Deepthi Mary Murva participated in a combined Course on New Education Policy, Safe Environment and POCSO from February 19th to 24th at NBCLC Bangalore. They found the Course very relevant and informative, which will be transmitted to the next Retreat Group comprising of Principals and Senior Sisters.

SECRETARIES' COUSE

Sr. Ritsel D'Almeida will be participating in the Course for the new Provincial Secretaries from 5th to 23rd March 2025 at our Generalate at Rome organized by the Secretary General and her Team. She will be leaving for Rome on 3rd March and will return on 25th. We wish her an enriching experience at the Centre.

BLESSING OF NEW ROOMS

On March 19th, the feast day of St. Joseph, we will bless the newly constructed rooms for our elderly Sisters at Kottiyam. This significant milestone is a source of great joy, and we are deeply thankful to God for His abundant blessings. These new rooms are designed to provide comfort and care, offering a peaceful space for the elderly Sisters. We express our heartfelt gratitude to God for His grace and to all our generous benefactors.

PCI MEETING 2025

The PCI 2024 Conference is scheduled to take place at **Auxilium Provincial House in Kolkata** from 29th to 31st March **2025**. This year's theme is **“With Mary, journey towards generative leadership in a Synodal lifestyle for a shared animation and mission.”** Representing our province, Sr. Alice Chacko and Sr. Maria Rajeswary, the National Coordinator for Social Communications will participate as Delegates in the Meet. We will be leaving for Kolkata on 28th March and return to the Province on 1st April. Let us join together in prayer for the fruitful and successful outcome of this upcoming meeting.

WORLD DAY OF GRATITUDE

Our Vicar General, Sr. Maria del Rosario Garcia Ribas, has communicated that the Feast of Gratitude 2025 will take place on April 26th in the **Vietnam Province “Mary Help of Christians” (VTN)**. It is a special occasion for us to come together in prayer and joy to express our deep gratitude to our beloved Mother, Sister Chiara Cazzuola.

In this sacred Jubilee Year, which marks the beginning of preparations for the 150th Anniversary of the first missionary departure of the FMA, we are invited to reflect on the words of Saint Maria Mazzarello: "It is time to rekindle the fire." With the theme "Igniting the Gospel of Hope," we are called to renew our mission, reignite our hope, and embrace a spirit of deep gratitude.

"Igniting the Gospel of Hope"

The beautiful logo of the Feast, which the Province of “Mary Help of Christians” of Vietnam, proposes to us, contains a profound message, which is expressed through the various elements that compose it:

Globe: The dark blue circle represents the Earth, the common home of humanity, where people give and receive love and care. It is here that we Daughters of Mary Help of Christians devote ourselves, with thoughtful solicitude, to the education of young people.

Map of Vietnam: In Vietnam the seed of the Salesian charism was planted by the first missionaries and continues to grow. This is also the place of the meeting, the place to express the gratitude of all the FMA towards our Mother on the Feast of Gratitude 2025.

Bronze Drum: Sacred symbol of national culture, art and history, in harmony with other cultures of the world. The Bronze Drum carries within itself the pride of origins and symbolizes the deep Vietnamese spirituality.

Mary Help of Christians: The image of Mary stands out as the Mother of Hope. Her mantle is wide, full of maternal love, always open to accompany, love, protect and support each of her children throughout the world.

Anchor and Cross: Christian life can only be strong if it is anchored to Christ, the source of hope. The Anchor and the Cross are an invitation to everyone to place their total trust in God. This is why we are committed to spreading the light of the Gospel.

Fire and Youth: the center of the logo is made up of fire and youth. Faithful to her vocation, accompanied by Mary and in communion with the Institute, each FMA becomes a “Living Monument of Thanksgiving”



with the enthusiasm of announcing Christ to all, especially to young people.

This celebration is a heartfelt expression of love and loyalty to our Mother, who, through her wisdom and unwavering devotion, guides us with tireless dedication. It is a moment for all of us to offer a united 'choral thanks' for her leadership and the strength she brings to the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and to our educating communities around the world.

Let us prepare ourselves in the spirit of this Feast, united in prayer and commitment to our mission. The other details of the programme for preparation will be sent to you later.

WISHES AND PRAYERS

Best wishes and prayers to all our students who are appearing for Class X and XII as well as our sisters who are appearing & preparing for their public examinations.

VOICE OF GRATITUDE

-  We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. James Mathew SDB, of the INC province, for leading the retreat for our sisters from February 7th to 14th, 2025. It was truly an enriching experience, as we delved deeper into the Word of God contemplating Jesus with Mother Mary.
-  Heartfelt gratitude to all the sisters of the province for their remarkable contributions in making the Provincial Community Day on February 16th 2025, a truly unforgettable occasion. It was a real warm family gathering, highlighted by a beautiful liturgy, thoughtful gifts, and delightful refreshments shared by all the communities. A special note of gratitude goes to Sr. Annie Thoppil for her committed leadership and tireless efforts in organizing this deeply meaningful celebration.
-  I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Sr. Sherly Joseph and the community for their gracious hospitality extended to the 2nd batch of annual retreatants and team members from February 14th to 16th. My sincere thanks also go to Sr. Sheela Jacob for her outstanding coordination of the Annual Evaluation and Planning days, ensuring everything ran smoothly and efficiently.

Let us implore our Heavenly Father for the speedy recovery of our HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS, offering our fervent PRAYERS and SACRIFICES.

CONDOLENCES AND ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS

-  To dear Sr. Jigi Paul at the demise of her beloved Father Mr. Paul Elayidathumadathil (85) on 04 February 2025.
-  To dear Sr. Namsila D Sangmaat the passing away of her uncle Mr. Madehsor on 8 February 2025.
-  To the Provincial and Confreres of INT Salesian Province at the demise of Rev. Fr. Sebastian Francis (66) on 15 February 2025.
-  To dear Sr. Bridget Kavalam at the passing away of her beloved Father Mr. Joseph Kavalam (95) on 20 February 2025.

- ✚ To dear Sr. Maia Kandankaryil at the demise of her dearest Mother Mrs. Rosamma Philip Kandankaryil (103), on 21 February 2025.
- ✚ To dear Sr. Selvi Pannir Lourde at the demise of her beloved Father Mr. Kulandi Yesu (74) on 23 February 2025.

CONCLUSION

The Annunciation, celebrated on March 25th, marks the pivotal moment in salvation history when the angel Gabriel delivered God's message to the Blessed Virgin Mary. In this sacred encounter, Mary was told she would conceive the Son of God by the Holy Spirit. Her response, "Let it be done to me according to your word," reflects both her deep faith and her humility, revealing the profound trust she placed in God's plan, despite not fully understanding its magnitude.

Mary's unwavering "yes" to God's call marks the beginning of God's divine plan on Earth, making her the first disciple and a model of obedience and courage for all of us. Her example teaches us the importance of embracing God's will, even when it comes unexpectedly or presents us with challenges. The Annunciation calls us to reflect on our own willingness to say "yes" to God's plan, trusting in His guidance and wisdom.

In conclusion, as we prepare for the feast of the Annunciation, let us draw inspiration from the Blessed Virgin Mary's faith, humility, and total surrender to God's will. Her response is not only a historical moment but also an invitation to each of us to embrace the unknown with openness and trust. Just as Mary's "yes" brought forth the Incarnation, so too can our willingness to follow God's call allow His grace to work in our lives. May we, like her, walk with courage and faith, reflecting the sacrifices of Christ for the greater good of the world!

As we accompany the children through the final stretch of their examinations, amidst the fatigue of a year's hard work and the mounting pressure of the season, let us take comfort in knowing that we are not walking this path alone. We are joined by the Holy Family, who also faced life's struggles with unwavering grace and strength. Reflecting on the challenging journey of Mary and Joseph, and especially on the immense suffering and selfless sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are called to draw inspiration from their example. May their resilience and devotion empower us to walk in their footsteps, offering our own sacrifices for the greater good of peace, unity, and healing in our world! In this season of testing and trial, let us remember that our struggles, too, can serve a higher purpose, drawing us closer to God's plan for humanity and strengthening our commitment to His love and compassion.

Good wishes and prayerful greetings to all in the Family.

Affectionately,



Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil
Provincial