



JNM FMA / Pro. Cir. 21

March 2019

Viva Gesù!

My dearest Sisters,

“The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God”. (Rom 8:19).

The dawning of the month of March invites us to look forward to the grace-filled season of Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, 6 March. The Biblical verse chosen by Our Holy Father Pope Francis for this year’s Lenten season is: ***“The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God”*** (Rom 8:19). Quoting these words of St. Paul to the Romans, the Pope exhorts us that the period before Easter must be a time to “welcome Christ’s victory over sin and death into our own lives”, and attract “its transforming power to all creation”. Pointing out that it is a call which involves the whole of creation, the Pope said, “The journey to Easter demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness”. May our Lent this year be a journey along this same path, bringing the hope of Christ also to creation, so that it may be “set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). Let us leave behind our selfishness and self-absorption and turn to Jesus’ Pasch. Let us stand beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing our spiritual and material goods with them. In this way, by concretely welcoming Christ’s victory over sin and death into our lives, we will also radiate its transforming power to all creation.

In this our Lenten journey of Repentance, Conversion and Renewal, let us continue to walk toward the path of holiness **IN COMMUNITY and IN CONSTANT PRAYER.**

IN COMMUNITY: We are called to bear witness to an ideal of sisterly communion among us, with the sentiments of mutual acceptance, bearing with the limitations and appreciating the qualities and gifts of each person, according to Jesus’ teaching (Cf. Pope Francis to the FMA, 2014). When we live apart from others, it is very difficult to fight against our evil desires, the snares and temptations of the devil and the selfishness of the world. We are bombarded by so many enticements and we can grow too isolated, lose our sense of reality and inner clarity, and easily give way to sin. The Supreme Pontiff says that growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others. We see this in some holy communities. From time to time, the Church has canonized entire communities that lived the Gospel heroically or offered to God the lives of all their members. St. John of the Cross told one of his followers that he is living with others in order to be fashioned and tried.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consacrata*, St. John Paul II says that community must create a God-enlightened space in which to experience the hidden presence of the Risen Lord every day. The Church’s Magisterium tells us that sharing the Word and celebrating the

Eucharist together fosters fraternity and makes us a holy and missionary community. Article 40 of our Constitutions invites us to make the Eucharist the centre of our day, the moment on which community life is built and renewed and that nourishing ourselves at the table of his Word and Body, we become like him 'bread' for our sisters and brothers. Holiness consists in living the common life, in the religious community, paying attention to small, everyday things. This was true of the holy community formed by Jesus, Mary and Joseph which reflected in an exemplary way the beauty of the Trinitarian Communion. It was also true of the life that Jesus shared with his disciples and with ordinary people. The Roman Pontiff presents a few examples from the life of Jesus who asked his disciples to pay attention to details. Communities that cherish the little details of love and care for one another, frequently use the keywords: 'please' 'thank you' and 'sorry'; the right words spoken at the right time, daily, protect and nurture love (Cf. GE 140 - 146).

As FMAs we are called to make our community a place of personal renewal, a community restructured in the light of the Gospel and with the style of relationships characteristic of Salesian Spirituality lived in the feminine style. We need to live just as our first Sisters did in Mornese where the Spiritual climate fostered the growth of persons, balancing attention to their needs with making them responsible for the mission (Cf. *Rooted in the Covenant*, 78). ***Dear Sisters, are we capable of paying attention to little details in everyday life in the community? As in Mornese, do we create spiritual climate that fosters personal growth and growth in the mission?***

IN CONSTANT PRAYER: Holiness consists of a habitual openness to the transcendent, expressed in prayer and adoration. The saints are distinguished by a spirit of prayer and a need for communion with God. St. John of the Cross in his '*Degrees of Perfection*' tells us to remain always in the presence of God, real or imaginary, insofar as it is permitted by our works. In the end, our desire for God will surely find expression in our daily lives as we try to be continuous in prayer, and we do not leave it even in the midst of physical activities; whether we eat, drink, talk with others, or do anything, always we must go to God and attach our hearts to him. Mother Mazzarello asked Sr. Angela Denegri who was studying French that while studying the languages of this world, to study also the language of the soul with God who will teach her the science of becoming holy which is the only true science (Cf. L.22).

Pope Francis reiterates that trust-filled prayer is a response of a heart open to encountering God face to face where all is peaceful and the quiet voice of the Lord can be heard in the midst of silence. In that silence and in the light of the Spirit, we can discern the paths of holiness to which the Lord is calling us. St. Bernard of Clairvaux rightly said that if gazing at the face of Christ, we feel unable to let ourselves be healed and transformed, then we must enter into the Lord's heart, into his wounds, for that is the abode of divine mercy. The Roman Pontiff urges us to think of our own history when we pray, and there, we will find much mercy. This will also increase our awareness that the Lord is ever mindful of us; he never forgets us. So it makes sense to ask him to shed His light on the smallest details of our life for he sees them all. Our Great Pastor, Pope Francis, quoting the *Final Declaration of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India (2009)* tells us that devotion to the Word of God is not simply one of many devotions which are beautiful but somewhat optional. It goes to the very heart and identity of the Christian life. The Word has the power to transform lives (Cf. GE 147-157). Meeting Jesus in the Scriptures leads us to the Eucharist. The source and culmination of our prayer is the Eucharist, the paschal sacrifice, from which the whole life of the Church springs (*FMA Constitutions Art.40*). ***Let us then remember dear Sisters, that when we receive him in Holy Communion daily, we renew our covenant with him and***

allow him to carry out ever more fully his work of transforming our lives. Through our prayer and meditation, let us allow ourselves to be permeated by the power of the Holy Spirit who leads us gradually to put on Christ, strengthens sisterly communion and renews apostolic zeal.

FEASTS OF THE MONTH

06	-	Ash Wednesday
08	-	International Women's Day
19	-	Feast of St. Joseph
25	-	Annunciation of the Lord

AIL IN THE FAMILY

FORMATION SECTOR MEET

It was a special moment of grace for our Province and we were indeed very privileged to have been blessed with the gracious presence of Rev. Sr. Reboso Maria Nieves, the General Councillor for Formation and her Team who brought about renewed enthusiasm in our Salesian vocation as FMA. Their encounters with the Provincial Councillors, Animators, and Formators from February 23 to 26 at Kodambakkam were indeed days of great enlightenment. The main aim of this encounter had been to transmit the “Guidelines for the Formation Period of Temporary Vows”, as this period is fundamental for the progressive building of the identity of the Daughter of Mary Help of Christians. The Biblical text of Mary at Cana (Jn. 2: 1-11) was the inspiring icon for this great mission. The creative and inspiring scene of the six jars of the wedding feast at Cana in the conference hall was an irresistible invitation to dwell in the climate of joy and to experience the accompaniment of Mary.

At the inaugural meeting, the document “Guidelines for the Formation Period of Temporary Vows” was received by 36 Sisters from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka from Rev. Sr. Maria Nieves Reboso, in a symbolic gesture of taking upon ourselves the accompaniment of our young Sisters with love and commitment. Along with the presentation of the content, the participants enjoyed an experiential moment of the wedding feast at Cana through the *Lectio Divina*, the enriching sharing of one another in the group, and the recreation ‘Cultural Fiesta’. We are indeed very grateful to dear Sr. Reboso Nieves, the General Councillor for Formation and her team, Sr. Fisichella Maria and Sr. Miranda Anelfreda, for transmitting the contents of the new document and all the other guidelines regarding the ongoing formation so effectively and creatively.

We also thank Sr. Reboso Nieves and her team for their encounter with the Aspirants and the Postulants at Sacred Heart Home Katpadi on 27 February. It had been a time of reawakening of the awareness in the young candidates that formation is a process in which the Holy Spirit plays the central role in the formation of each person so that they may grow into the full stature of Christ.

Auxilium College had the privilege of getting the special blessings from the General Councillor for Formation as she and her team members were greeted affectionately and welcomed warmly into its portals on the same day. Sr. Nieves, Sr. Maria and Sr. Anelfreda were highly excited and very much thrilled to see such a large number of young girls on the campus.

Heartfelt thanks to Rev. Fr. Kanaga Maria Arockiam SDB, the General Councilor for South Asia, who was gracious enough to celebrate the inaugural Holy Eucharist on the 23 February

at Kodambakkam. He exhorted us to take Mary, the formator of Jesus, as our own model in the process of accompanying the young Sisters in their vocational growth and maturity.

Sincere appreciation to Sr. Stanislaus Mary Dora and the Community of Kodambakkam for the warm welcome and all the hard work that went into the excellent hospitality they offered to our dear Sisters during these days. Congratulations to our dear Sr. Kanickaraj Tamizharasi, the Formation Coordinator of our Province and Sr. Samala Rayappan Elisa, the Councillor for Formative programmes for their efficient organization and effective coordination of the interaction between the Formation Team and the Province. A sincere word of appreciation to all the community animators who collaborated in the celebration of the liturgical and other moments of each day significantly, creatively and with and great commitment!

Let us continue to support Rev. Sr. Rebozo Maria Nieves and her team with our prayers as they will be animating our young Sisters on 4 and 5 March and the Novices on 6 March at Manikandam, Tiruchy and further on during the days ahead as they carry on with the same mission of animation in other Indian Provinces. *Mille Grazie e Tanti Auguri!*

SINCERE THANKS

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr. Stanislaus Mary Dora and the Community of Kodambakkam for hosting the VIDES Meet on 1 February, Tri-monthly recollection for Juniors and Seniors of Chennai Zone on 2 February. Congratulations to Sr. Francis Amala, the VIDES Coordinator, for her efficient coordination of members.
- ✚ Our gratitude to the communities of Tirupattur, Sacred Heart Home, Yercaud, and Vavuniya, Sri Lanka for providing a conducive climate for prayer and reflection during the Tri-monthly recollection for seniors on August 3, 8 and 9, and the community of Negombo for organizing Recollection and Animation for Juniors in Sri Lanka on 8 and 9 February.
- ✚ Thanks a lot, to Sr. Pathi Margaret and the community of Mannivakkam for the 'Training for the Child Care Institutions and Boardings at Mannivakkam on 9 and 10 February 2019.

May God bless and reward your generous availability!

WORLD FEAST OF GRATITUDE 2019

Sr. Cazzuola Chiara, Vicar General has sent a letter to the whole Institute officially announcing the place and theme of the World Feast of Gratitude 2019, which will be celebrated on April 26, 2019, in Bellflower, California, in the Province of Mary Immaculate (SUO). "*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free*" (by the poet Emma Lazarus), is the theme proposed to us by the hosting Province and is taken from the poem placed at the base of the Statue of Liberty, a symbol of the people of the United States. The slogan chosen for the Feast of Gratitude is: "**I Entrust Them to You**". As we await the detailed information about this great event, I recommend you to read and assimilate the material and to pray the special prayer for our Superior General from 26 March to 26 April.

CONVOCATION OF GENERAL CHAPTER XXIV

I am glad to communicate to you the good news that our beloved Mother General Yvonne Reungoat, in her circular No.985 that is just posted on 27 February, has officially convoked the General Chapter XXIV, according to Article 138 of the Constitutions. It will begin in Rome at the Generalate on September 18, 2020. She has appointed Sr. Chiara Cazzuola as the moderator of the Chapter. The theme is, "*Do whatever He tells you*" (Jn 2: 5),

Generative communities of life in the heart of modernity". The circular of our Mother General and the prayer to Mary for the forthcoming General Chapter will be sent to you later.

DAY OF PROMISE AND THANKSGIVING

On 9 March 2019, nearly 40 members of the "In Christo Movement" and 25 members of "Inter-religious Movement" will be making their promise at Mannivakkam in the Presence of Rt.Rev.Anthonisamy Neethinathan DD, the Bishop of Chingleput. It is also a day of thanksgiving for all that the Lord has done for and through the SEARCH Ashram. Let us join the community of Mannivakkam to glorify the Lord for the wonders He is doing through this Centre that gives a unique contribution to the Salesian Spirituality in the Indian context.

HEARTY WELCOME

We are happy to welcome our dear Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil, the Visiting Councillor, to our motherland who has begun the Canonical Visit in Kolkata Province on 24 February 2019. We accompany her and the Province of Kolkata with our prayers.

BEST WISHES

Prayerful wishes to all our students of Std. X (1474), Std. XI (1313) and Std. XII (1376), who are appearing this year for the Board Examinations. Let us offer our prayers and loving attention towards them that they may be blessed with sound health, high motivation and a good memory.

HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES

Our loving prayers and sincere condolences to all those who lost their dear ones:

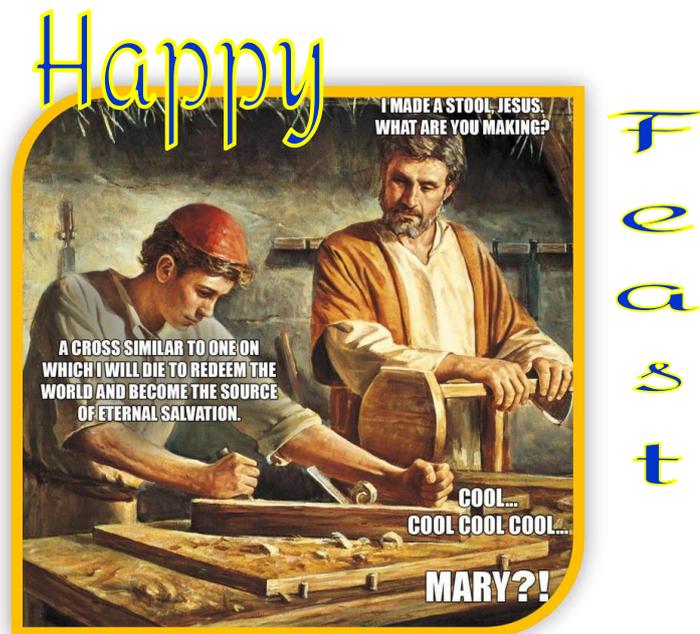
- To Sr. David Elizabeth at the passing away of her sister Mrs. Chinnama (92) on 1 February.
- To Sr. Fernando Mary Ann at the demise of her brother Mr. Joseph Ravindran (67) on 9 February.
- To Sr. Kanikairaj Shermila who lost her brother Mr. Paul Packianathan (54) on 21 February.
- To Sr. Thomas Rita Dora and the Sisters of Mumbai Province at the demise of Sr.Teresina Barreto (87) on 5 February 2019.
- To Fr. Nirmol Gomes and the confreres of Kolkata Province at the demise of Bro.Mathew Thaiparambil (78), founder, Director of Don Bosco Self-Employment and Research Institute (DBSERI) who passed away on 1 February
- To Fr. K. M. Jose and the confreres of Chennai Province at the demise of Fr. Enchil Kuriakose SDB (77) on 20 February.
- To the Superior General and Sisters of SMA Congregation at the death of Sr. Mercy (70) who passed away on 3 February 2019.
- To the Provincial and Sisters of SMI Congregation at the death of Sr. Infanta Fernando on 12 February 2019.

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARCH 2019

- 04 - 05 : Formation Team meet with Juniors, Manikandam, Tiruchy
- 06 : Formation Team meet with Novices, Manikandam, Tiruchy
- 08 : Women's Day celebrations
- 09 : Workers Retreat, Ennore, Polur

On 19 March together with the entire Catholic Church, we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph, the Husband of Mary. St. Joseph appears as a strong and courageous man, yet in his heart, we see great tenderness, which is not the virtue of the weak but rather a sign of the strength of the spirit and a capacity for concern, for compassion, for genuine openness to others, for love. Let us strive to assimilate his virtues and beseech his help to seek God's will and the grace to accompany others in silence. He is the Patron of the Universal Church, unborn children, fathers, workers, virgins, travellers, immigrants, a happy death, and above all as the patron of our Institute given to us by Don Bosco, our father and founder. Let us invoke his intercession for the various needs of our Province and communities and in particular for the communities of Arni and Mosavadi, for all our Sisters and dear ones who bear the name of this most powerful saint.

I am happy to wish all of you a very Fervent Feast of St. Joseph and a Holy Season of Lent!



Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**

ITINERARY OF THE PROVINCIAL

MARCH 2019

- 01 - Provincial Office**
- 02 - Recollection, Kodambakkam**
- 03 - Journey to Tiruchy**
- 04 - 05 - Formation Sector Meet with Juniors, Tiruchy**
- 06 - Formation Sector Meet with Novices, Tiruchy**
- 07 - 08 - Provincial Office**
- 09 - Mannivakkam**
- 10 - 11 - Provincial Office**
- 12 - 28 - Philippines & Sri Lanka - Provincial Visit**
- 29 - 30 - Provincial Council, Kodambakkam**
- 31 - Journey to Wellington**

April

- 01 - 08 - Animators' Retreat, Wellington**
- 08 - 09 - Animation for Animators, Wellington**

