



INM FMA/Pro.Cir.59

June 2022

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest... learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.” - Mt. 11:28-29*

## My Dearest Sisters,

*Viva Gesù!*

*Affectionate greetings to you from Sri Lanka!* I am here for a few days and I am happy to bring you warm wishes from all our Sisters, Novices and Candidates.

While preparing ourselves intensely for the solemnity of the Pentecost we also begin a fresh academic year with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised to send his disciples, the Holy Spirit, the ultimate gift, the gift of gifts, the very love of God, the Spirit who creates and renews all things. Jesus used a mysterious word to describe the Spirit: The ‘*Paraclete*’. It essentially means two things: *Comforter* and *Advocate*. Our holy father, Pope Francis, encourages us to “**open our heart to the Holy Spirit**” as a means to confront the darkness, the pain and the solitude in our lives. The experience of apostles should give us hope, he says, despite their fears, weaknesses and failings everything changed when they received the Spirit. While their weaknesses and problems did not disappear, they were no longer afraid of them or of those who were hostile to them. They felt God’s love, comfort, consolation and support within, and wanted to share it and testify to the love they had received. (cf. Homily of Pope Francis, Pentecost 23 May 2021). May the Holy Spirit, our sweet Counsellor and Advocate, comfort our hearts, make us missionaries of comfort, *paracletes* of His mercy to the world, His witnesses, prophets of unity for the Church and humanity and apostles grounded in His grace.

*La Madre’s* circular 1018, with her reflections on “**Mornese Outgoing**”: **Communities that proclaim Jesus with their life**, is a precious gift. She says, “the solemnity of Pentecost, which occurs this year at the beginning of June, calls us back to the Upper Room, the place where Mary is present with the women and the brothers of Jesus (cf. Acts 1:14)”. She urges us as Church outgoing, as communities of educators, to continue the journey towards the celebration of the 150 Years of our Institute, culminating on 5 August 2022. In a concrete gesture of our fidelity to the charism just like the first Sisters of Mornese, I invite you to revive in all of us and every environment our missionary call and to encourage missionary vocations. Let us be consecrated women, ready to collaborate with the creativity of the Holy Spirit by continually revisiting the charism, ensuring that it expresses all its vitality in the context of today in fidelity to Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello and reviving the ardour of the *da mihi animas* that cannot be expressed without the realism of the *cetera tolle*.

## IN PREPARATION FOR THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

We continue to “*Journey with Mary in the Course of the Century (1922-2022) and Beyond*”, during this third year of preparation for the centenary celebration of FMA Presence in our motherland and the 150<sup>th</sup> year of the foundation of our Institute. I invite you to reflect on **Synodality as a way to constant conversion that involves renewing mentalities, attitudes, practices and structures**.

The Church of God is convoked in the Synod. Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on what is decisive for its life and mission: 'It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium' (Vademecum). Synodality is established to energize the life and evangelizing mission of the Church in union with and under the guidance of the Lord Jesus, who promised: "where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them" (Mt. 18,20); "look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of the world" (Mt. 28,20). The synodal renewal of the Church happens through the re-vitalization of synodal structures, of course, but expresses itself first and foremost in response to **God's gracious call to live as His People**, who journey through history towards the fulfilment of the Kingdom (*International Theological Commission No.103*). Some specific elements of this response are the formation of **the spirituality of communion** and the **practices of listening, dialogue and communal discernment** and its relevance for the ecumenical journey and for a prophetic *diakonia* in **building a social ethos based on fraternity, solidarity and inclusion**. In docility to the Holy Spirit, we as consecrated women, ought to intensify our **communion with God** which will enable us to **be open to Christ who is present in our sisters and brothers and every reality** (Cf. Con. Art.38). Only those who learn the art of being deeply in communion with God through the constant union of mind will be able to establish a 'social ethos' that radiates and reflects fraternal love, solidarity and all-embracing universal love that excludes none.

In Vatican II, Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* we read, "Every renewal of the Church is essentially grounded in an increase of **fidelity to her own calling**". In carrying out her mission, the Church is called to **constant conversion** which is a "**pastoral and missionary conversion**"; Pope Francis explicates this in No. 25 of his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* by stating that pastoral and missionary conversion **involves renewing mentalities, attitudes, practices and structures**, to be ever more faithful to her vocation. An ecclesial mentality shaped by synodal thinking joyfully welcomes and promotes the grace in virtue of which all the baptized are qualified and called to be missionary disciples. The great challenge for pastoral conversion that follows from this for the life of the Church is to **intensify the mutual collaboration** of all in evangelizing witness based on everyone's gifts and roles without manipulating the role and the authority and without giving way to escapism from the responsibilities and duties inherent to every walk of life. For FMA, as indicated in our Constitutions, it is a demand to put on **the attitude of conversion and penance**. Conscious of her fragility, the Daughter of Mary Help of Christians continually renews her determination to be converted to the Gospel (Con Art.46). In our frailty, we do not always respond to this clarion call of the Lord. Therefore, we implore the forgiveness and mercy of the Lord for our community, which is not always ready to be converted to the demands of its consecration to the Lord for the Christian education of the young.

The ethos of the Church, the People of God gathered together by the Father and led by the Holy Spirit to become, in Christ, "like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely-knit union with God and the unity of the whole human race" (Lumen Gentium No.1), bursts forth from and is nourished by **personal conversion to the spirituality of communion**. All the Church's members are called to accept this conversion as a gift and pledge of the Spirit to be lived in deference to His guidance and to learn to live in communion, the grace received in baptism and brought to fulfilment in the Eucharist: the **paschal transition from "I" understood in a self-centred way to the ecclesial "we", where every "I", clothed in Christ** (cf. *Galatians* 3,27), lives and journeys with his or her brothers and sisters as a responsible and active agent of the one mission of the People of God. Here comes the need for all of us to become more Christo-centric, overcoming our tendency to be egocentric; we are well aware that sin is 'love of oneself even to the contempt of God'. So, by the grace of God, it is possible to overcome our selfishness and the desire for self-promotion.

Hence the need for the Church to become "**the home and school of communion**" (*Novo Millennio Ineunte* No.43). Without conversion of heart and mind and without disciplined training for welcoming and listening to one another the external instruments of communion would be of hardly any use (*International Theological Commission No.107*).

Carlo Colli affirms that Mother Mazzarello guided her Sisters to the coherence of life and action overcoming various difficulties and obstacles and tending incessantly towards sanctification. It calls for 'courage' to be converted. According to Mother Mazzarello, it means, to **face all the difficulties of a psychological or intellectual nature**, all the obstacles that come from outside, the difficulties one may meet in rapport with the Sisters, the inconveniences of work, and the obstacles that interfere with her journey toward God, **without fear**, without feelings of self-pity, but **with courage and Christian fortitude**. Yes dear Sisters, let the words of Mother Mazzarello echo in our hearts, **'let's have the courage to correct our defects, having great confidence in God and a good spirit of self-contempt and we can see all will go well'**. As *la Madre* says, May Mary Most Holy, who always reveals herself to be majestic and solemn, who is tender and strong Mother, a vigorous and energetic presence, continue to accompany us in our journey towards wholeness and holiness and may her blessings inundate the joy of our existence as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians.

#### Let us reflect and share:

- ✚ How do I live the social ethos based on fraternity, solidarity, and inclusion, in my daily life?
- ✚ What efforts do I make to overcome my ego-centric tendency and become more Christocentric in my life?
- ✚ Conscious of my fragile nature, what efforts do I make to acquire the attitude of conversion and penance and to live the spirituality of communion?

### CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 05 - Pentecost / World Environment Day
- 08 - Blessed Stephen Sandor SDB
- 12 - Holy Trinity
- 19 - Most holy Body and Blood of Christ
- 23 - St Joseph Cafasso
- 24 - Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
- 25 - Immaculate Heart of Mary
- 29 - Sts Peter and Paul

### ALL IN THE FAMILY

#### HEARTY WELCOME!

The six newly professed Sisters of our Province from Trichy - Manikandam Novitiate have safely reached their communities on 30 May. We heartily welcome them to our Province family and wish them the blessings of God in abundance for a fulfilling FMA life.

I am happy to communicate to you the good news that Mother General has appointed Sr Celine Jacob, the visiting general councillor, to make the canonical visitation of our Province. Sr. Celine has officially communicated the news that she will be starting the visitation in the second week of August 2022. The detailed itinerary will be sent to you shortly. We happily welcome our dear Sr Celine to our province for this grace-filled event.

#### NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Hearty thanks to Sr Chinnappan Mano Ranjitham, animator, and the community of Yercaud for the hospitality extended to the Sisters during the Annual Spiritual Retreat IV and Animation from 2 to 9 May 2022.
- ✚ Thanks a million to Sr Devadoss Margaret, the animator and the community of Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi for hosting the provincial council on 10 and 11 May and the animation and Recollection of the Junior Sisters on 21 and 22 May 2022.

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr Kunnathu Anna and the community of Auxilium College, Katpadi for doing all the arrangements for the renewal of vows of the junior sisters on 22 May, final commitment on 25 May and the funeral of Sr Anthony Agnes on 26 May.
- ✚ Our gratitude to Sr Fernando Mary Ann, the Delegate of Sri Lanka, for organizing the Annual Spiritual Retreat for the Sisters of Sri Lanka at Negombo from 24 to 30 and the renewal of vows of juniors on 31 May. Our deep appreciation also to Fr. Harsha Hemantha SDB, Scripture Professor, Lanka National Theologate, Kandy, for his lively and passionate scripture-based preaching and for touching the hearts of the retreatants with a sharing of his personal experiences; to Sr Arockiasamy Rackel Mary, animator and community of Auxilium Negombo and to Sr Mathew J. Sriapushpam, Novice Formator, Novices and Sisters of the Novitiate community for generously preparing a conducive ambient and providing healthy food for the retreatants.

## COURSES AND SEMINARS

- ✓ Sr Kanikairaj Shermila participated in the Province Mission ad/inter gentes Coordinators Online Meet (Africa, Asia and Australia) on 3 May organized by Mission ad/inter gentes Sector, Rome.
- ✓ Our novices along with the Novice Formators of Manikandam and Negombo attended the World Online Meet for Novices on 9 May.
- ✓ Sr Lourdusamy Kalai Gnani took part in the Province Social Communication Coordinators Online Meet (PCI, CIAO and SPR), on 19 May by Social Communication Sector, Rome.
- ✓ Sr Puliyani Lucy participated in the Online Formative Meet for Province Economers, and Sr Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi in the Province Secretaries Online Meet on 27 May by the Economer General and Secretary General, Rome.

## A HAPPY FMA- SR ANTHONY AGNES

The loving memory of our dear Sr Anthony Agnes still lingers on in our minds and hearts. Sr Agnes was indeed privileged to end her earthly sojourn after having celebrated the feast of Mary Help of Christians and in the wake of her entering into the bliss of paradise has brought to the congregation two permanent members who made their Final Commitment as FMA on 25 May 2022. We remember her with great affection and gratitude to God for the 48 years of her fruitful apostolic life.

She was a successful educator in many communities as a teacher, headmistress, boarding mistress and hostel warden. She made an impact as part of the team of social workers at the Salesian Beatitude Centre in Vyasarpadi through her commitment and dedication to the poorest, the needy and the marginalized of the slums in and around the place for twelve years. She joyfully served among the women and the poor people, young and old. Her ecclesial sense was evident in her zeal for animating the parish activities. Being with the children in the oratory and evening school was dear to her heart. When the chances were offered, she also got herself involved in the prison ministry bringing comfort and consolation to the prisoners. She was happy to visit the families in the villages strengthening their faith and bringing about greater unity in the family. Sr Agnes served also as the administrator in some of the communities of the Province for seven years. She was an able animator in three communities for three years each. She was very happy to work for child labourers, girls at risk, transgenders and tribal children. She was instrumental in the promotion of women through self-help groups. Many school dropouts were able to complete their education through her persistent efforts.

Sr Agnes was deeply spiritual and had a strong Eucharistic and Marian piety. She was sincere, understanding, helpful, cheerful and a loving person of open nature, capable of adapting herself to any situation, diligent and faithful to the duties entrusted to her. Networking in collaboration with the brother Salesians for the poor and downtrodden was a pleasant experience for Sr Agnes. Many

Salesians and other priests can vouch for her motherly care and delicate sentiments. She was the rightful winner of several awards, especially in the field of social service.

As we celebrate the centenary year of our presence in India, let us ask her to intercede for us to live a happy consecrated life and be always at the service of the poor and also obtain many vocations of her calibre for the province. Let us continue to pray for her younger sister, Sr Maria Lucy, a Cloistered Nun in the Order of the Discalced Carmelites who is the only surviving member of the family.

I am grateful to Sr Anthony Raj Christina, animator, and the community of Mary Immaculate Convent, Tirupattur, who lovingly accompanied our dear Sr Agnes, especially during the last stages of her life enabling her to surrender her soul peacefully to the creator. Sincere thanks to Sr Kunnathu Anna, animator and the Sisters of the community of Auxilium College, Katpadi for making all the arrangements for the funeral mass and for getting ready the cemetery within the premises of Auxilium campus in which Sr Agnes rests in peace. ***Rest in peace in the Lord dear Sr Agnes!***

## **IN PREPARATION FOR THE 150<sup>th</sup> OF OUR INSTITUTE**

Mother General and the General Council have sent the Modules in preparation for the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institute's Foundation on 5 August 2022. In concluding the Circular n. 1017 Mother wrote: *"I communicate to you that in May, June, and July, some modules will be sent to you that will be used for the preparation for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Institute, and an outline for the celebration of a new "Yes" on 5 August."* The texts of the modules are well-prepared and are taken from the book edited by Sr Ko Ha Fong Maria, *'The strength of the roots: The Word of God in the life plan of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians*. The theme for the month of MAY: The Constitutions, a gift from Mary; JUNE: Trinitarian Horizon in our Constitutions; JULY: Christological Horizon in our Constitutions. Kindly make use of them to animate the Sisters and the Educating Community Members to renew and revitalize our Salesian Charism as outlined in our Constitutions. There are also suggestions for the celebration of 5 August 2022 to ensure that all the FMA in communion with each other may be able to express profound gratitude and renewed fidelity for the gift of our FMA vocation.

## **HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS!**

We rejoice with the FMA world on the appointment of Sr Martha Séide, from Haiti, as Consultor of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican City, by the Holy Father. She is a Professor of Educational Theology at the Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences "Auxilium" in Rome, where she is a member of the Academic Council, Director of the Institute of Pedagogical Methodology, and a Member of the Direction Committee of the Review of Educational Sciences. We wish her a fruitful mission in the field of Catholic Education!

It is indeed a matter of pride for the Church in India that two Indians among the 21, will be elevated by Pope Francis to the rank of a cardinal in a ceremony at the Vatican on 27 August 2022. This news was officially announced on Sunday, 29 May. The two Cardinals from India are Archbishop Filipe Neri Antonio Sebastiao di Rosario Ferrao, Archbishop of Goa and Damao, and Archbishop Anthony Poola, Archbishop of Hyderabad. As we congratulate our archbishops, let us offer our prayers for their fruitful ministry close to the Holy Father.

Fr Stan Swamy SJ (1937 – 2021) is honoured at the 2022 Martin Ennals Award Ceremony on 2 June 2022 in Geneva, for his exceptional commitment to defending human rights despite the great risks involved even to the point of immolating his life. He is a martyr of justice beyond limits and boundless charity to the poor and oppressed. May God be praised for the great service Fr Stan has rendered to the people in the margins of the society.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Let us intensify our prayers:

- ✚ For the fruitfulness of the great events in the annals of our Province: Centenary Celebration on 3 September 2022 and for the canonical Visit by Sr Celine Jacob, the Visiting General Councillor, from 9 August 2022.
- ✚ For Mrs Metilda, the elder sister of Sr Lourdasamy Ugini Fatima, who is seriously ill.
- ✚ For the Salesian Province of Guwahati that Don Bosco University may soon find a peaceful settlement to the critical issues it is facing.

## HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

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

- ✚ Provincial and the Confreres of Dimapur Province (IND) at the passing away of Fr VARIATHUKALAYIL Joseph SDB (82) on 9 May 2022
- ✚ Sr Antony Theresa at the demise of her nephew Mr Robert (60) on 11 May
- ✚ Provincial and the Confreres of Bombay (INB) at the sudden demise of Fr Bernard Fernandes (56) on 24 May 2022
- ✚ Sr Meenakshi D'Silva and the Sisters of INB at the passing away of Sr Fernandes Sylvia Philomena (79) on 26 May 2022

## LIVING IN OUR MEMORY- JUNE 2022

- 03 † Sr Barberi Lina (1986) and Sr Bagyam Mary (2004)
- 05 † Sr Martina Francesca (1994)
- 07 † Sr Nadar Catherine (2000)
- 09 † Sr Correa Alice (1996)
- 11 † Sr Drago Maria (2008)
- 13 † Sr Balestra Teresa (1955)
- 15 † Sr Joseph Lumin Priscilla (2010)
- 20 † Sr De Souza Theresa (2009)
- 21 † Sr Fernandes Evelina (1989)
- 25 † Sr Mc Guire Ada (1969)
- 27 † Sr Abramo Teresa (2017)
- 30 † Sr Fassa Cleofe (2001)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS – JUNE 2022

- 02 - 04 - Vocation Camp, Auxilium Home-Katpadi
- 02-05 - National Education Coordinators' Meet, The Citadel
- 05 - World Environment Day, Local Communities
- 06 - Team Meet along with Provincial Councillors, St Mary's Vellore
- 07 - Provincial Council Meet, St Mary's Vellore
- 08-10 - Presentation of Plan and Project 2022-2023, Online
- 11 - Inauguration of Avvai Nagar, Salem Community
- 17 - Seminar on Environment for the Evening Coaching Class Children, Vellore

- 18-19 - Headmistress / Principals Orientation Meet, St Mary's, Vellore
- 22- 02 July - Provincial Team Visit to Sri Lanka
- 25 - YP/SC/Cate/VIDES/Mission ad gentes Coordinators Meet, Aux. Home
- 26 - VIDES General Body Meet, Auxilium Home - Katpadi
- 30 - Centenary Renewal Programme, online

On 24 June, the Friday after the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, the Church celebrates the **Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus**. God's infinite love for us is revealed in the pierced heart of His Son. It is the symbol of a love that conquers sin and transcends death; the symbol of the One who loved us to the end.

The Church was born from the pierced heart of Jesus on the cross. When the soldier thrust his lance into Jesus' side, immediately blood and water flowed out. Saint John Chrysostom says that *water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy eucharist. From these two sacraments, the Church is born: from baptism, the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit, and from the holy eucharist, the outstanding gift of the Heart of Jesus, the Heart that gives life to the Church and all of us, her members.*

In prayer, we contemplate the pierced Heart of our Saviour and His incredible love. We reflect on the mercy, compassion and love that God has bestowed upon us. We become enthralled by Christ, like St Paul, who prayed that Christ might dwell in the hearts of the Ephesian Christians through faith and that they might know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge. When Christ dwells in our hearts, when we know his love deeply, in our minds and hearts, we are moved to live the great commandments of love of God and neighbour. In our lives and our mission in the Church, let us place all our hope in the One who said *Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart* (Mt.11: 28-29). Jesus invites us to learn from his heart and to imitate his love, his meekness, and his humility. Let us turn to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by reciting often the invocation: ***Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine.***

On 25 June, we commemorate the **Immaculate Heart of Mary**. This feast refers to the interior life of Mary, mother of Jesus, her joys and sorrows, her virtues and hidden perfections, and, above all, her virginal love for God the Father, her maternal love for her son Jesus Christ, and her motherly and compassionate love for all mankind. Let us unite ourselves to the heart of Mary and assume her virtues, to love God and Jesus better.

***I wish you all a very Happy feast of Pentecost and the Sacred Heart of Jesus!***

*Festal wishes to Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi*

*Sacred Heart Convent, Polur*

*Sacred Heart Novitiate, Negombo*

*and our Lady's Centre, Chetpet which has the Immaculate Heart of Mary as the patroness!*

*Yours affectionately,*

*Sr. Nirmala Lazar*

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA  
Provincial**



**HAPPY  
FEAST**

# Itinerary of the Provincial

JUNE 2022

- 31 May FN - Renewal of vows, Negombo, Sri Lanka**  
**AN - Installation of New Animator, Nochchiyagama, Sri Lanka**
- 01 June - Installation of the New Animator, Thirukovil, Sri Lanka**
- 02 - Journey to India**
- 03 & 05 - National Education Coordinators' Meet, The Citadel**
- 04 - Vocation Camp, Auxilium Home, Katpadi**
- 06 - Province Team Meet along with Prov. Councillors, Vellore**
- 07 - Provincial Council, Vellore**
- 8-10 - Presentation of Plan and Project 2022-23, Online**
- 11 - Inauguration of Avvai Nagar -Salem Community**
- 18 - Headmistress / Principals' Orientation, Vellore**
- 25 - YP/SC/Cate./VIDES/Mission ad gentes Coord. Meet, Aux.Home**
- 26 - VIDES General Body Meet, Auxilium Home - Katpadi**
- 30 - Centenary Renewal Programme, online**

