



INM FMA/Pro.Cir.64

November 2022

“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” – Jn 11: 25-26

My Dearest Sisters,

Viva Gesù!

Affectionate greetings to you from the Provincial House, Kodambakkam!

The Christian celebrations of All Saints' Day on the first day of November and All Souls' Day on 2 November stem from a belief that there is a powerful spiritual bond between those in heaven (the "Church triumphant"), and the living (the "Church militant"). On the Solemnity of All Saints, the Church celebrates those Christians who achieved spiritual maturity and venerates all these holy men and women. The Saints are “persons in heaven (officially canonized or not), who lived heroically virtuous lives, offered their lives for others, or were martyred for the faith, who have attained the beatific vision in Heaven, and who are worthy of imitation.” Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta says, “holiness is not the luxury of a few people, but a simple duty for you and me.” In the context of the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the FMA Institute, our Superior General Sr Chiara Cazzuola reminds us that the commitment to holiness is a priority: “Mother Mazzarello said, ‘If you want to become a saint, hurry up, there is no time to waste’ (L 47,10). It is the first thing to do, but also the most important! We are not alone on this journey and we can count on the example and intercession of the Sisters who are on their way to the altars” (Circular No. 1019).

We are all called to become saints, and we can attain sanctity by striving to follow God’s commands and being united with Him in love. To be holy, to be a saint, means allowing God “to live His life in us”, and to live the beatitudes of the kingdom radically, and thus contribute to building up the kingdom of God here on earth. On this sacred day let us resolve to imitate the virtues of these saints and pray in a special way to them that they continue to help and guide us along our path to holiness.

On All Souls’ Day, the Church remembers and prays for the faithful departed: our brothers and sisters who have died marked with the sign of faith, particularly, we pray for all the souls in purgatory. As our Constitutions recommend, let us offer special prayers for our departed Sisters, family members and benefactors throughout this month, believing that “the communion that has united us in life continues and is strengthened when we reach the moment of passing from this life to the Father’s house” (C. 60).

JOURNEY WITH MARY IN THE COURSE OF THE CENTURY AND BEYOND ...

During this month, as we complete the first **100 YEARS** of FMA presence in India, I invite you to reflect on our specific **Marian identity** rediscovering the Salesian charism in all its apostolic and missionary dynamism.

Synodality signifies ‘Living a participative and inclusive ecclesial process that offers everyone the opportunity to contribute to the edification of the People of God’, for the building up of God’s Kingdom of peace and justice, fraternity and love (Cf. *Preparatory Document No.2*). We are called to become together **witnesses of God’s love, God and His grace**, to the broken world as the document rightly indicates, recognizing and appreciating the wealth and variety of gifts and charism that the Spirit liberally bestows for the good of the community and the benefit of the entire human family.

Mary in her song ‘Magnificat’ glorifies the Lord and rejoices in God for His favours: ‘for he looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant’ (Lk.1,47). **Mary bears witness to God’s wonderful deeds in her life: ‘the mighty One has done great things for me...’**. She shares God’s unconditional and steadfast love with others and proclaims the liberating and salvific action of God for humankind: ‘He has lifted the lowly; He has filled the hungry with good things’. These words uttered by Mary become a witness to God’s loving deeds in favour of those who rely on him for safety and emancipation. As Mary, the wise woman, who knew how to read the reality of her days and acknowledged the greatness of God Almighty, we, her loving daughters, are called to habituate ourselves to read the realities of daily life and behold God’s grandeur. As ‘*La Madre*’ exhorts us we need **‘to walk with our feet on the ground and our minds turned to Heaven in a continuous attitude of docibilitas’ i.e. listening that enables us to unlearn, learn, and relearn**. We are called to live life as a vocation with our specific **Marian identity** and to rediscover the Salesian charism in all its apostolic and missionary dynamism.

As members of the Church, we are called to **‘listen without prejudice’ and ‘speak with courage’**. Mary is a symbol of synodality. **Mary walked with God, listened to the Spirit and in her ‘Magnificat’ spoke courageously for the liberation of those who are on the margins**. She walked many miles to be with her cousin Elizabeth and remained with her for three months. We could imagine the two journeying together, sharing how God visited them in unique ways and thus strengthened their trust in God as they listened to one another about their God experience. The purpose of the synod is ‘to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, **allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another** and create bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts and give strength to our hands (Preparatory Document, 32).

The Johannine Gospel presents Mary in two scenes, namely, the wedding at Cana (Jn 2:1-11) and the foot of the cross (Jn 19:26-27). John begins and ends Jesus’ ministry with his mother. This indicates that Mary was with Jesus and his disciples journeying together during his public ministry. As GC XXIV indicates, Mary’s presence at Cana was generative; Mary with all the richness of her humanity, maternity, and powerful intercession, calls us to take on a new style of presence that flows from an ‘overview’ as *La Madre* puts it, a typically **feminine gift that sees, ponders in the heart and lets itself be involved**.

Walking with God enabled Mary to walk with others. Like Mary, we **must walk with God and with others in faithfulness and love bearing witness to the Love of God in our lives**. The article 53 of our Constitutions urges us to walk with others as in a family and build communion, by ‘constantly tending towards love, and with Salesian optimism’, **to believe in the omnipotent efficacy of Love, says Carlo Colli, which makes possible the imperturbable serenity, continuous and generous availability, sense of humour, contagious joy, affability with everyone**. Carlo Colli explicates that ‘the constantly tending’ urges the FMA to be attentive in correcting in herself the attitudes and behaviours like proud self-sufficiency, intolerance, prejudices, touchiness, jealousy, lack of sincerity, the search for one’s convenience and facile criticism all which do not build sisterly communion. We will witness God’s unconditional and merciful love in the measure in which we love our sisters with unconditional love and acceptance.

May Mary, our Mother and our Teacher help us to love God and bear witness to His grace by living our Marian identity which enables us to live in generous availability, contagious joy and affability with everyone.

Let us reflect on the following questions and share the insights:

- ✚ What efforts do I make to ‘listen without prejudice’ and ‘speak with courage’ to witness God’s love?
- ✚ How can I exercise a feminine gift that sees, ponders in the heart and lets itself be involved?
- ✚ How can I consciously live my *Marian identity* that enables me to live in generous availability, contagious joy and affability with everyone?

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 01 - All Saints Day
- 02 - All Souls Day
- 13 - St. Artemide Zatti
- 14 - Children’s Day
- 15 - Bl.Magdalena Morano
- 20 - Christ the King
- 24 - Centenary of the Arrival of our Pioneers in India
- 25 - Ven. Occhiena Margherita
- 27 - First Sunday of Advent / Communio India Sunday
- 29 - Novena to the feast the Immaculate Conception of Mary begins
- 30 - St Andrew the Apostle

ALL IN THE FAMILY

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

24 November is a memorable day in the annals of FMA India as we commemorate with immense joy and gratitude the arrival of the first group of missionaries to our motherland (Thanjavur) in 1922 and another group of missionaries to Assam in 1923. They have sown the seed of the Salesian charism in the Indian soil and we have grown into a gigantic tree giving the fruits of holiness and integral education to numerous young people. Our Mother General Sr Chiara Cazzuola in her circular 1022 highlights “the figures of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians... transmit to us the experience of a living charism woven into the texture of every day. Like them, each of us can with her own life make the charism grow and enrich it with her characteristics and resources. Each of us in our educating community can share and make concrete in our mission what Don Bosco said, ‘You will complete the work that I begin; I sketch, you will spread out the colours’”. As FMA living in this graceful and historical era, let us feel a greater sense of responsibility to assimilate and live to the full the rich heritage of our charism and transmit the same to future generations. I request you to celebrate this great event in a highly significant way in our communities together with the young people, the Salesian Family and the entire educating community. May the beauty and fragrance of the Salesian Spirit of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello nurtured by our Sisters who have gone before us continue to shine forth in the second centenary and beyond!

COMMUNIO INDIA SUNDAY

Amidst the sufferings and challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Latin Catholic Church in India comprising 132 dioceses, religious communities, institutions and Parishes, observes **27 November** (The first week of Advent) as the Communio India Sunday this year.

The CCBI launched Communio India in 2018 for the following purposes: To establish a missionary organisation, to build a culture of sharing and caring in solidarity with the needy brothers and sisters in our own country; to encourage the faithful to pray and help the missions and the missionaries and more importantly to promote missionary vocations; to encourage and inspire the faithful to be lay missionaries expressing solidarity with those who are suffering. The CCBI recommends that the Communio India Sunday should be observed faithfully and meaningfully in all the parishes and institutions in our country with the proper commentary at the Holy Mass and special prayers of the faithful. Let the celebration of this Sunday help us to become conscious of our baptismal call to be missionary disciples, to pray for the mission of the Church in India and gratefully remember all our missionaries who work gladly and generously in various parts of our country to proclaim the joy of the gospel.

SIXTH WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

The World Day of the Poor is commemorated annually on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time in the liturgical calendar which falls on **13 November** this year. In his message for the 6th World Day of the Poor on the theme **“For your sakes, Christ became poor (2 Cor. 8:9)”**, Pope Francis invites Christians to greater solidarity and responsibility for the poor in the society stressing the importance of putting our faith into practice through personal involvement that cannot be delegated to others. The Pope noted that the World Day of the poor this year comes “as a healthy challenge, helping us to reflect on our style of life and the many forms of poverty around us.” He added that the theme of the World Day of the Poor presents us with the great paradox of our life of faith, that “Christ’s poverty makes us rich” because he became poor for our sake so that our lives are illumined and transformed taking on “a worth that the world does not appreciate and cannot bestow.”

Therefore, “if we want life to triumph over death and dignity to be redeemed from injustice, we need to follow Christ’s path of poverty sharing our lives out of love breaking the bread of our daily existence with our brothers and sisters beginning with the least of them, those who lack the very essentials of life.” This is the way to create equality, to free the poor from their misery and the rich from their vanity and both from despair. May this 2022 *World Day of the Poor* be for us a moment of grace. May it enable us to make a personal and communal examination of conscience and ask ourselves whether the poverty of Jesus Christ is our faithful companion in life.

NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr Arockiasamy Rackel Mary, the Animator and Sisters of the Negombo Auxilium Community for organizing the annual retreat of the candidates from 4 to 6 October and the Medal receiving ceremony of the two postulants on 7 October. Million thanks to Sr Anthony Raj Christina for diligently inspecting our Schools in Sri Lanka from 7 to 11 October and guiding our Sisters with the help needed for their efficient educative ministry.
- ✚ Hearty thanks to Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the animator, and the community of Kodambakkam for extending hospitality to the ecomers during the submission of half-yearly Society accounts on 14 October; the new ecomers during their course on 15 and 16; and the provincial councillors on 21 and 22 October. Congratulations to Sr Puliyani Lucy, the Provincial Ecomer, for animating the ecomers.
- ✚ Sincere appreciation to the following Team members for organizing and animating the meetings: Sr Mahimainathan Sathiyavani, the YAR and Non Formal Coordinator for the online training offered to the Boarding Sisters on 15 October; Sr Varghese Mary Janet, the ADMA Coordinator, for the seminar on ‘Introduction to ADMA’ to the Candidates, Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi on 15 October; Sr Lourdasamy Solomon Kalai, the Coordinator for Social Communication for the webinar on Media Education for Students and Teachers on 22 October and Media Education to Sisters on 29 October.

- ✚ Sincere gratitude to Sr Doss Rosalia, the Directress of SEARCH Ashram, Mannivakkam, for animating the seven First Year Novices from 20 to 30 October; and Sr Pichai Mary Saroja, the animator and the Community for facilitating the ashram experience of the Novices.
- ✚ Thanks a million to Sr Fernando Mary Ann, the Delegate of Sri Lanka, and the community of Colombo, for organizing the Animators' Meet on 24 October.
- ✚ Hearty Congratulations to Sr Joseph Teresa INB for the online presentation of the Renewal Programme, "Seed of Salesian Charism sown by Sr Berta Sperrfechter" on 30 October 2022.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

- ✚ Sr Antonyraj Mary Josephine, the National Coordinator for Education, participated in the Meeting of the Regional Education Secretaries / National Coordinators Meet on 08 October 2022 at CBCI Center, New Delhi organized by the CBCI Office for Education and Culture, on the theme 'The Challenges and way forward in education ministry in India'.
- ✚ Sr Kanikkairaj Shermila, the Social Development Coordinator (SDC) of our Province and her staff Ms Divya Shree, participated in the National level SDC meeting from 8 to 10 October 2022 at Asha Nivas Social Service Center, Chennai. Thanks to Sr Azarias Arokia Mary Selvi, the National Development Forum Coordinator, who organized the meeting on the theme, "NDF towards networking in the provinces and addressing the Ecological Concern".
- ✚ Sr Amirthanathan Preethi Diana, Sr Gabriel Mary Chitra and Sr Chrisdhu Dass Esther Rani will be doing the first phase of the Second Novitiate at Lumen Institute, Tindivanam, along with their companions of INT, INK and INB Provinces and the Sisters of other congregations, from 21 November to 20 December 2022. Our prayerful wishes to them for this enriching inter-congregational and inter-province experience.
- ✚ Sr Lawrance Daisy and Sr Anthony Samy Abisha are attending the online course on Video Making, organized by the Training Institute of Digital Education of MSFS Fathers from 30 October to 4 November 2022.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

We offer our loving prayers and heartfelt condolences to Sr Nicholas Susheela at the demise of her sister Mrs Agnes Nicholas (75) on 29 October 2022.

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY- NOVEMBER 2022

- 01 † Sr Fonseca Juanita (Novice) (1954)
- 06 † Sr Fernando Amala (2004)
- 09 † Sr Ghidoni Alma (1980)
- 11 † Sr Morris Flida (2016), Sr Viano Nicolina (2020)
- 14 † Sr Galli Clotilde (1990)
- 17 † Sr Thonippara Rosamma(2008)
- 18 † Sr Murgia Maria (1968)
- 20 † Sr Avio Maria (1959)
- 21 † Sr Schiapparelli Severina (1980), Sr Pereira Ludgarde (2001)
- 24 † Sr Gnavi Virginia (1977), Sr Anthoniappan A.Celine (2021)
- 26 † Sr David Arul Mary (1946), Sr Rodrigues Ethelvina (2016)
- 27 † Sr Azolini Gina (1998)
- 28 † Sr D'Cruz Constance (2003)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS – NOVEMBER 2022

- 4,5 - Counselling Course for Teachers, Auxilium Home, Katpadi
- 5,6 - Trimonthly Recollection and Animation for Juniors, Kodambakkam
- 7-9 - Juniors Animation and Recollection, Negombo
- 8-9 - Understanding Governance, online meet.
- 12 - Trimonthly Recollection for Seniors, Communities / Zonal
- 13 - Feast of St Mary Mazzarello, local communities & World Day of the poor
- 13 -14 - General Assembly I & Discernment, ACK
- 15-16 - General Assembly II & Discernment, ACK
- 17-18 - General Assembly III & Discernment, Kodambakkam
- 19 - Conclusion of the Canonical visitation & World Youth Day
- 19, 20 - Salesian Co-operators Retreat and Promise Day, TPT
- 24 - Centenary Celebrations in local communities
- 25 - Sr Celine Jacob's departure to Rome
- 26-29 - SPM Leadership Training Programme, Mannivakkam (Chetpet & Kod)
- 27 - VIDES zonal meeting, online
- 30 - Centenary Renewal Programme

We begin the advent season on 27 November. The advent Season is a very special time of expectant waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. The first day of Advent is the beginning of a new Liturgical (or Church) calendar and on that day we begin four weeks of preparation in anticipation of the nativity of Jesus at Christmas. During this advent Season, we are invited to reflect on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today. During this significant season as we prepare the Advent Wreath which symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ, adorned with four candles, the symbols of hope, faith, joy and love, let us with an open heart and yearning spirit, keep ourselves alert and awake to recognize the Lord who comes, comes, and ever comes, listening and meditating on the Word of God like Mary the Immaculate Mother as we begin the novena to the feast of her immaculate conception at the end of this month.

*I wish a very Happy Children's Day to all the dear children of our Institutions,
A fervent Season of Advent and Novena to the feast
of Mary Immaculate to everyone!*

*Happy Feast
Of All Saints!*

*Yours affectionately,
Sr. Nirmala Lazar*

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**

