



JNM FMA / Pro. Cir. 11

May 2018

Viva Gesù!

My Dearest Sisters,

Warm and affectionate greetings to you from the Provincial House, Kodambakkam!

I wish you all a very Happy Feast of St. Joseph the Worker!

On this significant feast day, I would like to share a few reflections on Chapter VII of **“Initial Proclamation Today”** by Alfred Maravilla (Don Bosco’s letter from Rome -1884).

Don Bosco’s immense work and his intimate union with God earned him great esteem of Popes, great personalities and Saints. St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta affirmed: *“Don Bosco had a great heart for the poor. He saw Jesus in them. He knew that what he was doing for the poor youngsters, he was doing for Jesus.”* It is Don Bosco’s unconditional love and faith-filled cooperation with grace that made him a prophetic phenomenon in the world. He knew well to translate his ecstasy of love into action: An ecstasy of solidarity with the poor and those most in need; An ecstasy of faith-filled service; An ecstasy of loving care finding expression in a vast work of education, evangelization and development of the young.

What is evident is that it is love that motivates the whole content of this letter.

The Letter from Rome of 1884 in the Light of **“Initial Proclamation”** gives ‘love’ as the magic formula for success. With love and charity and with loving Salesian presence we make youngsters know that they are loved.

In my dream I was in the playground with the boys, at that moment the other past pupil who had a white beard came up to me and said, "By being loved in the things they like, through taking part in their youthful interests, they are led to see love in those things which they find less attractive, such as discipline, study and self-denial, and so learn to do these things too with love." Then my friend Joseph Buzzetti continued: "In the old days at the Oratory, were you not always among the boys, especially during recreation? Do you remember those wonderful years? They were a foretaste of heaven, a period of which we have fond memories, because then love was the rule and we had no secrets from you."

The focus is on something very demanding and at the same time worth reflecting on: *“Why don’t your Salesians follow the example you gave?”* Following the example of Don Bosco requires a constant return to Don Bosco, to observe him in his intimacy with Jesus and in his ecstasy of action with the young. It means to work hard, to come alive today as builders of confidence among the young in the footsteps of Don Bosco.

Once again, I was in the play-ground with my boys and the same past pupil Joseph Buzzetti stood before me. I began to question him. "I'll let my Salesians know what you have told me, but what

should I say to the boys of the Oratory?" "Tell them not to grumble because it freezes the heart. But especially, tell them to live in the holy grace of God. If you are not at peace with God, you cannot be at peace with yourself, nor with others."

This letter makes us reflect the blossoming of sanctity in our Salesian presence and the way to accompany this flowering of sanctity among the young. Prayer and firm resolutions have to be supported with deeds. In every boy, in every girl and in every person, who are part of our educational ambient, the seed of sanctity is alive and it is our task to nurture it with reason, religion and loving kindness, the key elements of Don Bosco's pedagogy.

"Our Lady, Help of Christians, will be the Foundress and perpetual Protectress of our works. We owe many great debts of gratitude to Mary, Help of Christians. What we are and what we have done, we owe to her." We have to bask in the Love of Jesus Christ to generate life in abundance. Acknowledging the pedagogical importance of this dream which underlines the values of the indispensable educative environment which fosters Initial Proclamation, we need to find ways and means to outline an appropriate methodology, a methodology which has its solid basis in the love of Jesus Christ, translated into ways of affection between young people and superiors.

We the FMA, missionaries of hope and joy, need to go out and fascinate more people to know and fall in love with Jesus Christ and reach out to those in the peripheries. With a very personalized invitation to follow Him and a loving command "Go Proclaim the Good News", Jesus wants us to be vibrant and active missionary disciples, to carry out the very same mission the Father has entrusted to Him. Led by the Holy Spirit we will witness to the Father's love to all whom we meet on life's journey.

SIGNIFICANT FEASTS OF THE MONTH

1st May : May Day / Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

The feast of St. Joseph the Worker was established by Pope Pius XII in 1955 to sanctify human labour and to offer all the workers a model and a protector. By the daily honest labour in his shop, St. Joseph provided for the necessities of Mary, his spouse and Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God and thus became an inspiring role model for labourers. This feast celebrates the dignity and value of human labour, demands the right to work, and just payment. Let us pray that the rights and dignity of workers be respected at all levels.

6th May : Feast of St. Dominic Savio

On 6 May we celebrate the feast of the little saint Dominic Savio. While still a boy he decided to be pure and avoid anything that would distance him from the Lord. At the age of 12 he became a spiritual son of St. John Bosco and at 15 he already attained the heights of sanctity as he winged his flight towards the Father's house. Under the personal direction of this great Salesian saint, Dominic became a tabernacle for the Lord and a model and example of God's love for all the young people. With his life style he was an apostle and missionary of Jesus. *"Like Saint Dominic Savio, be missionaries of good example, good words, good action at home, with neighbours and colleagues at work. At every age we can and we must bear witness to Christ! Commitment to bear witness is permanent and daily"* (His Holiness Pope John Paul II, 1997).

10th May : Ascension of the Lord

The lifting up of Jesus on the Cross signifies and announces His lifting up into heaven by his Ascension. Christ's Ascension marks the definitive entrance of Jesus' humanity into God's heavenly

domain, whence He will come again (cf. Acts 1:11); this humanity in the meantime is hidden from the eyes of men and women (cf. Col 3:3). Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, precedes us into the Father's glorious Kingdom so that we, the members of his Body, may live in the hope of being with him forever. Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

9th and 13th May : Birthday and Feast Day of St. Mary Domenica Mazzarello

The birthday and the feast day of St. Mary Mazzarello invite each of us to follow her life of daily holiness (Art.48) in expressing our love for God and one another. On these happy days, I invite you to recall the words of Pope Pius XI (1936) who proclaimed Mother Mazzarello's heroic virtues: *"Here is a woman of simplicity, extreme simplicity - a simplicity as pure as that of the simple elements, as simple and unmixed as gold without alloy!"* The characteristic mark of St. Mary Mazzarello is her humility, profound consciousness and continual union with God, tender love for Mother Mary, simplicity of life, and hard work. She was but a peasant girl, a village seamstress, a great person endowed with remarkable virtues of genuine charity, profound faith, and unending joy". We, her daughters are called to live like her the holiness of daily life.

20th May : Pentecost Sunday

Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the beginning of their earthly ministry to make disciples of all nations. On the day of Pentecost Christ's Passover is fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit who is manifested, given, and communicated as a divine person: of his fullness, Christ, the Lord, pours out the Spirit in abundance. Let us implore the Holy Spirit to fill our lives with His fruits and gifts.

21st May : Feast of Mary as 'Mother of the Church'

Pope Francis, whose devotion to Mary is well-known, has established a new feast for Mary as the *"Mother of the Church."* to be celebrated on the Monday after Pentecost. The decree observes that the veneration of Mary as Mother of the Church has ancient roots in Catholic tradition, reaching back to St. Augustine and St. Leo the Great. The title is rooted in New Testament accounts about Mary. *"She became the tender Mother of the Church which Christ begot on the cross, ... Christ, in turn, in the beloved disciple, chose all disciples as ministers of his love towards his Mother, entrusting her to them so that they might welcome her with filial affection."*

In 1964, at the close of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), Blessed Pope Paul VI formally declared Mary as the *"Mother of the Church,"* and invited Catholics to invoke Mary's help under this title. During the jubilee year of 1975, the Vatican approved a special Mass, called a *"votive Mass,"* for Mary under the title of *Beata Maria Ecclesiae Matre, or "Blessed Mary Mother of the Church,"* and also approved inserting this title into various prayers in honor of Mary. With the new decree, devotion to Mary as Mother of the Church now becomes an approved feast for the universal Church.

The decree says: *"Having attentively considered how greatly the promotion of this devotion might encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety, Pope Francis has decreed that the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, should be inscribed in the Roman Calendar on the Monday after Pentecost and be now celebrated every year. This celebration will help us to remember that growth in the Christian life must be anchored to the Mystery of the*

Cross, to the oblation of Christ in the Eucharistic Banquet and to the Mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the Redeemed, the Virgin who makes her offering to God.”

24th May : Feast of Mary Help of Christians

The tradition of celebrating the Feast of Mary Help of Christians on May 24 goes back to 1571, when the whole of Christendom was saved by Mary Help of Christians when Catholics throughout Europe prayed the Rosary: The great battle of Lepanto (*October 7th, 1571*). In 1573 *Pope Pius V* instituted the feast in thanksgiving for the decisive victory of Christianity over Islamism. Through the intercession of Mary Help of Christians, Vienna was freed from the Turks. On 24 May 1814, Pius VII returned to Rome after the captivity of Napoleon in Naples. Twelve months later, the Pope decreed that the feast of Mary Help of Christians, be kept on this significant day every year.

For us Salesians, this feast is considered to have a very special significance. On June 9, 1868, St. John Bosco dedicated the mother church of his congregation at Turin (Italy) to Our Lady Help of Christians. He founded the Congregation of the *Daughters of Mary Help of Christians* as a living monument of his gratitude to Mary Help of Christians. This feast reminds us of our responsibility to prolong Don Bosco’s gratitude to Mary Help of Christians all through our lives. Congratulations to all the Sisters who pronounced their first ‘*Yes*’ on this great day.

27th May : Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday is a Christian feast dedicated to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the essence of God expressing itself in three persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the spirit of God. It is one of the few Christian feasts that celebrate a doctrine, not an event. This feast was introduced in the ninth century by Pope John XXII exhorting us to praise and adore the thrice-holy God. Let the prayer of St. Francis Xavier to the Holy Trinity become our own: *“Most Holy Trinity, who live in me, I praise You, I worship You, I adore You and I love You.”*

31st May : Feast of the Visitation

Today’s feast of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth invites us to a deeply personal moment in the life of Mary (*Luke 1:39-56*). The Precursor and the Lord are both hidden from each other. Yet even before the two women embrace, John leaped for joy in his mother's womb, having recognized the presence of the Lord and Messiah in the womb of Mary. The story of the Visitation teaches us an important lesson: when Christ is growing inside of us, we will be led to people, places and situations that we never dreamed of. These two women (Mary and Elizabeth) show us that it is possible to move beyond our own little personal agendas and engage in authentic ministry of God.

COMMUNICATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS AND PRAYERFUL WISHES

First Profession

This year we have six novices making their first profession - four in Manikandam - Tiruchy, and two in Negombo - Sri Lanka.

Sr. Adaikalam Rekha	Manikandam - Tiruchy	24 May
Sr. Andrew Roseline	Manikandam - Tiruchy	24 May
Sr. Anthony Cruz Mathalen Mary	Manikandam - Tiruchy	24 May
Sr. Thirukumaran Tamil Selvi	Manikandam - Tiruchy	24 May
Sr. Arulnesan Mariya Jenatnayaki	Negombo - Sri Lanka	31 May
Sr. Emmanuvel Camalin Riyalini	Negombo - Sri Lanka	31 May

At this juncture, I would like to express my deep sentiments of gratitude to Sr. Cruz Micheal and Sr. Calabig Cynthiya, the Novice Mistresses, for having accompanied and prepared our novices to take this important step in their life. Our heartfelt thanks and appreciations are to both the provinces of Trichy and Philippines.

We shall accompany our novices more closely these days with our prayers as they are nearing the day of their first profession.

Perpetual Vows

We rejoice in the Lord and praise Him for the gift of our four Sisters, who will be making their final commitment to the Lord in the service of the young people on May 26, 2018, at the Assumption Cathedral, Vellore.

Sr. Gabriel Mariammal
Sr. Mariadoss Bridget

Sr. Lourdusamy Jebamani,
Sr. Savari Fathima

Let us accompany them with our loving prayers so that they progress steadily in their journey 'to make His Word their life.'

I take this opportunity to thank Sr. Arockiasamy Maria Kalyani who is accompanying them during their month-long preparation to the final commitment, and Sr. Perianayagam Martina and the community at Yellagiri Hills for their generous hospitality in accommodating our young Sisters in their home. Special thanks to the Animators of the communities who lovingly accompanied them during their period of temporary vows.

Entry into Novitiate

With joy, we congratulate our seven postulants Reshma, Sudha Violet, Gracy Marthal, Josephine, Sorna Rani, Mary Theresa and Ayesha Bindhu who will be entering into the Novitiate at Manikandam - Tiruchy. And the two Sri Lankan postulants Kaushalya, and Jereda who will be entering into the Novitiate at Canlubang-Philippines on the 23 May. We assure them of our prayerful support to continue their formative journey.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW PROVINCIALS

Congratulations and best wishes to the new Provincials of Guwahati and Shillong SDB Provinces, Fr. Januarius Sangma and Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot who will be taking up the responsibility as Provincials on 23 and 24 May 2018 respectively. We assure them of our prayerful wishes as they take up this important responsibility of leading the Province.

SUMMER JUNIORS' MEET

Our Sisters with temporary vows will be having the renewal course from May 13 to 21, 2018, at Yercaud. They are expected to reach the house by 4.00p.m. on May 13. They will make their recollection on May 22 and renewal of vows on May 23, in Yercaud itself. They will return to their communities on the same day and reach Auxilium College, Gandhi Nagar, Vellore by 6.00 pm on May 25, 2018.

SINCERE THANKS

My heartfelt thanks to Sr. Chinnappen Mano Ranjitham and the community of Yercaud, Sr. Poobalarayan Nirmala, and the community of Wellington for hosting the retreat for the Animators and the Sisters, and for creating a conducive atmosphere for prayer and reflection. A sincere word of appreciation and gratitude to dear Sr. Fernando Mary Ann for organizing and helping the three young Sisters of Sri Lanka to make their annual retreat with the same intensity and timetable as the other retreats.

My sincere thanks to Sr. Stanislaus Mary Dora and the Sisters of Kodambakkam for hosting the Economers' meet.

PRAYERFUL CONDOLENCES

Our heartfelt condolences and prayers to

- Sr. Santiagu Amirtha Alocis at the loss of her dear father Mr.Santiagu (74) on April 23, 2018.
- Sr. Panekezhathan Annie at the passing away of her brother-in-law Mr. Joseph (83) on April 8, 2018.
- To Sr. Rita Dora Thomas and the Sisters of INB at the demise of Sr. Alexandra Dias (86), who went to her eternal reward on April 16, 2018.

May their souls rest in peace!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - MAY 2018

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| 03 - 10 | - | Annual retreat for Sisters, Yercaud |
| 10 | - | Animation for Retreatants, Yercaud
(Those who made retreat in December 2017 are requested to join this) |
| 07 - 13 | - | Vocation Camp, Auxilium Home, Katpadi |
| 13 - 23 | - | Juniors' Summer Meet and Renewal of Vows |
| 16 - 23 | - | Annual Retreat for Novices & II Novitiate Sisters, Tiruchy |
| 24 | - | First Profession, Manikandam - Tiruchy |
| 26 | - | Perpetual Vows, Assumption Cathedral, Vellore |
| 30 | - | Renewal of Vows, Negombo, Sri Lanka |
| 31 | - | First Profession, Negombo, Sri Lanka |

We are in the season of transfers, a wonderful occasion to practice the vow of obedience in a special way. As our Constitutions says, "Through the vow of obedience made with faith and love the Daughter of Mary Help of Christians publicly commits herself to submit to her lawful Superiors as "God's representatives"... (art.32). Let us assume more and more the attitude of "I'll go" making *Mary's fiat our own*. The Sisters who are transferred are requested to be in their respective communities by 28th May.

I wish you a very happy feast of Mary Help of Christians! May Mary our mother and teacher continue to walk with us on our journey towards holiness!

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial



Happy Feast



**PROGRAMME OF THE PROVINCIAL
MAY 2018**



- 01 - 02 - Provincial Office**
- 03 - 10 - Annual Retreat IV and Animation, Yercaud**
- 11 - Meeting the II Novitiate Sisters, Yellagiri Hills**
- 12 - 13 - Vocation Camp, Katpadi**
- 22 - 23 - Recollection and renewals, Yercaud**
- 24 - First Profession, Tiruchy**
- 25 - Provincial Council, Sacred Heart Home**
- 26 - Perpetual Profession, Vellore**
- 27 - 29 - Major Superiors' Meet, SRM, Chennai**
- 30 - 31 - Renewals and First Profession, Negombo - Sri Lanka**