



INM FMA/Pro.Cir.67

February 2023

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer”. - Rom 12:12

My Dearest Sisters,

Viva Gesu`!

Affectionate greetings to you from the Provincial House, Kodambakkam!

On the second day of February, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which is observed as the World Day of Consecrated Life. Forty days after Christmas, we celebrate the Lord who enters the Temple and comes to encounter his people. In the Eastern Churches, this feast is called the “Feast of Encounter”: it is the encounter between God, who became a child to bring newness to our world, and an expectant humanity, represented by the elderly man and woman in the Temple. I wish you a very happy day of Consecrated Life!

On the feast of Don Bosco, our Father and Founder, we had the joyful announcement of the **new Provincial** for our Province of St. Thomas, the Apostle (INM), **Sr Devadoss Margaret**. Our beloved Mother General Rev Sr Chiara Cazzuola has nominated her as the 16th Provincial of INM for the period of 2023 - 2029. We are indeed grateful to Mother and the members of the General Council for discerning the will of God for our Province.

Sr Margaret is serving our Province as a Provincial Councillor for the last six years and as the animator of the Formation house Sacred Heart Home, Katpadi for the past three years. She has a vast experience in the field of formation and animation and has contributed to the governance of the Province.

She made her first profession on 24 May 1988 at Sacred Heart Novitiate, Bangalore and her Final Commitment on 6 August 1994 at Auxilium College, Katpadi. She has obtained her Master’s degree in Mathematics and Doctorate in Theology. She has done the Salesian Spirituality Course for two years in Rome and participated in the General Chapter XXIV at the Generalate, Rome in 2021. She has served the Province in various capacities: Assistant of the Candidates, Novices and Juniors, Animator of the formation house for four years and the community of Kingsford, Chennai for six years. She is a person of prayer, right judgement and creative thinking. She is dedicated to the mission and has a great sense of belonging to the Province, the Institute and the Church; as a theologian had contributed much to the spiritual growth of the Province as well as the Seminarians and formees of other congregations. **The Visiting General Councillor Rev Sr Celine Jacob, will be installing the New Provincial on 25 May 2023.** Hearty congratulations to you our dear Sr Devadoss Margaret the Provincial-Designate! We assure you of our loving prayers and sisterly support and collaboration.

We also rejoice and thank God for the gift of **Sr Fernando Majella, the Provincial Designate of Our Lady of Snow (INT) Province**. We express our heartiest congratulations and assurance of prayers to our dear Sister as she takes up the leadership of the young and vibrant Province for the next six years.

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

We have just completed the first **100 YEARS** of FMA Presence in India and 150 years of the foundation of our Institute. I invite you this month, to reflect on “**Patience and Compassion as vital elements required for a synodal journey**”, drawing inspiration from the homily of Holy Father Pope Francis on World Day of Consecrated Life and his message for the World Day of the Sick 2023.

Pope Francis, during the homily on the feast of Presentation of our Lord on 2 February 2022, focused on the words of Simeon who “**looked forward to the consolation of Israel**” (Lk 2:25). Simeon and Anna awaited with patience the fidelity of the Lord and did not allow themselves to be robbed of the joy of the encounter with him. It is an invitation for all the consecrated women and men to look to the patience of God and the patience of Simeon as they consider their own lives of consecration. The Roman Pontiff says that **Patience is a hallmark of consecrated women and men**.

Patience is not simply about tolerating difficulties or showing grim determination in the face of hardship, it's not a sign of weakness, but the strength of spirit that enables us to ‘**carry the burden**’ of personal and community problems, to accept others as different from ourselves, to persevere in goodness when all seems lost, and to keep advancing even when overcome by fatigue and listlessness.

The Holy Father has pointed to what he called **three “settings”** in which patience can become concrete: In our **personal life** the way we have responded to the Lord's call has not always been constant because of disappointments, frustrations and feelings of powerlessness. In these circumstances, we have to be **patient with ourselves** and await in hope God's own times and places rather than yielding to interior sadness and discouragement.

A second setting in which patience can become concrete is **community life**. Human relationships are not always serene, especially when they involve sharing a project of life or apostolic activity. We need to cultivate a kind of reciprocal patience: “the ability to support, that is, to bear on our own shoulders, the life of one of our brothers or sisters, including his or her weaknesses and failings.” The Roman Pontiff using an allegory beautifully exclaims, “Let us keep in mind that the Lord does not call us to be soloists, and there are many of those in the Church. We are called to be part of a choir that can sometimes miss a note or two, but must always try to sing in unison.” Our Constitutions exhort, “Like the first community of Mornese, we are called to **live this patient charity that excuses all, trusts all, bears with all and never loses hope** (C 7).

The third setting described by Pope Francis concerns **our relationship with the world**. Simeon and Anna did not complain about how wrong things are but patiently looked for the light shining in the darkness of history. We too need that kind of patience, so as not to fall into the trap of lamenting that ‘the world no longer listens to us’, or ‘we have no more vocations’, ‘it is very difficult to educate today's young people etc... Among the characteristics mentioned in the profile of the FMA as outlined by Don Bosco in the First Constitutions, it is stated, “Patient and zealous charity not only towards children but also towards young women and everyone without exception...”

This kindly patience helps us to be compassionate and merciful in the way we view ourselves, our communities and our world. This will enable us to accept every Sister in our community as she is, radiating the joy of fraternal life, and never to stop offering our service to all our brothers and sisters.

Our Holy Father has given us a beautiful message for the XXXI World Day of the sick observed on 11 February 2023, on the theme, “**Take care of him**” **Compassion is a synodal exercise of healing**. He says, “When we go on a journey with others, it is not unusual for someone to feel sick, to have to stop because of fatigue or of some mishap along the way. It is precisely in such moments that we see *how* we are walking together: whether we are truly companions on the journey, or merely

individuals on the same path, looking after our own interests and leaving others to “make do”. For this reason, as the whole Church journeys along the synodal path, he invites all of us to reflect on the fact that it is especially through the experience of vulnerability and illness that we can learn to walk together according to the style of God, which is closeness, compassion, and tenderness. The World Day of the Sick calls for prayer and closeness towards those who suffer.

In his Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis encourages us to read anew the parable of the Good Samaritan, illustrating how we can move from the “dark clouds” of a closed world to “envisaging and engendering an open world” (cf. No. 56). There is a profound link between this parable of Jesus and the many ways in which fraternity is denied in today’s world, leading to loneliness and abandonment. This kind of cruelty can be overcome more easily, as the parable tells us – to be **moved to compassion within us**. Two travellers, considered pious and religious, see the wounded man, yet fail to stop. The third passer-by, however, a Samaritan, a scorned foreigner, is moved with compassion and takes care of that stranger on the road, treating him as a brother. In doing so, without even thinking about it, **he makes a difference, he makes the world more fraternal**.

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

- ✚ How can we live Patience and Compassion in three settings?
 - Personal life
 - Community Living
 - Relationship with the laity

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 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
- 16 - 140 years of the birth of Bl. Sr. Maria Troncatti (1883-2023)
- 18 - St Kuriakose Elias Chavara
- 22 - Ash Wednesday
- 25 - Sts Versiglia and Caravario SDB

ALL IN THE FAMILY

PROVINCE COMMUNITY DAY 2023

It was indeed a magnificent family experience of love and joy as we celebrated the Province Community Day on 21 January 2023 at Kodambakkam. The gracious presence of the Provincial Councillors, the loving Presence of all the animators, the enlightening presence of the Team members, the cheering presence of all the Sisters and the friendly presence of students, Teachers, Salesian Family and Educating Community members added colour and beauty to the occasion. The well-chosen spiritual practices for the four weeks - **Solid ongoing formation, Missionary Synodality, Integral Ecology and Proclaim the gospel in an attitude of gratitude and celebration**- based on the theme ‘**With Mary be a life-giving presence**’ actively involved everyone during the preparation and the celebration of this joyful event. I do cherish and treasure the creative presentation of the **Spiritual bouquet** of each of your community, a sign of your gratitude.

A million thanks to dear Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the Vice Provincial, for proposing the spiritual practices, meticulously coordinating all the events of the day and loving words of felicitation. As the animator of Fatima Community, Kodambakkam, she, along with the Sisters of the community, left no stone unturned to make the Province Community Day celebration truly grand and meaningful. Thank you, dear Sisters, for your hard work, sacrifice and above all for your loving hospitality and sisterly presence.

Sincere gratitude to Rev Fr K.M. Jose SDB, the Provincial INM, for graciously presiding over the thanksgiving Holy Eucharist invoking the choicest blessings of the Lord on all of us. His in-depth and concise homily with the acronym LED (Listening, Empathetic and Dedicated) presence like Mary our Mother, to shine forth the light of Christ to the world was memorable. At this instant, I record a **note of thanks** to our dear Fr Jose, as he completes his tenure as Provincial of Chennai, for all he was for us and for all he had done. He was really an understanding and encouraging father and guide who accompanied us with his brotherly support and guidance. He was a simple, gentle and unassuming leader after the heart of Christ the Good Shepherd, who collaborated whole-heartedly in our shared mission among the children and young girls through the Salesians. We offer our continuous prayers to him and for his future mission.

Loving gratitude to all the communities, young people and lay collaborators who animated and participated in the programme of the day: The community of Mary Immaculate Convent for the dynamic Morning Prayer; the community of Arni for the meaningful animation of the Holy Eucharist; Kodambakkam School for the welcoming Guard of Honour, Vyasarpadi elementary School children for the fervent Prayer Dance, Nandambakkam boarding children for the rhythmic Welcome Dance, the Sisters of Auxilium College for the melodious Felicitation Song, the students of Auxilium Home for the creative theme Presentation, the Candidates of Sacred Heart Home for the delightful Dance. It was a joy for us to release the Beacon Light Vol.7 compiled by Sr Fernandez Crystal which contains the life history of seven of our deceased Sisters, and the higher education policy by Sr Kunnathu Anna and the Sisters of the Commission. Thank you, dear Sisters, for your hard work and commitment.

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS!

XIV NATIONAL BOSCOREE 2022 - 2023: The fourteenth National Boscoree 2022 - 2023 was held in Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU), Guwahati, from 29 December to 3 January 2023 with the theme “Save Our Planet Home”. Expressions of gratitude to the SDB & FMA Provincials, Rev Fr Januarius Sangma, Rev Sr Kurusinkal Alphonsa, and all the organizers and collaborators for the animation and hospitality. Hearty Congratulations to all our Schools that participated and bagged many prizes. **A special record of appreciation** to Sr Antonyraj Christina who was awarded for her contribution to scouting for the past 30 years during the Inaugural ceremony of XIV Boscoree. Dear Sr. Christina, we are proud of your wonderful service!

Silver Jubilee of Scouts and Guides

Don Bosco Scouts and Guides District Association, Chennai, Tamil Nadu will be inaugurating the Silver Jubilee celebrations of its inception on 11 February 2023, from 10.00 to 12.00 noon, at Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Thanjavur. The association stands tall in building up disciplined and good leaders. Various programmes have been planned throughout this jubilee year to keep the association abreast with the changing times. Prayerful wishes to all the animators and students of Don Bosco Scouts and Guides District association that they may continue to journey towards excellence and integral development true to their motto “Be Prepared”.

ARUWYE turns Silver

The Glorious Silver Jubilee of **Auxilium Rural Underprivileged Women and Youth Empowerment-ARUWYE**, the Social Development Office of our Province was celebrated on 22 January 2023, at Kodambakkam. There was an atmosphere of jubilation and gratitude as ARUWYE crosses the milestone of a Quarter Century in working to promote Human dignity and empowerment of the poor

and the marginalized in society. The silver day began at 7.00 a.m. celebrating the thanksgiving Mass presided over by Rev Fr John Christy SDB, in which the Provincial Councillors, Animators and Team Members along with all the ARUWYE staff, and representatives of the women groups participated. The central theme of the Homily “to *be simple and simply synodal*” captured the minds of the participants.

The cultural events began at 4.30 p.m. A traditional folk art procession accompanied the distinguished chief guest of the day, Mrs Innocent Divya, I.A.S., the new managing directress of the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC), and the guests of honour to the Fatima Matriculation Golden Jubilee Auditorium. Lighting the Kuthuvillakku with 25 wicks by the chief guest and other representatives to invoke the presence of the Lord was indeed a significant gesture. After a prayer dance, the Pioneers and the former National Development coordinators were appreciated and honoured for their tireless services. The 25 years journey of ARUWYE was presented through a video; achievement awards were given to Mr Koteeswaran for his active participation in the Children parliament and Mrs Kasthuri from the self-help group for her sustainability in Livelihood activity. The colourful traditional dances were performed by the Alternative Media centre folk, Loyola College, Chennai on empowerment of women and saving Mother Earth.

We express our gratitude to the pioneering efforts of the stalwarts, Sr Pichai Mary Saroja, the first Directress of the Development Office and Sr Selvam Maria who succeeded her, Sr Joseph Lumin Priscilla, of holy memory, Sr Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi INT, and Sr Kanikairaj Shermila the present SDC and her lay collaborators, for their vision, commitment and indomitable courage that shaped the ARUWYE to what it is today, a Non-Government Organization that has visibility in the society, reaching out to the unreached and giving power to the powerless, especially the women and children in the margins. A special note of thanks and appreciation to Sr Shermila and her team, Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the animator of Kodambakkam, for coordinating efficiently the day’s events. We wish and pray that the silver years of ARUWYE turn into gold, diamond, platinum and centenary etc... touching lives and transforming society.

Silver Bells chime at Yellagiri Hills

On 26 January 2023, Amala Anjali at Yellagiri Hills was dazzling with joy and gratitude as the community celebrated the silver jubilee of its foundation. The Celebration began with the cultural Programme at 10.30 a.m. during which Amala Anjali students voiced out the song of silver Jubilee and presented the history of the house. Don Bosco college students and the boarders from MIC added beauty to the programme with their amazing songs and dance. The Sharing of happy experiences of five past pupils of Amala Anjali who are pursuing their higher education was truly inspiring. Rev. Fr. K.M Jose SDB, the provincial INM, along with eight other priests celebrated the thanksgiving holy Eucharist. Hearty Congratulations to Sr Perianayagam John Martina, the animator and the Sisters of the community for organizing the celebration in a significant manner. Let us pray with hope that the community may continue to serve many more children, youth and their families according to the signs of the time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AWARENESS SESSION

An awareness session will be held on 11 February 2023, Saturday from 2.15 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. at AICUF House, Nungambakkam, Chennai -34, on the theme "Need of protecting Indian Constitution in the present-day context of India and the role of civil society". The following Sisters from our Province will be participating in this session: Sr Alphonse J.Isabella, Sr Madalaimuthu Lidwin Mary, Sr Lourdusamy Kalai Gnani, Sr Sebastian Amala, Sr Mahimainathan Sathiyavani, Sr Kanikairaj Shermila and SDC staff, Sr Susainathan Ayesha Bindhu, Sr Thirukumaran Tamil Selvi with a staff from Thoraipakkam/Kannaginagar, and Sr Adaikalam Rekha.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE - GLOBAL COMPACT ON EDUCATION

A National meet was organised at the Provincial House - Dum Dum – Kolkata from 27 to 29 January 2023, on the theme “Global Compact on Education in view of Integral Ecology and Preventive System” for all the Province coordinators of Education along with a few representatives of Principals and vice Principals of both Schools and Colleges. The Conference was convened, in line with the invitation of Pope Francis, “The time has come to sign a Global Compact on Education with the younger generations, that involves the education of mature individuals, families and universities, institutions, religions, governments, all of humanity”. Hearty Congratulations to Sr Antonyraj Mary Josephine, the National Coordinator for Education, for her efficient organization of the National Meet with excellent resource persons; and deep appreciation to the 25 participants from all the seven provinces, for their wholehearted collaboration and drawing concrete action plans for their province and FMA India!

VISIT TO SRI LANKA

I will be going to Sri Lanka along with Sr Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi, the Province Secretary, from 12 to 16 February for the inauguration of the newly constructed house at Omandai near Vavuniya on 13 followed by Animators and young Sisters Meet. I request your prayers for the mission in Sri Lanka.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

- ✚ Sr Chinnappan Gracy Fatima and Sr Francis Jeyamani will be attending the XXVI General Body Meeting of the Indian Catechetical Association from 8 to 10 February 2023 at Kristu Jyotis Animation Centre, Kottiyam, Kerala, on the theme Catechesis as a Spirituality.
- ✚ Sr Susairaj Mary Sheila, Province Delegate for Salesian Cooperators, along with the Provincial councillors of the Association of Salesian Cooperators of Chennai, will be participating in the VII Regional Congress of ASC-South Asia 2023, at NBCLC, Bangaluru on 18 and 19 February 2023. The theme of the congress is “To be the yeast in today’s human family: Role of the Salesian Cooperators”.
- ✚ Sr Antonyraj Mary Josephine will be attending the **Ongoing Formation Course** from 13 February to 26 May 2023 at Pontifical Salesian University (UPS), Rome. We wish her a safe flight and a fruitful experience of spiritual renewal at the centre.
- ✚ Sr Susai Josephine Rani will be going to Rome for the preparatory course for the **Animators of Project Mornese** from 20 February to 12 March 2023 in Casa Generalizia, Rome. We wish her *buon viaggio* and an enriching experience.
- ✚ Sr Devadoss Margaret and Sr Rayappan Samala Elisa will be participating in **Project Jerusalem** organized by the Formation Sector, Rome from 28 February to 15 March 2023. We wish them a holy trip as they traverse the footsteps of Jesus our Lord.

NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Hearty thanks to Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the animator, and the community of Kodambakkam for hosting several meetings in January: Provincial Team Meet on 04; Provincial Team and Councillors’ Meet on 08; Provincial Council meet on 09; Submission of House Accounts on 11 and 12; Province Community Day on 21; Animators’ and Team Meet on the 22.
- ✚ A note of appreciation to Sr Sebastian Elizabeth, the general Coordinator, Sr Mariadoss Amala Mary and Sr Madalaimuthu Lidwin Mary, the Educating Community Coordinators, for organizing efficiently the Educating Community Meet at the Province level on 7 January; the Animators and the Educating Community Coordinators of the communities for animating the group discussion and general assembly in their respective institutions.

- ✚ Sincere thanks to Sr Rayappan Samala Elisa, the animator and the community of Vyasarpadi for hosting the VIDES General Body Meet on 29 January; Congratulations to Sr Maria Louis Sirumalar and Sr Maindan Jayapriya, the VIDES Coordinators for organizing the same.
- ✚ Million Thanks to Sr Runita Borja, General Councillor for Youth Ministry and her team for organizing the webinar on 14 January for all the Youth Pastoral Coordinators of PCI.
- ✚ Sincere gratitude to Sr Sebastian Elizabeth and the community of Mazzarello Home, Tirupattur for hosting and animating the SPM Training Programme for the 15 Candidates from 27 to 30 January 2023.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

Our loving prayers and heartfelt condolences to all those who lost their dear ones in January 2023:

- ✚ To the Provincial and confreres of Dimapur at the passing away of Fr. Mathew Tharakkan (88) on 03 January
- ✚ To Sr Irudayam Nirmal Rose at the demise of her paternal aunt Rev Sr Mary Alma SSAM (85) who passed away on 5 January
- ✚ To the Provincial and confreres of Kolkata at the loss of Fr Thomas Pulickal SDB (76) on 8 January
- ✚ To Rev Sr Lucy Rose Ozhukayil and the Sisters of INK Province at the passing away of the Sr Annie Kottaram (85) on 17 January 2023.

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY- FEBRUARY 2023

- 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 2023

- 04 - Trimonthly Recollection for Juniors & Seniors of Chennai zone, Kodambakkam
- 05 - Trimonthly Animation to Juniors, Kodambakkam
- 08 - Trimonthly Recollection for Seniors, Salem
- 9-10 - Provincial Council, Kodambakkam
- 11 - Silver Jubilee inauguration of DB Guides and Scouts, Thanjavur
Trimonthly Recollection for Seniors, Sacred Heart Home / Negombo
- 12 - Trimonthly Recollection for Seniors, Tirupattur
- 13 - House blessing, Omandai, Sri Lanka
- 15 - Juniors' animation, Negombo
- 18 - Retreat for Workers and House Staff of Vellore Zone, Arni
Chennai zone, Chetpet; Salem zone, Avvai Nagar
Eco Festivity, Communities

- 19 - ADMA Day Celebration, Communities
- 20-23 - SPM Training programme for Vellore & Auxilium Home students, M.Home-TPT
- 21 - Missionaries Ad gentes Meet, Online
- 25 - Retreat for Workers and House Staff of Tirupattur Zone, MIC

As we celebrate the World Day of the Sick on the feast of our Lady of Lourdes, 11 February, let us entrust to the intercession of Mary, Health of the Sick, all those who are ill; who care for them in their families, or through their work, research and volunteer service; and those who are committed to weaving personal, ecclesial, and civic bonds of fraternity.

We enter into the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday on 22 February, a favourable time of reflection and preparation before the celebration of Easter. May the observance of fasting, penance and almsgiving lead us to personal conversion uniting ourselves more deeply to the passion of our Lord and experiencing His immense and unconditional love.

*I wish each one of you a very happy feast of
the Presentation of our Lord,
Our Lady of Lourdes
and a fervent season of Lent!*



HAPPY FEAST

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**