



INM FMA/Pro.Cir.55

February 2022

“You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him...” – 1Peter2:9

My Dearest Sisters,

Viva Gesù!

Affectionate greetings to you from the Provincial House, Kodambakkam!

With great joy we have re-opened our educational institutions on 1 February after a long period of lock-down. We have welcomed the young people joyfully and are set to accompany them with great love, care, and zeal in their integral formation. On 2 February, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we celebrated the 25th World Day of Consecrated Life. In his homily during the Holy Eucharist in St Peter’s Basilica, Rome, Pope Francis exhorted religious men and women to reflect on the essential aspects of their consecrated life. Quoting the examples of two important persons of the Gospel of the day, Simeon and Anna, two elderly people who awaited the fulfilment of God’s promise of the coming of the Messiah, he places before us three provocative questions:

1. Simeon goes to the temple **“moved by the Spirit”**. What moves us? Is it the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of the world, or the passion of the moment? What moves our hearts and actions? What is the love that keeps us going?
2. Simeon, moved by the Spirit, recognizes Christ and exclaims: **“My eyes have seen salvation”**. This is the great miracle of faith: it opens eyes, transforms gazes and changes perspectives. What do our eyes see? What is the vision of our consecrated life?
3. Simeon **took Jesus into his arms**. In the gospels, it is a touching scene, unique and full of meaning. God has placed his Son in our arms as well because embracing Jesus is the essential thing, the very heart of faith. What do we take into our arms?

With renewed vision and passion for the Lord, let us take Jesus into our arms and go forward with faith and joy reflecting His light to all peoples.

IN PREPARATION FOR THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

We continue to *“Journey with Mary in the Course of the Centenary (1922-2022) and Beyond”*, during this third year of preparation along with our Institute. I invite you to reflect on the style of synodality in community life and mission.

God realizes his new covenant in Jesus of Nazareth, Messiah and Lord, whose *kérygma*, life, and person reveal that **God is a communion of love who in His grace and mercy wishes to embrace the whole humanity in unity**. Jesus reveals himself throughout the Gospel as he announces the kingdom of God in his way of being and doing. Jesus is the Son of God, destined from all eternity to love the Father’s heart (*cf. Jn 1:1,18*).

Made man in the fullness of time (*Gal.* 4: 4), he brings God's plan of salvation to fulfilment (*cf. Jn* 8:29; 6:39; 5: 22,27). He never acts alone. In all things, He does the will of the Father. Father dwells in him and carries out his work through him whom he sent into the world.

Pope Francis reiterates that Jesus, as the pilgrim who proclaims the good news of the Kingdom of God (*cf. Lk* 4:14-15; 8:1; 9:57; 13:22; 19:11), teaches "**the way of God**" (*cf. Luke* 20:21) and points the way to it (*Lk* 9:51-19,28). He is "The Way" (*cf. Jn* 14: 6) that leads to the Father. (*cf. Jn* 16:13). He shares with everyone the **truth and love of communion with God and with our sisters and brothers**.

Jesus pays special attention to those who are separated from God and those abandoned by the community. Through his words and actions, he liberates people, sets the captives free, restores them to their lost dignity, and inserts them into the community to which they belong. He deliberately focuses on the community dimension of every human person. Jesus, the Master, proposes a new way of living in faith as a response to God's call by valuing people and inclining our ears to those who feel their voice is never heard; feeling one with the suffering people by sharing their lot; bending down a bit to wipe their tears; alleviate their pain by sharing time and energy; ease the sorrowful by comforting and healing presence; and be available with **maternal love to everyone without 'showing partiality'** (*cf. Vademecum*, No.17). This is possible in the measure in which we habituate ourselves to fix our gaze on him who called us to **put on love**; a love that heals and binds, builds and uplifts, leads and guides, shows and accompanies the 'journeying together' as 'synodal community' towards newer and wider horizons in response to the call of GC XXIV.

Mother Mazzarello exhorts us to **love with maternal charity, fraternal chastity, and religious reserve** so that we will be at the height of our mission according to the Preventive System of Don Bosco, **to teach and to educate youth in holiness and Christ-like manner; to keep them away from sin, and to bring them to the salvation willed by God in Christ**. Carlo Colli in his book *Pact of our Covenant with God* affirms that the life of Mother Mazzarello gives us the most authoritative interpretation of how the 'heart' of Don Bosco must be translated into the feminine. Moved by simple and lively faith and ardent charity Mother Mazzarello with her sensitive heart knew how to love with an exquisite and tender maternal love. **Attentive to every person she delicately noticed doubts, anxieties, and intimate sufferings. In reality, she is more in solidarity with the neediest, the young, the sick, the timid, the less able, strange characters, and even the worst because in the 'house of the Madonna' no one should feel marginalized but feel esteemed, loved, and valued.** Our Sainly Mother followed Jesus's way of being and doing. In her, we find an excellent model of living our **life and mission** in love to build a 'synodal community' where daily life is nurtured and sustained by total self-giving, mutual acceptance, forgiveness and a genuine family atmosphere permeated by the Gospel Spirit.

We are called to grow in awareness that our '**mission**' is the very reason for the existence of our Institute as it rightly asserts that it 'comes from the saving initiative of the Father who calls us to participate as an **apostolic Salesian community in the Church**, to share in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly mission of Christ by witnessing to and proclaiming the Word, and rejoicing in salvation (*cf. Lumen Gentium*, No.12). Article 8 of our Constitutions affirms that "we live our FMA vocation as a response to the Father who, in Christ, consecrates, unites, and sends us forth". We live this mandate marked with the characteristic spirit with which all is lived and accomplished. 'In a community animated by the apostolic spirit of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, we live the new life of the Beatitudes of the Kingdom radically, proclaiming and bearing witness to young people, and with them be **the Good News of God's saving love**.

This 'Synodal Process' we take up as people of God is a clarion call **to build a civilization of love through a culture of encounter, spirituality of relationship weaving the network of communion within the Church, religious community and society at large**.

In response to Pope's exhortation let us enlarge our horizons to reach beyond the frontiers with wider perspectives embracing humanity and nature with universal love and create anew a common home where everyone is a brother or a sister! Let us share our reflections based on the following:

- ✚ *God is a communion of love who in His grace and mercy wishes to embrace the whole of humanity in unity. Am I capable of building unity in the community and the mission?*
- ✚ *What efforts do I make so that no one feels marginalized in the community or the mission but each one, even those with strange characters feel esteemed, loved, and valued?*
- ✚ *How do I live the centrality of Christ? Do I build a civilization of love and a culture of encounter undertaking 'synodal processes' seriously?*

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH -FEBRUARY

- 02 - Presentation of the Lord / World Day of Consecrated Life
- 04 - St John de Britto
- 08 - St Josephine Bakhita
- 09 - Blessed Eusebia Palomino
- 11 - Our Lady of Lourdes / World Day of the Sick
- 22 - Chair of St Peter
- 25 - Sts Versiglia and Caravario SDB

ALL IN THE FAMILY

NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr Stanislaus Mary Dora and the community of Mannivakkam for hosting the course in counselling for teachers from 6 to 8 January and Sr Johnson Irene Towle for organizing it efficiently.
- ✚ Congratulations to Sr Mariadoss Amala Mary and Sr Madalaimuthu Lidwin Mary the Educating Community Coordinators, animators, local educating community coordinators, and the resource persons for conducting the partial online educating community meet followed by the physical meeting in the local communities, on 8 January.
- ✚ Heartfelt thanks to Sr Joseph Jackulen Anthony, the Past Pupil Delegate, for the online Past Pupils General Body Meet on 9 January.
- ✚ I record my thanks to Sr Puliyani Lucy, Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, and the community of Kodambakkam for the hospitality extended to the Economers during the submission of house accounts on 11 and 12 January; to the Animators, Headmistresses and Principals during the Orientation Session animated by Fr Varghese Alengaden, Director, USM Indore, and the seminar on "online administration in school management" by Fr Xavier Packiam SDB, Rector, Egmore, Don Bosco.

PROVINCE COMMUNITY DAY 2022

On 22 January we had a magnificent celebration of the Province Community Day at St Mary's, Vellore. It was indeed a joyous moment of our being together as the province family to thank God and each other in unison. The Morning Prayer was well animated on the theme of synodality. The Eucharistic Celebration was the peak moment that raised our hearts in thanksgiving to God for all His blessings.

Felicitations was an apt moment expressed our gratitude through colourful cultural expressions and released the books: 'Beacon Lights Volume IV', 'Educational' and 'Financial' Policy. The family circle was a spontaneous moment of appreciating the communities for their study on the letters of St Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians and volume III of the Diamond Years.

I take this precious opportunity to express my gratitude to Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the Vice Provincial for the month-long spiritual preparation on the theme "Celebrating Synodality", spiritual bouquet and meticulous organization of the various events of the Province Community Day.

I sincerely thank Mgr John Robert, Apostolic Administrator of Vellore Diocese, for his appreciative and brotherly presence, for the Eucharist with his enriching homily on the four dimensions of synodality, participation, communion, mission and celebration, and to all the priests who concelebrated the Holy Eucharist.

Congratulations and million thanks to the communities and Sisters who creatively animated the various moments of the day: Sr Irudayam Nirmal Rose and the Sisters of the community of Polur for the morning prayer, Sr AnthonyRaj Christina and the community of Mary Immaculate Convent, Tirupattur, for the Holy Eucharist, Sr Mariadoss Amala and Auxilium Home community for the choir and vase preparation, Sr Peddineeni Mary Philomena and the Sisters of Pallikonda for altar decoration, Sr Devadoss Margaret and Sisters and candidates of Sacred Heart Home for the festal song, Sr Sebastian Elizabeth, General Coordinator and all the Team members for the lively family circle.

A special note of thanks to Sr Rathinaswamy Regina, Sisters, staff and students of St Mary's, Vellore for hosting this festive event with a great sense of belonging; preparing and arranging everything to make it solemn, and for the beautiful presentation of the theme of the province community day.

Hearty thanks to Sr Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi and Sr Lourdusamy Solomon Kalai for facilitating the live streaming of the events so that our Sisters in Sri Lanka and those who remained in the communities could be virtually connected to us.

FMA PCI 2022

The long-awaited FMA PCI 2022 meet in this significant centenary year of the first arrival of FMA to our Indian soil was held online, on 1 and 2 February 2022 since some of the participants could not make it in person to the venue due to the fast-spreading omicron virus. Though there was a note of disappointment, considering the good of the Sisters, we were content with the virtual meeting. Twenty-seven Sisters from seven provinces participated.

Zoom meeting began at 9.00 am on 1 February. The inaugural function was creatively animated by the INT Province leading the participants into prayer. Melodious song coupled with a rhythmic dance of the novices of Trichy-Manikandam welcomed the members virtually with garlands, bouquets, kumkum and arathi in typical Indian style. The moment concluded with the solemn message of Don Bosco, represented by a novice, who blessed the members and requested them to work for the young in the synodal style with the zeal of the *da mihi animas*. Sr Jacob Celine, the presiding General Councillor delivered the inaugural address underlining that our coming together as FMA India was highly significant during the centenary year of FMA presence in India and the 150th Anniversary of the foundation of our Institute (1872-2022). She exhorted the participants to focus not just on a celebration but to consider it as a valuable opportunity to look at the past with gratitude, to live the present with confidence, and to dream of the future of our evangelizing and educational mission with the energy and the novelty of the Gospel. National Coordinators presented the report of the shared vision, objectives, action plans and best practices of their respective areas of animation based on the theme of GC XXIV. In the evening the heads of all the centenary celebration committees joined the portal to present their journey and the activities carried out by each committee.

On 2 February, the participants were enlightened by Fr. Xavier Terrence on the theme: Synodality regarding preparatory document, Synod 2021-2023. Extensive discussions followed and decisions took shape regarding the preparation and celebration of the centenary events and other important issues of FMA India.

At this juncture I express our gratitude to Sr Jacob Celine, the Visiting General Councillor, for her active presence throughout the meet and her guidance; to Sr Amalanathan Mary Margaret, the Provincial INT and the Provincial House community of Manikandam for all the preparations though the meeting could not be held there, and to the holy novices for their creative virtual welcome; to the National Coordinators for presenting plans for the future; to the heads of the Centenary Celebration Committees for sharing the report of the centenary activities and to all the provincials and the delegates for their active participation in the PCI 2022 Meet.

I place on record our sincere thanks to the **outgoing National Coordinators** for their unified journey and unique contribution towards the formation and mission of FMA India: Sr Komuhra Lydia ING, National General Coordinator for her 9 years service of coordination, Sr Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi INM as Formation Coordinator for 6 years, Sr Clara Saminathan INC, as Education Coordinator for 6 years, Sr Hilda Braganza INB as Social Communication Coordinator for 7 years, Sr Moksha Mary Anthonappa INB, as Youth at Risk Coordinator for 6 years, Sr Molly Kaniampady ING, as Youth Pastoral Coordinator for 7 years and Sr Savarimuthu Bala INK as Mission ad/inter gentes Coordinator for 7 years. Thank you, dear Sisters, for your dedicated service and sense of belonging.

PRAYER REQUEST

I request your special prayers for the success of the Centenary Celebrations proposed to be held at Katpadi in September 2022, and intense prayers for the Sisters at Sacred Heart Higher Secondary School, Michealpatti, Thanjavur during this moment of pain and tribulation.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

Our loving prayers and condolences to all those who lost their dear ones during January 2022:

- ✠ To Sr Irudayaraj Lourdummy at the demise of her nephew Mr Arun (34) on 7 January
- ✠ To Fr Joseph Pauria, the Provincial and Confreres of INK Province at the demise of Fr Kissun Cosmos Tudu SDB (52) on 10 January
- ✠ To Sr Maghimai Lourdummy at the passing away of her mother Mrs Arputha Mary (91) on 13 January
- ✠ To the Novice Anthony Dass Arockia Marial at the demise of her brother Mr Antony Stephen Kumar (33) on 16 January
- ✠ To Fr Savio Silveira, the Provincial and Confreres of INB Province at the passing away of the missionary priest Fr Joseph Casti SDB (91) on 29 January

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY- FEBRUARY 2022

- 03 † Sr Jeganathan Clara (2019)
- 05 † Sr Louis Evelyn (2006)
- 08 † Sr Braganza Rose (2000)

- 12 † Sr Domingo Frances (2009)
- 14 † Sr Barbon Arokia Jebamani (2020)
- 18 † Sr De Santis Rosarie (2018)
- 24 † Sr Bricarello Maria (1925)
- 25 † Sr Rossini Maria (1986)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS -FEBRUARY 2022

- 3, 4 - Trimonthly Recollection for Juniors (Sri Lanka), online
- 5, 6 - Trimonthly Recollection for Seniors, local communities
- 12 - VIDES General Body Meeting, Pallikonda
- 19 - Diamond and Golden Jubilee Celebration, Auxilium College, Katpadi
- 21-22 - Animators' Meet (Sri Lanka), Colombo
- 26-27 - Trimonthly Recollection and Animation for Juniors, Kodambakkam

On 11 February, the feast of our Lady of Lourdes, we keep the 13th World Day of the Sick. Pope Francis has given a beautiful message on the theme “***Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful***” (***Lk 6:36***), **standing beside those who suffer on a path of charity**. Our Holy Father invites us to turn our gaze towards God who is “rich in mercy” (*Eph 2:4*); who always watches over his children with a father’s love even when they turn away from him. Mercy is God’s name par excellence; mercy, understood not as an occasional sentimental feeling but as an ever-present and active force, expresses God’s very nature. He reminds everyone that closeness to the sick and their pastoral care is not only the task of certain specifically designated ministers; visiting the sick is an invitation that Christ addresses to all his disciples and is a task for every baptized person mindful of the word of Jesus: “I was sick and you visited me” (*Mt 25:36*).

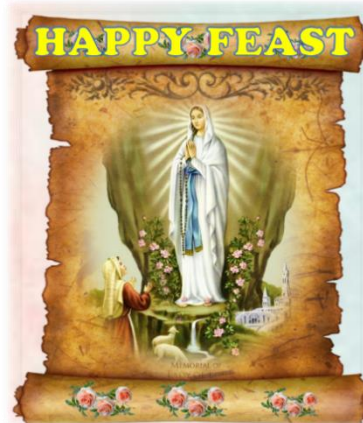
Let us commit ourselves to doing this corporal work of charity during this month. Let us entrust all the sick and their families, especially our Sisters and family members of our Sisters who are sick to the intercession of Mary, the Health of the Infirm, that united with Christ who bears the pain of the world may find meaning, consolation, and trust. Let us also pray for healthcare workers everywhere that like the Father who is rich in mercy they may offer their fraternal closeness to the patients, together with suitable care.

I wish each one of you a very happy feast of Our Lady of Lourdes!

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**



Itinerary of the Provincial

FEBRUARY 2022

- 01-02 - FMA PCI 2022 Meet, Online
- 06 - Recollection, Kodambakkam
- 08 - 09 - Provincial Council, Kodambakkam
- 11 - Thoraipakkam, PV
- 14-17 - Kodambakkam, PV
- 19 - Diamond & Golden Jubilee Celebration, ACK
- 20-21 - Pallikonda, PV
- 22-23 - Mary Immaculate Convent - TPT, PV
- 24-25 - Mazzarello Home - TPT, PV
- 26-27 - Trimonthly Recollection & Animation, Juniors, Kodambakkam

