



Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice
Salesiane di Don Bosco
S. Thomas Apostle Province - INM
Madras - India

2020-21



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

Mazzarello Convent, Kodambakkam, Chennai - 600 024

INM FMA / Pro. Cir.38

August 2020

Viva Gesù!

"You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light". (1 Pt. 2: 9)

My Dearest Sisters,

Affectionate greetings to you from Kodambakkam!

On 5 August we celebrate with joy the **Foundation Day of Our Institute**, a memorable day for us. It was on this day in 1872, dedicated to our Lady of Snows, in Mornese, Alessandria, Italy, the first Daughters of Mary Help of Christians gathered around Don Bosco and Mgr Joseph Sciandra, the Bishop of Acqui, made their first profession. On this same day, St Maria Domenica Mazzarello was also elected as the first Superior General of the Institute.

On 5 August last year, 2019, from the Room of Mother Mazzarello in Mornese, our beloved Mother Yvonne officially inaugurated the triennium of preparation for the **150th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Institute** of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (1872-2022). A day of remembrance of the past and of the future, of gratitude and of fidelity that projects the FMA Institute forward with hope. August 5 is an opportunity to return to the evangelical and charismatic sources, to the motivations that give meaning to Salesian life and mission. It is an event of grace that leads us profoundly into the roots of the Salesian vocation. In her video message Mother Yvonne recalled it as an opportunity to "renew the certainty that Mary walks with us, she supports and accompanies, protects and embraces us" (*Christus Vivit*, n. 45).

In the historical circular that has reached an exceptional goal, **No. 1000**, *la Madre* announces the opening of the year 2020-2021 as the second year of the triennium of preparation for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of our Institute. She invites us warmly to **accept the mandate: "I entrust them to you"**. This year, as well, she will be in Mornese to open with deep joy this second year. From that first mandate to Mary Domenica Mazzarello, God's dream for the Institute began to take shape. From that moment on, through the years, the charism continues to grow, to develop and to gain more and more vigour through the acceptance of this mandate by every individual Sister and all the communities as they express it with creativity, apostolic ardour, and live it in synergy with all those who share the educative mission in the spirit of preventive education. "*I entrust them to you*" is not a slogan, but a *living word*, a *mandate* that challenges, sets in motion, sometimes also disquiets due to the responsibility it entails. Mother General poses the following questions to us: "**Who is entrusted to us today? Which conditions does this mandate require so that from generation to generation, it will be a fruitful womb of a new life for all of us and the new generations? What can 'Mornese' say to the youth of today?**" (Ref. Cir. No. 1000)

These questions can accompany us throughout the whole year and be the motives for our reflection also with the educating community, and especially with the young people and with the members of the Salesian Family.

IN PREPARATION FOR THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

As FMA INDIA we are journeying with Mary through the course of the century (1922-2022) and beyond. Let us continue to reflect on the theme “*Living our FMA identity with Gratitude*” based on the **third article of our Constitutions**. “*Our Institute is a living part of the Salesian Family* which, throughout time, implements in different ways the spirit and mission of Don Bosco, thus expressing its perennial newness”(C.3).

This article dealing with the FMA Institute as belonging to the Salesian Family is of great importance in as much as it concerns the **identity of the Institute** and suggests that it would not be complete without such belonging. Besides, this aspect of the Institute's identity is not something that was born solely through human will nor is it reduced to a purely legal or formal relationship. It is rooted in the very charism of Don Bosco; in his 'experience of the Spirit'. In fact, as stated by the former Rector Major, Fr. Egidio Viganò, it is “a fact documented historically, that Don Bosco felt called by the Spirit of the Lord to dedicate himself tirelessly to the salvation of youth, committing himself to this end to found a large apostolic association, a spiritual Family, composed of different groups and categories, but intimately united and structurally organic”. In other words, groups where everyone draws from the charism of the common Founder and spiritually differentiated according to the task they are called to perform within the Family which is born from his spiritual paternity. In fact, as Fr. Viganò affirms, "charism and spirituality do not coincide: in the existential synthesis of the same charism various spiritualities of a ministerial type or different states of life can harmoniously agree”. Consequently, the identity of the FMA Institute requires not merely a specific and original role to be played within the Salesian Family, but also that this role be integrated, harmonized with that of the other members of the same Family.

With the background of these considerations, we can understand the affirmations of the Article 3 of the Constitutions: “Our Institute is a living part of the Salesian Family, thus expressing its perennial newness. In this Family we share the spiritual heritage of the Founder and, as in Mornese, we offer the unique contribution of our vocation”. Beyond the juridical relationships that can subsist, it must be affirmed that the perception of the charismatic reality of this 'Family', aroused by the Spirit through Don Bosco, induces the Institute to recognize the “Rector Major of the Society of St. Francis de Sales”, not only its direct superior but as the successor of Don Bosco, “the animator and centre of unity of the Salesian Family”.

This 'experience of the Spirit' of the Institute, the one that makes it specific, so to speak, is that of Mornese, even if this depends on the spiritual heritage transmitted by Don Bosco and lived with creative fidelity by Mother Mazzarello and the first Sisters. The first few articles describe the experience of the Spirit lived at the origins and we see how it is deepened, developed, and prolonged in the life of the Institute and codified in the initial chapter of the Constitutions on 'identity'. We can ask ourselves the following questions which will enable us to live more deeply the identity of our Institute and be grateful to God for the great spiritual heritage that sustains our life and mission as FMA.

- *Do I nurture the sense of belonging to the great Salesian Family? Do I take care to assimilate and implement the animation and spiritual direction from the Rector Major as the successor of Don Bosco?*
- *Do I live the Charism, Spiritual heritage given by Don Bosco, with creative fidelity in day to day situation, as lived by Mother Mazzarello and the first Sisters?*
- *What efforts do I make to know deeply and disseminate the knowledge of the spirit and mission of Don Bosco and express its perennial newness for the young people?*

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 02 - Bl Augustus Czartoryski SDB
- 04 - St John Maria Vianney
- 05 - Foundation Day of FMA Institute / Our Lady of Snows
- 06 - Transfiguration of the Lord
- 15 - Assumption of Mother Mary / Independence Day
- 16 - Birthday of Johnny Bosco
- 22 - Queenship of Mary
- 24 - St Bartholomew
- 25 - Bl Maria Troncati
- 26 - Bl Zeferino Namuncura
- 29 - Beheading of St John the Baptist

ALL IN THE FAMILY

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS!

I am very happy to communicate to you that our dear Sisters Sr Augustine Sagayarani, Sr Antonysamy Caroline and Sr Maria Prakash Kanimozhi will be making their Final Commitment on 05 August 2020 at Auxilium College, Katpadi. As we congratulate them for their joyous 'yes' to the call of God to be with Him and to serve Him till the end of their life, let us continue to accompany them in their vocational journey.

Our hearty congratulations to our twelve young and enthusiastic aspirants, Jerline, Alpenda, Pemina, Jerlin Jeevitha, Micheal Avila, Jancy, Jency Arockia, Arul Jenifer, Ketharin and Arockia Jelaja of INT, and Sujitha Jeyaseeli of INM who will be receiving the Postulant's medal at Sacred Heart Home on 05 August in the evening at Sacred Heart Home. We thank God for the gift of these young candidates and pray for them to become authentic Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

We also extend our warm wishes and prayers to all the novices of the FMA India and other Provinces of the Institute who will be making their first profession and all the young Sisters who will make their Final Commitment. Let us ask for everyone the gift of joy and fidelity.

Hearty congratulations for the excellent results all our schools have secured in classes XII, X and XI. I very much appreciate the efforts of the students, the hard work of the teachers and the encouragement of the Heads of Schools. May God bless you all for your labour of love and lead you to reap still richer harvests in the coming years!

GOLDEN BELLS CHIME!

Let us magnify the Lord the almighty together with our dear Sisters **Sr Anthony Teresa, Sr Irudayanathan Agatha, Sr Baranabas Sabina, Sr Doss Rosalia, Sr Francis Giovanna, Sr Muniswamy Dolores, Sr Pathi Margaret and Sr Stanislaus Paolina** who celebrate the golden jubilee of their religious profession. Though COVID-19 pandemic is preventing us from having a province level celebration we remember you, dear Sisters with much affection and gratitude to you for all the wonders the Lord has done through you. May you be blessed for your love for Christ and your service to the Church, the Institute, the Province and to numerous persons especially the young people. *Congratulations to you as you celebrate the 50 Golden Years of abiding devotion and faithful service to the Lord! What a blessing you are to all of us!!!*

WELCOME BACK

We are happy to welcome back home our dear Sr Savariappan Irene Noviala Rani who has completed her course in Salesian Spirituality at Casa Ersilia Canta, Rome. She will be returning to the province by the end of this month. Please pray for her safe return. *Bentornata* to the Province dear Sr Irene!

NOTE OF THANKS

I express my sincere gratitude to our dear Sisters of the Provincial Team who organized various on-line meetings and webinars during the last month. I appreciate them for their hard work and creativity.

- Sr Alexander Amali, the General Coordinator, for presenting the Plan and Project of our Province through the zoom meet on 05 July.
- To Sr Antony Raj Christina, the Academic Coordinator and all the Leaders of the Educational Institutions of the province for the success of the zoom meet on 26 June.
- To Sr Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi, the Formation Coordinator, for organizing the Webinar on 'Introduction to Pauline Letters' by Fr Maria Arul Raja SJ, from 20 to 24 July for all the Sisters of the Province and for the INM-INT Formators' zoom Meet on 25 July.
- To Sr Joseph Victoria Mary, the Human Right Education Coordinator, for the webinar on 'Sustainable Development Goals' on 25 July to the teachers of our Schools.
- 'To Sr Louis Isabel Sirumalar and Sr Mahimai Dass Jaya Sunitha, the VIDES Coordinators, for the Webinar: 'A View on Indian Constitutions' to the VIDES members on 26 July.
- To Sr Alphonse J. Isabella, the VTC Coordinator and the Miracle Foundation for the google meet on 'Introducing Child Safeguarding Policy of Miracle Foundation' on 27 July to the Provincials, MT and CMTs of INM, INT, INB and INK Provinces, and for the Webinar on 'Existing challenges and emerging opportunities towards decent earning and sustainable economic development' on 29 July.

ADIEU DEAR SR VICTORINA!

In the morning on 21 July, the news came like the crash of thunder that our dear Sr Victorina Gnanaprakasam became unconscious and the doctors from CMC have given the information that she has only a few more hours of life left. We had hoped so much for a miracle that she would be back to Auxilium College community fully recovered. From the time she was admitted to the hospital, she was giving me the messages of hope and courage. Her faith was so unshakable that she was very happy to be in the common ward which allowed her to pray and strengthen the patients infected with COVID-19. But the Lord of life decided to honour her with the gift of eternity and she bowed her head in humble surrender to His divine plan. We too join in the 'Fiat' of our dear Sister and commit her soul to Him.

Sr Victorina was born at Tambaram, Chennai, on 08 February 1975, and professed at Manikandam, Trichy, India, on 24 May 1999. She was gifted as the fourth child to her parents from whom she learnt a love for God and the poor, sincerity in relationships, generosity and self-sacrificing spirit and to be good and helpful to others. After her profession Sr Victorina began her mission among the young people and started working with the zeal of the *da mihi animas* in different communities of the Province: Puliadithammam, Arni, Tirupattur, Yellagiri Hills, Kodambakkam, St Mary's Vellore and Dindigul as a teacher, assistant in the boarding, in-charge of the oratory, youth pastoral coordinator, in charge of the kitchen, and parish

catechism teacher. While Sr Victorina was a teacher in Arni, she received a special honour, the 'Best Teacher Award' from the Educational Officers for her teaching as well as for her dealings with the students. This was indeed a fitting tribute to her who considered teaching as a noble mission and carried it out in the truly Salesian style of the preventive system.

When Sr Victorina returned to Vellore, St Mary's, for the second time in 2014, she was active in her service among the young girls. Her period of agony started in 2016 with the swelling in the stomach and over bleeding. On 30 March 2016 she underwent a hysterectomy and the biopsy results revealed the tumour in the uterus to be malignant. Once in three months she visited the doctor and continued her medication. Her constant prayer and her retreats at Sogathur, Dharmapuri retreat centre had been a great source of energy for her to go through the period of intense suffering. She felt very strongly the loving presence of the Merciful Jesus close to her. She was hospitalized in CMC on 24 June 2020. She fought relentlessly with her sickness and kept herself calm and serene till she breathed her last on 21 July around 1.30 p.m.

Dearest Sr Victorina, we thank you for your 21 years of dedicated service as a Salesian educator and during the last few years, your sacrificial offering on the altar of intense pain and suffering. We bid you farewell with heavy hearts but at the same time, we rejoice with you because your sorrow now has turned into joy. You have fought the good fight and now go and receive the reward that has been prepared for you from all eternity! ***May you rest in peace with the Lord!***

My sincere thanks to Sr.Kunnathu Anna, the Animator, and the Sisters of Auxilium College Community for taking good care of our dear Sister for the past two years, the doctors and the nurses of CMC where she underwent medical treatment. I extend my thanks to the animators and Sisters of the communities of Auxilium Home, Sacred Heart Home and St Mary's Vellore for your sisterly help and support for the funeral mass and the burial of our dear Sr Victorina.

MILLIONS OF THANKS!

On behalf of Fr. K. M. Jose SDB, INM Provincial, I thank you, dear Sisters, for your earnest prayers. Fr Provincial and Fr Joe Andrew are completely recovered and are back to normal life, and Fr Lourdusamy Don Bosco who is recovering fast testifies to his miraculous healing to the intervention of Venerable Mamma Margaret. Let us join them to thank the Lord and continue to assure them of our prayerful support.

PRAYER INTENTION

Let us continue to pray unceasingly for all our brothers and sisters across the globe who are suffering due to the COVID-19 pandemic especially the Salesians of INC Province and the dear ones of our Sisters who are affected.

I request your special prayers of this month for the approval of the HRDC building in Kodambakkam.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

May God grant eternal peace to all those who lost their lives due to COVID-19. Our loving prayers and condolences to all those who lost their dear ones during the last month:

- ✠ To Sr Lourdusamy Kalai Gnani at the demise of her sister Mrs Maria Juliana (52) on 03 July
- ✠ To Sr Madalaimuthu Antoinette at the demise of her dear mother Mrs Jaya Mary (85) on 08 July

- ✠ To Sr Thambuswamy Bridget at the passing away of her niece Mrs Viola Selvam (72) on 10 July
- ✠ To Fr Joseph Pauria the Provincial of INC and the confreres at the passing away of Fr Mathew Manianchira SDB (75) on 17 and Fr. Joseph Aymanathil (73) on 19 July 2020
- ✠ To Sr Rayappan Leema Rose at the passing away of her brother-in-law Mr John Doss (62) on 22 July
- ✠ To Fr Kuruvachira Jose SDB and the Confreres of the Salesian Province IND at the demise of Fr Joseph Kaippallimyalil (56) on 27 July.
- ✠ To Sr Kasu Sleeva Showrilu at the demise of her brother-in-law Mr Sekar (40) on 30 July

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY: AUGUST 2020

- 04 † Sr Angeleri Maria (1967)
- 06 † Sr Xavier Anna (2005)
- 08 † Sr Spitalieri Carmela (1938)
- 09 † Sr Arockia Maria Teresa (2012)
- 10 † Sr Da Roit Cecilia (1981)
- 11 † Sr Soosai Maria Teresa (2019)
- 13 † Sr Sylvia Fernandes (2009)
- 15 † Sr Ravalico Maria (1980)
- 19 † Sr D'Couth Margaret (2007)
- 20 † Sr James Glorina Rita (2019)
- 23 † Sr D'Souza Celine (2013)
- 26 † Sr Tagliabue Camilla (2004)

UPCOMING EVENTS: AUGUST 2020

- 01 : Tri monthly Recollection for Juniors and Seniors
- 02 : Trimonthly Animation for Juniors, Kodambakkam, Auxilium College and Nochchiyagama-Sri Lanka
- 02 - 04 : Retreat for Aspirants, Sacred Heart Home
- 03 : Montessori Schools' Principals Meet, Nochchiyagama-Sri Lanka
- 05 : Perpetual Vows of three Sisters, Auxilium College, Katpadi
Postulants' Medal Receiving Ceremony, Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi
- 06 - 07 : Provincial Council, ACK
- 08 : Animators' Meet, Zoom
- 09 : Zoom Meet for Boarding Mistress and Sisters in-charge of Shelter Home
: Online Past Pupils animation and orientation Meeting
- 13 : Catechetical animation on Scripture and Catechesis for Sisters-Session 1,
Online Webinar on Highlights and Main features of the National Education Policy 2020
for Animators, Principals and Headmistresses of Schools & Colleges.
- 18 - 19 : Webinar on SDG for Sisters
- 20 : Online Catechetical animation for Teachers - 1 On Lk. 1-8 chapters
- 21 : Media animation for Sisters on "Pandemic Infodemic", Cisco Webex
- 22 : Online HRE Meet for Teachers-Session II
- 24 : Panel on Human Rights Violation and Covid Impact, Kod. Teachers & Parents
- 24-26 : Zoom Meet-INM & INT Formators and Animators
- 25 : Online Quiz for teachers on Luke's Gospel (Chapters 1 - 8)
- 27 - 28 : Zoom Meet FMA PCI Formators
- 29 : Online Seminar on Impacts of Covid-19 for VIDES members of Vellore Zone

On 15 August we celebrate the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and 74th Independence Day of our country. Mother the Church invites us to contemplate on the special privilege granted to the Mother of God on account of her unique corporal and spiritual union with her Son, Jesus. The mystery of the Blessed Virgin Mary's bodily Assumption into heaven, "shows us that God wills to save the whole human person: body and soul."

At the end of her life, Mary was taken 'body and soul' into heaven; her body 'did not know the corruption of the grave.' This privilege, 'gives us the confirmation of our own glorious destiny.' This is the Christian doctrine of the 'resurrection of the body,' which Pope Francis described as an 'element proper to Christian revelation and the pivotal element of our faith.' If we live in this way, in the joyful service of God, which is expressed also in generous service to our brothers and sisters, on the day of the resurrection our destiny will be like that of our heavenly Mother. It will be given to us, then, to realize fully the exhortation of Saint Paul: "**Glorify God in your body!**" (1Cor 6:20) and we will glorify him forever in heaven.

Through the powerful intercession of Mary assumed into heaven, the liberated woman, let us pray for our beloved country India that all her citizens may enjoy true freedom, peace and prosperity!

May the blessing of the Lord, the presence of Mary, and Mother Mazzarello be our great hope and strength during this troubled time of the pandemic Covid-19!

Festal greetings to the Provincial and the Sisters of our youngest daughter Province, Our Lady of Snow on the 5 August!

*I wish you all very Happy Feast of Assumption and Independence Day!
Congratulations to all the Sisters who celebrate the anniversary of their profession on 5 August!*

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**

