



JNM FMA / Pro. Cir. 03

September 2017

My Dearest Sisters,

Affectionate greetings to you from Mazzarello Convent, Kodambakkam!

We have just returned after the rich experience of FMA - PCI 2017, held at Lonavla - Mumbai from 28th to 31st August 2017. There were 28 participants from all the 7 provinces of India including the provincials, delegates, National coordinators and Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil, the Presiding General councillor, Rome. I bring you the affectionate wishes of all the participants. Sr. Lucy Rose enlightened us to prepare ourselves for the significant process of Triennial verification in order to evaluate the authenticity of our existence as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in the Church and in the Society and as **“Living stones in the monument of gratitude to Mary”** in the Salesian family. We were also facilitated to become aware of the present socio - political scenario of our country and the urgency to respond adequately to the current needs of today launching ourselves into ever new prophetic gestures. Truly it was a unique experience of deep reflection, sharing, discernment, joyful family spirit, reciprocal enlightenment and spiritual renewal. Our loving gratitude to Rev. Sr. Lucy Rose, Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas, the Provincial of the hosting Province - Mumbai and to Sr. Rose Ezarath, the President of FMA PCI, for this wonderful experience. During this meet we also discussed at length about the Centenary Celebrations of the Presence of FMA in India and to initiate the three year preparation well ahead of time. In view of this, various committees are formed with the members from each of the Provinces. You will be receiving an exclusive information sheet about it. The minutes of the FMA - PCI will be sent to the communities and I request you to read it as a community to get a glimpse of all the information especially regarding the Triennial evaluation and to feel part of our FMA - INDIA family.

INITIAL PROCLAMATION AND THE SALESIAN MISSION

The seminar on **“Missionary Animation and Formation: Initial Proclamation and the Salesian Mission”** was conducted at Sam Phran in Thailand from August 14 - 20, 2017. The Mission Sectors of FMA & SDB in Rome shared the study on **‘Initial Proclamation’** that was held around the world from 2010 - 2015, and prepared a valuable document on the same. The main purpose of this seminar was to instil a greater awareness and a stronger missionary commitment. Hence, in view of the preparation and celebration of the 140th year of the first missionary expedition, we will be having the missionary animation on the topic **‘Initial Proclamation Today’** in cluster communities of Chennai, Tirupattur and Katpadi zones on 15th, 16th and 17th September 2017 respectively by Sr. Stanislaus Mary Dora who participated in the seminar at Thailand. The details of the meetings will be sent to you in a separate information sheet. I wish you all a whole hearted

participation in the meetings and to take up courageous prophetic actions personally and as a community. I request you also to study the book. 'Initial Proclamation' written by Fr. Alfred Maravilla.

This month I would like to focus on **Initial Proclamation In The New Testament** and share with you some insights regarding the same.

Encounters with Jesus

In the Gospel of John we have John the Baptist who, seeing Jesus passing by, exclaimed with a contagious enthusiasm: "Behold the Lamb of God!" Two of his disciples went to Jesus out of curiosity and asked him, "*Where are you staying?*" Jesus answered - "**Come and see.**" These are the first words of Jesus in the Gospel of John. Jesus allows those who seek Him to find him in an original way. He does not give them a doctrine to be understood, or a commandment to be obeyed; he invites them to share a personal experience with him and to stay with him. Therefore, "*they went and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.*" This '*being with him*' becomes an inexhaustible internal resource for the life and mission of the disciples. One of them, Andrew, after he found the Messiah, leads his brother Peter to him. The next day Philip, after becoming a disciple of Jesus, brings Nathanael to him. The disciples were drawn to Jesus and they transmitted this attraction to others.

Initial Proclamation In St. Paul

St. Paul felt that his mission in life was the promotion of initial proclamation of the Gospel in order to establish new communities. He clearly stated: "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ, thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man's foundation" (*Rom. 15: 19 - 20*). He did it especially through the witness of his life and his preaching. He introduces himself as "*a servant of Jesus Christ*" (*Rom. 1: 1*), a humble and unworthy herald of his Gospel, a fragile earthen vessel holding a great treasure (*2 Cor. 4: 7*). He himself was "*the servant of all, to win over the largest number possible*". (*1 Cor. 9: 19*), "*I have become all things to all, that I might by all means save some.*" (*1 Cor. 9: 22*). To the Corinthians to whom he proclaimed the Gospel *against all odds, opposition and adversity*, he writes: "*we do not intend to lord it over your faith; we work with you for your joy*" (*2 Cor. 1: 24*). He invited his Christian communities to imitate him as he himself imitated Christ (*1 Cor. 11: 1*) and to have "*the same spirit as Christ*" (*Phil 2: 5*). At the heart of the Christian experience of Paul is a concrete event which gave him a sublime vision. He knew Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

His 'knowledge' signifies entering into communion and developing an intimate relationship to such an extent that he himself does just as Jesus would. This relationship allows Christ to shape the destiny of Paul's life. The fruit of this knowledge is a radical and permanent change of values, the way of looking at reality and, above all, the way people see themselves before God.

Initial Proclamation In The Early Christian Community

The Acts of the Apostles presents members of the Christian community who have a simple way of life. They "*found favour with all the people.*" (*Acts 2: 47*) because of their lifestyle: they sold everything they had and pooled the proceeds to distribute it to those in need (*Acts 4: 32-37*). They were living witnesses of the Gospel, good news that changes lives; they did not

present it as a system of doctrine to believe in, or a set of moral rules to be followed. Instead, the Gospel was passed on with human warmth, witness of life and love. It was a community imbued with the Spirit, experienced like a vital principle (*Acts 2, 29 - 47*). It *"had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it was multiplied"* (*Acts 9, 31*).

In fact, the Acts of the Apostles shows that the spread of the early church is permeated with joy, even in the midst of persecution. It is the joy of seeing many people believe in Jesus Christ. Christianity was considered a '*path*', a '*way*' that invites a journey, with many implications for the life of believers. So, initial proclamation is only the beginning of a journey, which proclaims a promise and demands loyalty to a spiritual and communal path.

TEACHERS DAY: 5th SEPTEMBER

All over India, on 5th September the birthday of the second President of India Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is observed as Teacher's Day. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was a renowned educationist, a great philosopher, a diplomat, a great humanist, a well-known scholar and a teacher. Teachers' Day is an occasion and an opportunity to thank the teachers for forming the students, for building their characters, moulding their personalities and shaping their lives to become basically good human persons, and then to pursue their dream to become doctors, engineers, businessmen, farmers, artists, scientists, politicians etc. This day is dedicated to appreciate, to pay tribute, to honour, to respect and above all, to express our gratitude to our teachers for their immense hard work, exemplary life, support and guidance. Let us remember that teaching is not a profession, but a way of life. Teachers are called to educate and encourage, inspire and motivate, guide and accompany, lead and witness.

NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GOOD HEALTH/ VAILANKANNI, AND GIRL CHILD DAY - 8th SEPTEMBER

On this day, the Church solemnizes the first dawn of redemption with the appearance of our Saviour's Mother, Mary. With delight, we rejoice at the arrival of our Messiah and Redeemer that began on the day that Mary, daughter of Joachim and Anne, was born. Born to be the light of the world, on this day her mission to be the universal mediatrix and co-redemptrix officially began. Saint Augustine described the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary as an event of cosmic and historic significance, and an appropriate prelude to the birth of Jesus Christ. *"She is the flower of the field from whom bloomed the precious lily of the valley."* *"Through her birth, the nature inherited from our first parents is changed,"* he said.

The three significant events of the feast of Our Lady of Vailankanni: 1. Our Lady with her infant Son appeared to Hindu boy carrying milk to his customer, under a Banyan tree, near a tank (pond) now called "*Matha Kulam*". 2. The apparition of Our Lady as Mother of Good Health ("*Arokia Matha*") to a crippled boy who was cured miraculously and to a wealthy rich man who was asked to build a chapel. 3. Our Merciful Mother rescued a few Portuguese merchant sailors from a violent storm. They built a chapel and dedicated it to Our Lady on September 8th, to celebrate the feast of her nativity and to mark the date of their safe landing in Vailankanni. The feast of Our Lady of Vailankanni attracts more than a million and a half pilgrims of different faiths from all over the world. Hundreds of miraculous cures are reported every year.

Today we are also celebrating the **Girl Child Day**. The girl child is not only unsafe inside her mother's womb, even after her birth, she has to face various hardships because of gender inequality. Girls, just like their counterparts, deserve true freedom and dignity, equality and equity, love and respect. The celebration of the Girl Child day invites everyone to consider the girl child as a blessing of God. We need to celebrate their birth, their presence and their achievements. Just give a girl child her rights, and she will make everyone proud with her achievements.

THE FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS - 14th SEPTEMBER

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, celebrated every year on September 14, recalls three historical events: the finding of the True Cross by Saint Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine; the dedication of churches built by Constantine on the site of the Holy Sepulcher and Mount Calvary; and the restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the emperor Heraclius II. But in a deeper sense, the feast also celebrates the Holy Cross as the instrument of our salvation. Christianity without the Cross is meaningless: Only by uniting ourselves to Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross can we enter into eternal life. We identify with Christ on the Cross and become co-redeemers, sharing in His cross.

COMMUNICATIONS

RECOLLECT AND RENEW

On August 4th and 5th we had the Tri-monthly Recollection and Animation of the young sisters of INM and INT Provinces at Kodambakkam. They were 30 of them who were vibrant, enthusiastic and desirous to experience and communicate God's love and compassion. They presented creatively and beautifully the life of our Blessed *Sr. Maria Romero*, thanks to the animators of the communities who facilitated their study and reflection. Congrats to our young sisters for their fervour and good will to follow the footsteps of our Salesian Saints. During the course of this year I recommend them to deepen the life of *Sr. Maria Romero* and *Sr. Teresa Valse Pantellini*.

TWIN CELEBRATION OF GOLD AND DIAMOND JUBILEES

The jubilee celebrations at Auxilium College was indeed a magnificent and grace-filled occasion for our **2 diamond** and **5 golden Jubilarians** and for all the Salesian Sisters of various provinces from Chennai, Trichy and Bangalore who had come in great numbers to join the celebration. The well-animated vigil service on the evening of August 18th was a significant prelude to the solemn celebration. The Morning Prayer and the solemn Eucharistic celebration on 19th were the fitting moments to sing the praises of the Lord and to thank Him for His goodness and mercy towards the Jubilarians. Our sincere thanks to most Rev. Dr. Soundararaju SDB, DD., the Bishop of Vellore, for His gracious presence and for enlightening the participants by his homily on the preciousness of the religious call and the recommendations of our Holy Father Pope Francis to the Salesian family at Turin. Everyone enjoyed the colourful symphony of cultural items performed by our students of Polur, Broadway, Auxilium College and Auxilium Home, thanks to the animators, sisters and teachers of these communities for their expressions of affection and gratitude towards the Jubilarians. We also thank the communities of Anmarudai and Arni for animating the liturgical moments, the Morning Prayer and the Holy Eucharist respectively. Above all our special thanks to Sr. Samala Amala and all the sisters of Auxilium College

community for their whole hearted collaboration and innovative organization which made the twin jubilees a memorable celebration.

NOTE OF THANKS

We are grateful to Sr. Antony Raj Christina and the community of St. Mary's Convent, Vellore for hosting the Headmistress' Meet.

We thank Sr. Stanislaus Mary Dora and the community of Kodambakkam for hosting the Juniors' Recollection and Animation, New Animators' Meet and Provincial Team Meet.

We express our gratitude to Sr. Kulandaisamy Lourdu Mary and the community of Sacred Heart Home-Katpadi for hosting the Animators' Meet.

SILVER BELLS CHIME

The **6 Silver Jubilarians** of our province, Sr. Perianayagam John Martina, Sr. Victor Juliana Agnes, Sr. De Rose Amala, Sr. Perianayagam Sagaya Selvi, Sr. Varghese Mary Janet, Sr. Xavier Wency along with other 19 **Silver Jubilarians** of the FMA Indian provinces will participate in the Renewal Programme at SPCI House, Delhi from 24th to 30th September 2017. May this experience which is unique and special in their life be a wonderful opportunity to renew and rejuvenate themselves in their religious commitment.

TRAINING COURSE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATORS: THE GENERAL COUNCILLOR FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Sr. Runita Borja and her team is organizing the Training course for Youth Ministry Coordinators which will be held in Guwahati from 26th to 30th September 2017. Along with me the following sisters will participate in the meeting: Sr. Antony Raj Christina - the Academic Coordinator; Sr. Mudiappaswamy Nirmala - the Youth at Risk Coordinator, Sr. Samala Rayappan Elisa - the Councillor for Social Ministry and Sr. Tharcus Sagaya Mary - the Youth Pastoral Coordinator. We wish them fruitful experience with the youth ministry team and to be rekindled with the fire of the *da mihi animas*.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

I wish to communicate to you about the various courses and seminars our sisters will be participating in various institutions.

- Sr. Chinnappen Gracy Fatima, Sr. Savarimuthu Emelda Mary, Sr. Rayappan Selvi and Sr. Maria Louis Sirumalar will be attending the Certificate course in Catechetics through Arts to be held at The Retreat, Yercaud from 25 - 30th September 2017.
- Sr. Savari Fatima and Sr. Christudoss Esther Rani will be attending the Seminar on Creative Writing from 29th September to 2nd October at Beschi Illam, Dindigul.
- Sr. Chinnanayagam Mary Sheela and Sr. Vedanayagam Usha Catherine Viji will be participating in the E - Evangelization Seminar at Ishvani Kendra - Pune from 16 - 28th October 2017.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - SEPTEMBER 2017

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| 01 - 03 | : Counselling course for Teachers - Yercaud |
| 08 - 10 | : NLP Training Programme – Kodambakkam |
| 10 - 11 | : Economers Meet - Dharmapuri |

- 15 : Initial Proclamation Today, Kodambakkam - Chennai
16 : Initial Proclamation Today, MIC - Tirupattur
17 : Initial Proclamation Today, Auxilium College, Katpadi
25 - 26 : Media Education for Non-Formal Children - Nandambakkam
26 - 30 : Youth Ministry Coordinators' Meet – Guwahati

HEART-FELT CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS

- ✚ To Sr. Pudota Mary Kirubagari at the demise of her sister-in-law Mrs. Alphonsa (63) who passed away on 18th August 2017
- ✚ To our Rector Major and the Salesians at the sudden demise of the Former Vicar General Fr. Adriano Bregolin SDB who passed away on 23rd August 2017.
- ✚ To Sr. Santiagu Amirtha Alocis at the passing away of her brother-in-law (56) who passed away on 3rd September 2017.

A very happy feast of the Nativity of our Blessed Mother Mary, our Lady of Vailankanni, especially to those who keep their name feast. Let us entrust all our sick sisters, parents and dear ones to the maternal care of our Lady of good health! May she keep us all healthy both in mind and body!

Happy Feast!



Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial


**PROGRAMME OF THE PROVINCIAL
SEPTEMBER 2017**


- 03 - Yercaud - PV
- 04 - Erode - PV
- 05 - Journey to Sri Lanka
- 06 - Negombo - PV
- 07 - Nochchiyagama - PV
- 08 - Batticaloa - PV
- 09 - Jaffna - PV
- 10 - 11 - Urampirai - PV
- 12 - Return Journey to Chennai
- 13 - 14 - Preparation for Youth Ministry Meet
- 15 - Initial Proclamation Today, Kodambakkam
- 16 - 19 - Provincial Office
- 20 - 22 - Kodambakkam - PV
- 23 - 24 - Provincial Council
- 25 - Journey to Guwahati
- 26 - 30 - Youth Ministry Meet - Guwahati