

INM FMA / Pro. Cir. 33

March 2020

Viva Gesù!

*"Young men and maidens together, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord"
(Ps. 148:12-13)*

My Dearest Sisters,

Affectionate greetings to you from Kodambakkam!

We have just begun the Lenten Journey on 26 February, the Ash Wednesday. Holy Father Pope Francis in his Lenten message 2020 on the theme: "***We implore you on behalf of Christ: Be reconciled to God***", a quote from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, invites all of us to embrace the paschal mystery as the basis for our conversion, hearing God's call to be reconciled to Himself and to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Let us be grateful that the Lord once again offers us a favourable time for our conversion and a new opportunity to awaken in us an ardent love for Jesus in order to prepare ourselves to celebrate with renewed hearts the great mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the cornerstone of our personal and communal Christian life.

Let us continue to traverse along the path indicated by our Holy Father Pope Francis as we reflect on Chapter Six of Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation ***Christus Vivit*** - "**Young people with roots**". He recommends the young people to take great care to **build their future with deep roots**, because from the roots comes the strength that makes them grow, flourish and bear fruit. Roots are not anchors chaining us to the past and preventing us from facing the present and creating something new, rather they are the fixed point from which we can grow and meet new challenges. As a person concerned with the real good of the young people, Pope Francis laments that often they are manipulated by various false ideologies that attract them to a shallow way of living uprooted from the rich human and spiritual inheritances of the preceding generations. The cult of youth and youthful body promoted today is also a part of their tactics.

In this regard, the Pope places before the youth instances of **real beauty** which goes unrecognized in the culture of a shallow life that confines beauty with appearances. He exhorts, "*Dear young friends, do not let them exploit your youth to promote a shallow life that confuses beauty with appearances. Realize that there is beauty in the labourer who returns home grimy and unkempt...there is extraordinary beauty in the fellowship of a family at table...there is also a beauty, unrelated to appearances or fashionable dress, in all those men and women who pursue their personal vocation with love, in selfless service of community or nation...*" (CV183).

The successor of Peter insists that they need to preserve their cultural, religious and social identity overcoming the tendency to "homogenize" caused by the globalization that brings with it forms of cultural colonization.

He speaks to the young people regarding their relationship with the elderly highlighting the value of **intergenerational relationships**. When there is a harmonious relationship between the young and the elderly "a collective memory is present in communities, as each generation takes up the teachings of its predecessors and in turn, bequeaths a legacy to its successors" (CV 192).

The young people must **look at the elderly with respect**, remain close to them and be wise enough to learn from their wisdom gained through the long experiences of the past. They need to pay more attention to the memory of the past from which many gifts are transmitted to them by their parents, grandparents and the cultural experience of the society in which they live. **In the life of our Sainly founders, we see how they profited from the wisdom of the elders: Johnny Bosco** treasured the spiritual and material help offered to him by Fr.Colosso of Chieri and the wise advice of his own mother Mamma Margherita. **Maria Domenica Mazzarello** was very grateful for the wise guidance of her father Joseph particularly during the delicate years of her adolescence, which made her exclaim, “How much I owe my father for his loving care! Whatever good exists in me comes from my father who was really a saint...How much his silent handling of tricky situations contributed to my character formation. For this, I am ever grateful to him”. *How do we express gratitude to our parents and elders in a practical way? Are we capable of valuing the experiences of the elderly Sisters in our communities who are the special presence of fidelity and offering? (Ref. Cons.Art. 59).*

On the other side, Pope points out to the elders of the importance of **helping young people** to discover the living richness of the past, to treasure its memory and to make use of it for their growth. They have the responsibility to pass on to the younger generation the core messages of love, joy in giving and serenity of mind. Mother Mazzarello through her letters encourages the Sisters to practice the virtues of humility, charity, cheerfulness and obedience. One such example is the letter to the Sisters of the house of Saint Cyr-Sur-Mer (France), in which she gently but firmly, instructs them to overcome the community problem of not being able to accept their newly assigned Animator, and exhorts them to live the commitments they have assumed, with a sense of responsibility (Ref. Letter of MM No.49). *What values do we transmit to our young generations and how do we accompany them with loving-kindness and firmness?*

Pope Francis envisions the elders as “*a permanent choir of a great spiritual sanctuary, where prayers of supplication and songs of praise support the larger community that works and struggles in the field of life. It is a beautiful thing when young men and maidens together, old men and children, praise the name of the Lord*”. (CV 196) **Thus, the dreams of the elderly and the visions of the young (cf. Joel 3:1) need to combine and complement each other. How hope-giving are our encounters with the young? Do they find in us a person whom they can rely on for their moral support and spiritual growth?**

Encouraging and inspiring are the words of the Vicar of Christ when he says, journeying together, we, young and old, “*can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire the mind with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands*” (CV 199). Then we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future with hope. Dear Sisters, let each of us strive to **live and grow in intergenerational dialogue** by implementing some necessary and concrete steps such as choosing the Lord anew each day, strengthening the sense of belonging, integrating generational diversities, building missionary communities, taking on reciprocal accompaniment etc... as it is spelt out in the booklet Intergenerational dialogue: Strategy of a Community for all ages (pages 25 - 31) from the book “One generation speaks to another” published by the Institute in 2014.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 08 - International Women’s Day
- 19 - St. Joseph
- 24 - Sts. Mark and Timothy
- 25 - Annunciation of the Lord

ALL IN THE FAMILY

90 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE TO YOUTH

On 8 February St. Mary's Vellore celebrated the 90th Jubilee year of its foundation and the blessing of the Marian block. This significant celebration in the annals of our Province and of the house of St. Mary's, Vellore, began with a fervent prayer service at the end of which the 90th year memorial "Marian Block" was blessed by Most Rev. Fr. Soundararaju SDB.D.D., Bishop of Vellore. It was also fitting to honour beloved bishop Soundar, on the golden jubilee of his religious profession. The children staged the 90 years glorious history of St. Mary's with an array of cultural programmes expressing their joy and gratitude to God, our Missionaries and all the Sisters, past and present. I place on record my sincere congratulations to Sr. Antonyraj Christina, the Sisters of the Community and the Educating Community of St. Mary's for the graceful celebration of the Jubilee event and for their dedication and hard work which make their educative mission among the young fruitful. I wish and pray that this institution continues to realize the noble purpose of offering integral education to millions of young people, children and women for years to come with ever-growing enthusiasm, always striving forward toward greater glory and higher success!

PRAYERFUL WISHES TO OUR STUDENTS

Our prayerful wishes to the students of classes X, XI and XII of all our Schools, who are appearing for the Board Examinations during this month! Let us take special care of the physical and mental health of these students whom the Lord has entrusted to us so that they come out in flying colours and give glory to God and honour to our country.

WORLD FEAST OF GRATITUDE 2020

I am sure you have read the letter of Sr. Cazzuola Chiara, the Vicar General of the Institute, presenting the World Feast of Gratitude 2020 which will take place in Rome on 26 April 2020. The theme proposed is: ***Your life is a tree that bears fruit. Thank you, Mother!*** I would like to remind you of the request of Sr. Chiara, "as signs of communion, each Province is invited to choose one of the Circulars of the Mother General and to make it an object of sharing and prayer with the Educating Community. Starting from this sharing, we invite you to offer La Madre a '**thank you-commitment**' by answering the questions contained in the chosen Circular".

In the Province, we have chosen Circular No.992 to read, reflect, share in our communities and I request you to send the answers to the Provincial Secretary before 10 March 2020.

ONLINE COURSE

Sr. Alphonse J. Isabella, Sr. Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi, Sr. Susai Josephine Rani, Sr. Lourdusamy Salomon Kalai, Sr. Vedanayagam Usha Catherine Viji and Sr. Chinnappen Gracy Fatima will be participating in the on-line Coordinators 3.0 Course which begins on 3 March 2020, organized by Communication Sector of our Institute, Rome. It is a space for sharing, exchanging experiences and knowledge, reflection, collaborative learning, facing the daily challenges of our Edu-Communication. I wish them a good experience of the online course!

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On 8 March we celebrate with joy the International Women's Day (IWD). It is a global day that celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women while creating awareness on the rights of women for accelerating gender equality. "***An equal world is an enabled world***" is the theme of IWD 2020. How will we help forge a gender equal world? Celebrate women's achievement. Raise awareness against bias. Take action for equality.

Empowering women is a great responsibility that is necessary for gender equality. As we observe this day in our institutions in a significant manner let us celebrate our womanhood and take to heart the empowerment of women around us.

NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr.Ezarath Rose, the Provincial of INC, Sr.Adampakallel Teresa, the Animator and the community of Auxilium, Dum Dum for hosting the Workshop on Report writing for 16 Sisters including the National Coordinators of PCI; Hearty congratulations to Sr.Komuhra Lydia, the General Coordinator for her meticulous and efficient organization of the same.
- ✚ Expressions of gratitude to the animators and Sisters of Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi, Anna 4 Children Home, Salem, Mary Immaculate Convent, Tiruppattur, and Vavuniya, Sri Lanka for conducting the Tri-monthly Recollection for Seniors on 1, 2 and 8 February respectively.
- ✚ Heartfelt thanks to Sr.Stanislaus Mary Dora and the community of Kodambakkam for the Tri-monthly Recollection for juniors and Seniors of Chennai on 8 February, the Animation for juniors on 9 February and for the Animators and Team Meet on 15 and 16 February.
- ✚ A note of thanks to Sr.Fernando Mary Ann and the community of Auxilium Convent, Negombo for conducting the Tri-monthly Recollection and Animation for Juniors on 13 and 14 February.
- ✚ Our hearty thanks to Sr.Irudayam Nirmal Rose and the community of Sacred Heart Convent - Polur for hosting the Past Pupils Evaluation Meet on 8 February, and congratulations to Sr.Ambrose Arokia Jayaceli for animating the same.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

Our loving prayers and condolences to all those who lost their dear ones during the last month:

- ✚ To Sr.Kurusinkal Alphonsa and the Sisters of Guwahati Province at the demise of Sr.Puthempurakel Teresa (73) on 07 February and Sr.Mukalayil Teresa (86) on 09 February.
- ✚ To Sr. Fernando Jasmine at the passing away of her brother-in-law Mr. Jothi Rayan (77) on 13 February.
- ✚ To Sr.Amalanathan Mary Margaret and the Sisters of Trichy Province at the sad and sudden demise of Sr.Barbon Arokia Jebamani who passed away on 14 February. Our grateful homage to our dearest Sr.Jebamani with whom we shared our life and mission. She has served in many houses of our Province as an enthusiastic Sister, Headmistress and Animator.
- ✚ To Fr.Provincial and the Confreres of Guwahati Province at the passing away of Bro.Aloysius Induar SDB (76) on 08 February.
- ✚ To Sr. Peenikkaparamban Elizabeth at the passing away of her Sister-in-law Mrs.Mariam (87) on 23 February.
- ✚ To Sr. Kottaka Maria at the demise of her brother Mr. Jose (69) on 27 February.

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY: MARCH 2020

- 02 - † Sr. Ida Papa (1994)
- 10 - † Sr. Marie Dulla Cardozo (2004)
- 24 - † Sr. Castelli Giovanna (1995)
- 26 - † Sr. Cazzuli Eugenia (1973)

- 28 - † Sr. Nunes Nellie (1983)
- 29 - † Sr. Anthoni Philomena (2017)
- 30 - † Sr. Versino Eugenia (1951)
- † Sr. Gonsalves Dorothy (2019)

UPCOMING EVENTS: MARCH 2020

- 07 : Women's Day Celebration, Kodambakkam
Workers' Retreat, Arni / Mannivakkam
- 15 : Women's Day Celebration, Anmarudai
- 30 - 06 April: Annual Retreat - 1, Kavaraipettai
- 06 April : Animation for Retreatants, Kavaraipettai

On 19 March we celebrate the solemnity of St. Joseph, the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the foster father of Jesus our Lord and Patron of the Universal Church. No words of his are recorded in the Gospels; he was the "silent" man. He never said anything, but he was a man of action: he did what the angel told him; 'he takes Mary as his wife; he goes to Bethlehem; he finds a place to stay for the night; he takes his family to Egypt etc'. About him, Sacred Scripture has little more to say than that he was a just man, an expression which indicates how faithfully he fulfilled his high trust of protecting and guarding God's greatest treasures upon earth, Jesus and Mary.

As we journey through Lent let us pray to St. Joseph that he may guide us and help us open our hearts to God's plan. May he be our model for uprightness and righteousness that we may be women after God's will and be able to pray like him, "*Father show me how to fit into this plan of yours*".

*I wish you all a very Happy Women's Day and a fervent feast of St. Joseph!
Special Festal wishes to the communities of Arni and Mosavadi on 19 March!*



Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**

Itinerary of the Provincial

March 2020

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 01 | - | Recollection |
| 02 - 06 | - | Auxilium College PV |
| 07 - 08 | - | Jawadhi Hills PV |
| 09 - 10 | - | Yercaud PV |
| 11 | - | Journey to Chennai |
| 12 - 13 | - | Provincial Office |
| 14 - 15 | - | Provincial Council |
| 16 | - | Journey to Sri Lanka |
| 17 | - | Auxilium Negombo PV |
| 18 | - | Novitiate Negombo PV |
| 19 - 20 | - | Nochchiyagama PV |
| 21 - 22 | - | Thirukovil PV |
| 23 - 24 | - | Vavuniya PV |
| 25 - 26 | - | Urumpirai PV |
| 27 | - | Jaffna PV |
| 28 | - | Journey to Chennai |
| 29 | - | Provincial Office |
| 30 - 06 April | - | Annual Retreat I, Kavarapettai |

