



INM FMA/Pro.Cir.69

April 2023

“In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...” – 1 Pt 1:3

My Dearest Sisters,

Viva Gesu`!

Affectionate greetings to you from the Provincial House, Kodambakkam!

The month of April has blossomed in all its freshness leading us to experience the fragrance of the ineffable Paschal mystery. We are already immersed in the spiritual atmosphere of Holy Week “the central mystery of faith: the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. The Easter Triduum is the summit of the Liturgical Year and is the centre of our faith and vocation in the world.

On the evening of **Holy Thursday**, we enter the Easter Triduum, and we relive the Mass known as *in Coena Domini*, that is, the Mass in which we commemorate the Last Supper. It is on this evening Christ left His disciples the testament of His love in the Eucharist, not as a remembrance, but as His everlasting presence. He also asks us to love one another by becoming servants to one another, as He did in washing the disciples' feet, a gesture that anticipates His sacrificial oblation on the cross.

Good Friday is the day of penance, fasting and prayer. Through the texts of the Sacred Scripture and the liturgical prayers, we commemorate the redemptive Passion and Death of Jesus Christ as though we were on Calvary. By adoring the Cross, we are called to relive the journey of the innocent Lamb sacrificed for our salvation. Before the image of the crucified God, let us bring, in prayer, the many, who are crucified in our time, who only from Him can receive comfort and meaning in their suffering. Let us also pray that we are freed from the power of darkness, of pride, of resistance to being loved by God, since, “By His wounds we have been healed” (1 Pt 2: 24).

Holy Saturday is the day of silence, lived by the first disciples in mourning and bewilderment, shocked by Jesus' ignominious death. This Saturday is also **Mary's day**: she too lived it in tears, but her heart was full of faith, full of hope, and full of love. The Mother of Jesus had followed her Son along the path of sorrows and remained at the foot of the Cross, with her soul pierced. But when it all seemed to be over, she kept watch, she kept vigil, in expectation, maintaining her hope in the promise of God who raises the dead. Thus, in the world's darkest hour, she became the Mother of believers, the Mother of the Church and the sign of hope. Her witness and her intercession sustain us when the weight of the cross becomes too heavy for each one of us.

In the darkness of Holy Saturday, joy and light will break through with the rites of the **Easter Vigil** and, in the late evening, the festive singing of the *Alleluia*. It is an encounter in faith with the Risen Christ, and the joy of Easter will continue throughout the following fifty days, until the coming of the Holy Spirit. He who was crucified is risen!

Let us live the Paschal Triduum intensely allowing ourselves to be touched by the sacrificial love of Jesus, to be transformed, so that the resurrection may be realized in us. May our Blessed Mother, the Sorrowful Virgin accompany us on this spiritual journey, because it was she who followed Jesus in his

passion, was present with Him under the Cross, and received in her mother's heart the joy of the resurrection!

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

I invite you to reflect on the theme of **Christian Hope** this month, as we continue the synodal journey in the course of the century and beyond. Synodality is established to energise the life and evangelising 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 revitalisation of synodal structures which 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; they journey in faith, hope and charity. These theological virtues have relational and practical consequences, not only for discernment so integral to the synodal process but in developing a community which is journeying together in Christ.

Hope: This is one of the great gifts of the Holy Spirit. It fills us with creativity and opens new possibilities. Hope always allows us to begin again. *It is not afraid of failure but, because it is always open to the future, which is God's gift, it has the power to learn from failure and to grow in understanding.*

Christian hope is not the same as human optimism. Christian hope does not arise from any natural disposition, nor is it the product of some utopian vision whose credo is a doctrine of endless progress by which the future will be better than the past. A man-made hope will always end as the fragments of a shipwrecked dream washed up on the shores of an unredeemed history. Christian hope is the Spirit's gift, the assurance and the witness of the Risen Christ and the Father's inexhaustible love for us and all creation. It is God's future for us that comes to meet us as a promise and possibility, a future which is already realised in the Risen Christ. This gift of hope enables us to lay hold of these graced possibilities to create in our lives and our different circumstances the first fruits of the Kingdom of God.

The virtue of hope moves us to look always beyond ourselves to the One in whom we hope. It gives us the courage to face reality and its truth without despair and, no matter how deep the valley of darkness, to find that Christ is already present and that his grace is already working something new. Our grace is to work with Him in hope.

The patterns of fear and negativity which do not nourish the Mystical Body of Christ but continue to wound it. They are present in our Church, Society and even in our communities. We need to recognize the evil consequences and do all we can to eliminate them. Pope Francis says that hope is difficult to understand: it is "the most humble of virtues" that "only the poor can have". If we want to be women of hope, we must be poor, and not attached to anything. Hope is humble, and it is a virtue that we work at every day: every day we have to take it back, every day we have to take the rope and see that the anchor is fixed there and hold it in our hands; every day we have to remember that we have the security, that it is the Spirit who works in us with small things.

In order to make it clear how to live in hope, the Pope refers to the teaching of Jesus in the passage from the Gospel Lk 13:18-21, when He compares the Kingdom of God to the mustard seed thrown into the field. "Let's wait for it to grow". We don't go every day to see how it goes, because otherwise "it will never grow", the Pope points out, **referring to "patience" because, as Paul says, "hope needs patience". It is "the patience of knowing that we sow, but it is God who gives the growth".** For this reason, hope is a virtue that cannot be seen: it works from below; it makes us go and look from below. It is not easy to live in hope, but Pope says that it should be the air that a Christian breathes, the air of hope; on the other hand, one cannot walk, one cannot go on because one does not know where to go. Hope gives us security: hope does not disappoint. **If we hope, we will not be disappointed.** We must open ourselves up to that promise of the Lord, leaning towards that promise,

but knowing that there is the Spirit that works in us. May the Lord give to all of us, this grace of living in hope; through the Holy Spirit who throws us to the other shore and keeps us in hope, we ought to become prophets of hope.

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

- ✚ How do I live the virtue of hope in my daily life? what can I do to be more hopeful?
- ✚ What should I do to become a prophet of hope who can sustain the hope of others?

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MONTH

- 02 - Palm Sunday
- 06 - Maundy Thursday
- 07 - Good Friday
- 08 - Holy Saturday
- 09 - Easter Sunday
- 16 - Divine Mercy Sunday
- 22 - International Mother Earth Day
- 25 - St Mark, the Evangelist
- 26 - World Feast of Gratitude

ALL IN THE FAMILY

FMA PCI 2023

The FMA PCI Meet held at Manikandam, Trichy from 13 to 16 March 2023 was truly enriching, experiential and filled with abundant blessings of God. Joy and excitement filled the air as the Sisters were able to come together as one family after two years. The general theme of the PCI was explicated very aptly in three themes one for each day and they guided our liturgical celebrations and input sessions: ***Reawakening the original freshness of vocational fruitfulness; The new style of formation at all levels for a renewed youth ministry involving the entire educating community; and Revitalizing our Marian identity in the educational proposal.***

On **14 March**, the first day of PCI, Rev.Fr Sarprasadam Agilan SDB, the Provincial INT, presided over the Holy Eucharist and in his homily focussed on the importance of living a happy life as a human person and as a Salesian religious. During the solemn inaugural function organized by INT Province, Sr.Jacob Celine, the Presiding General Councillor and all the participants were warmly welcomed and felicitated. Launching of the PCI Website and Auxilium Green Movement designed by Sr Azarias Arockiamary Selvi, the NDF Coordinator and her Team, was very remarkable. The creative reports presented by Sr Saminathan Clara INC, the National General Coordinator and the other National coordinators of the different sectors, gave a bird's eye view of the FMA India journey of the past one year. And it was very evident that FMA India is journeying in line with the chapter deliberations, in particular – Integral Ecology and Global Compact on Education.

On the second day, the **15 March**, Fr K.M. Jose SDB, the formal Provincial INM, animated the assembly on the theme of the day affirming that a new style of formation is very necessary for our youth ministry involving the entire educating community under 4 salient features: Formation for Transformation, Accompaniment, Renewed youth ministry and Ongoing formation.

On **16 March**, the third and the last day of the PCI, the Holy mass was solemnized by Rev Fr Lourdusamy Don Bosco SDB, Provincial of Chennai who emphasized the importance of listening to God, to self and to others highlighting the aspects of preparation, participation and communion to revitalize the Marian identity. Visit to 'Valponasca' at Auxilium Thanjavur, the place impregnated with historical significance and the opportunity to pray at the statue of Mary Help of Christians given by Blessed Michael Rua SDB, the first successor of Don Bosco to the first Salesians

who arrived at Thanjavur, India in 1906, at the Cathedral Church, Thanjavur, were the exciting and blissful moments of the day.

I kindly invite you to read the report of FMA PCI 2023 which will be sent to you, and relish the rest of the events and the decisions made during the PCI.

Million thanks to Sr Jacob Celine, the Presiding General Councillor, for her sisterly and animating presence during these days of PCI, and enlightening the members on the themes of the days with a keynote address and introductory talks. Loving gratitude to Sr Amalanathan Mary Margaret, the Provincial INT and her councillors; Sr Soosaimuthu Arul Mary, the Animator and the community of the Provincial House, who left no stone unturned to keep the ambient clean and beautiful; Sr Soosai Magnificat, the animator and the community of Auxilium, Thanjavur, for their warm hospitality that helped everyone to enjoy the family spirit typical of Salesian spirituality. Sincere thanks to the SDB Provincials of INT and INM and Fr K.M. Jose, the Former Provincial INM for their brotherly and gracious presence and animation. Hearty thanks to all the Provincials of FMA India and each participant of the PCI 2023 for their sisterly presence and collaboration in making the PCI a significant and fruitful one. A million thanks to our dear Sr Kanickaraj Tamizharasi, the PCI Secretary for all the preparatory work and reporting, done with precision and dedication.

I am happy to communicate to you that Sr D'Silva Meenakshi, the provincial INB will be the new PCI President and Sr Palliparambil Leelamma, provincial INC will be the Vice president for the coming two years. I wish them hearty congratulations and best wishes to make FMA INDIA more visible, growing from strength to strength.

WORLD FEAST OF GRATITUDE 2023

We have started in earnest the preparation for the World Feast of Gratitude 2023 to be celebrated on **26 April 2023** in Bogotá, Colombia and animated by the 4 Colombian Provinces with the theme proposed to us "*With Mary we generate a culture of peace*". The logo of the Feast encloses a profound message through the various elements that compose it: **Mary / Outstretched hand:** Mary



reminds us of our identity as daughters. She continues to walk in this house, the "house" of Colombia, in the life and works of the FMA who, by recognizing the dignity of children, young people and women, generate new opportunities to build a culture of peace. Her outstretched hands are a sign of welcome. **The Orchids:** symbolic

flower of Colombia, epiphytic plant, that is, which can inhabit a living body without depriving it of nutrients. This characteristic, added to its delicacy and ability to harmonize, reminds us that we are called to build peace, fraternity and synodality. **The Paths:** the variety of works and ways through which the FMA Institute generates a culture of Peace on the Planet. The colours are those of the Colombian flag. **Coffee beans:** they express the richness of Colombia, the bond with the land and the commitment to care for our Common Home. As Sr Maria del Rosario, the Vicar General says let us "...celebrate it in an atmosphere of prayer and joy, to express the gratitude and affection that unite us to our Mother, as the centre of communion of our Institute." Let us intensify our prayers for our beloved Mother General as we entrust her to the maternal care of our Blessed Mother daily, that she may be filled with God's choicest blessings to guide our Institute in the footsteps of our holy founders. Kindly read the detailed information sent to you regarding the preparation and celebration of this memorable event of our institute and make ample use of the website www.festadelgrazie.org which provides suggestions to prepare ourselves for the event, and celebrate it meaningfully with our educating communities.

SECOND NOVITIATE II PHASE

Five of our young sisters namely Sr Amirthanathan Preethi Diana, Sr Arokia Raj Deepika, Sr Chrisdhu Doss Esther Rani, Sr Gabriel Mary Chitra and Sr Joseph Mercy Buella will be doing the second phase

of their Second Novitiate from 18 April to 15 May 2023. They will be having the animation on the FMA Constitutions from 18 - 24 April at Kodambakkam and from 25 April to 13 May at Don Bosco Renewal Centre (DBRC) in Bengaluru. They will be joining the annual spiritual retreat at Manikandam, Trichy from 16 – 23 May. Let us accompany our Sisters with our prayers during these days of prayer, reflection and intense preparation for their final commitment.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

- ✚ Sr Rayappan Leema Rose and Sr Gabriel Chitra participated in the Miracle Foundation Meeting held on 21 and 22 March in Delhi.
- ✚ Sr Puliyani Lucy, the Provincial Economer, participated in the online Formation meeting of Province Economers on 2 and 3 March organized by Sr Bolanos Ena Veralis, the Economer General and her team; Sr Mathew Josephine Siriapushpam and Sr Mamani Liendro Maria Susi attended the online meeting of the Formators on 18 March organised by Sr Moraes Nilza Fatima, the General Councillor for Formation and her Team; and Sr Lourdusamy Kalai Gnani took part in the Media Coordinators' online meet on 8 March by Sr De Siena Ausilia, the General Councillor for Social Communication and her Team.

NOTE OF THANKS

- ✚ Hearty thanks to Sr Gaspar Mary Celine, the animator, and the community of Kodambakkam for hosting the provincial council on 17 and 18 March.
- ✚ Loving gratitude to Sr Chinnappan Mano Ranjitham and the community of Yercaud for their hospitality to the participants of Annual Retreat I, from 19 to 26 March.
- ✚ Million thanks to Sr Ignaci Kulandai Theresa (INT) and the Community of Don Bosco, Wellington for hosting the Animators' retreat and animation from 27 March to 4 April.
- ✚ Sincere appreciation to Sr Chinnappan Gracy Fatima who animated effectively the seminar on Liturgy for the Sisters and Animators of our Province after their retreat on 26 March and 4 April. She will also be animating the other two groups of retreatants in April and May.

HEARTFELT SYMPATHIES

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

- ✚ To Sr Thambusamy Bridget at the demise of her elder sister Mrs Amali (95) on 4 March
- ✚ To Fr. Biju Michael, Regional Councillor for South Asia, at the demise of his dear mother Mrs Theresiamma Michael (88) on 4 March
- ✚ To the Provincial and Confreres of Bangalore Province at the demise of Fr Thomas Vailatt (93) on 13 March 2023 in Mamma Margaret Home, Aluva
- ✚ To the Provincial and Confreres of Shillong Province at the passing away of Fr Bosco Minj (76) on 15 March 2023.

LIVING IN OUR MEMORY- APRIL 2023

- 06 † Sr Aloysius Antoinette (2014)
- † Sr David Elizabeth (2021)
- 11 † Sr Ward Annie (1976)
- 16 † Sr Sindhuraj Regina (2021)
- 18 † Sr Albuquerque Alzira (2002)

- 20 † Sr Tarricone Consiglia (1990)
- 23 † Sr Arokiasami Philomena (2022)
- 26 † Sr Bossi Aurelia (1985) and Sr D'Souza Margaret (1954)
- 28 † Sr Solomon Philomena (2020)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS – APRIL 2023

- 27 March – 3 April: Animators' Annual Retreat II, Wellington
- 3- 4 April : Animation for Retreatants, Wellington
- 11,12 : Provincial Council, Kodambakkam
- 13 : Society Account Submission, Kodambakkam
- 13- 20 : Annual Retreat III, Kavarapettai
- 18 April – 15 May: Second Novitiate II Phase
- 20 : Animation for Retreatants, Kavarapettai
- 22 : House blessing, Colombuthurai, Sri Lanka
- 26 : World Feast of Gratitude

The climax of the Church's liturgical year is proclaimed at Mass on Easter Sunday in the Sequence: ***“Christ, my hope, is arisen; into Galilee He will go before his own.”*** It is both a proclamation of joy and hope and an appeal to responsibility and mission.

The evangelist Mark narrates that when the Sabbath was over, the women Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome witnessed the empty tomb and ran to proclaim to the disciples the joy of the resurrection. They had the fire in their hearts and with great zeal proclaimed the good news: ***“The Lord is risen!”*** The light of the resurrection was not meant to let the women bask in a transport of joy but to generate missionary disciples who “return from the tomb” in order to bring to all, the Gospel of the risen Christ. Pope Francis, in his Easter vigil homily 2022, exclaims, “How beautiful is a Church that can run through the streets of our world! Without fear, schemes and stratagems, but solely with the desire to lead everyone to the joy of the Gospel. That is what we are called to do: to experience the risen Christ and to share the experience with others; to roll away the stone from the tomb where we may have enclosed the Lord, in order to spread his joy in the world.”

Let us allow the women of the Gospel to lead us by the hand, so that, with them, we may glimpse the first rays of the dawn of God's life rising in the darkness of our world; experience the Risen Christ and share His joy, peace and light with others.

I wish each one of you a very fervent Easter Triduum and a Joyous Easter!

Yours affectionately,

Sr. Nirmala Lazar

**Sr Nirmala Lazar FMA
Provincial**

