

**INSTALLATION OF THE NEW PROVINCIAL OF INM PROVINCE OF ST
THOMAS THE APOSTLE, CHENNAI, KODAMBAKKAM**

25.05.2023

Sr Margaret D.J.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

“And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.”(1 Chronicles 29:13)

At the outset, I would like to thank God and greatly acknowledge His prodigious blessings. Indeed, my heart overflows with love and gratitude to Him for His benevolent love, providential care, gracious predilection, and secure accompaniment all through my life. I strongly believe that He will continue to shower His blessings upon me and assist, guide, and lead me on always.

I am overwhelmed with immense gratitude to our beloved Mother General, Sr. Chiara Cazzuola, and the Council Members who have entrusted me with the responsibility of animating, leading, and governing the Province of St. Thomas the Apostle. I shall do my best to fulfill this delicate responsibility and respond to the trust and confidence placed on me.

A special note of gratitude to you, dear loving Sr. Jacob Celine, the Visiting General Councilor, for accompanying us through the process of discernment for choosing a leader for the Province, and above all for your loving and encouraging presence today, and I look forward to your ever-ready wise listening, and for your able guidance.

I am honoured by the gracious presence of you, Most Rev. Dr. Neethinathan, the Bishop of Chenglepet, for presiding over the Holy Eucharist and imploring God’s abundant blessings upon me and on all of us gathered here. I am grateful to Fr. Lourdusamy Don Bosco, the Provincial of Chennai, and Fr. Jose, the former Provincial, for your brotherly presence and support. I express my gratitude to all the priests, religious sisters and brothers, friends, well-wishers, benefactors, and members of the Salesian family for your prayerful and reassuring presence.

I place on record my gratitude to you dear Sr. Lazar Maria Nirmala, our outgoing Provincial, the Council, and Team Members for your ability to achieve significant milestones in the history of our Province for the past six years. My heartfelt thanks to all the present and former FMA and SDB Provincials of India and to Sr. Fernando Mary Ann, the delegate for Sri Lanka, for your motivating presence and strengthening support.

I would like to thank you, my dear family members, and relatives for your love and support throughout my life's journey, especially to my dear salesian priest brother, Fr. D. J. Sagararaj.

My sincere gratitude goes to all those who have mentored me and provided me inspiration and encouragement when I was hesitant to accept this responsibility.

I thank you, dear Sr. Celine Gasper, the Vice Provincial, for your meticulous planning and execution of this memorable event, and to you dear sisters of the Community of Kodakbakkam for all that you have done to solemnize today's event with so much grace and efficiency.

My deepest gratitude to you, dear Sisters of the INM Province both in India and Sri Lanka, for your trust, confidence, openness, and eventually your availability for the mission as we begin a new chapter in the historical presence of FMA in the INM province. I am looking forward to a joint venture of the provincial councillors, the team members, and the animators of the communities to accomplish the mission of God. Let us make our religious life and our apostolic presences generate quality of life, and let us make our communities live and promote authentic synodal style of life and finally let us make our mission bear witness to the Gospel values, and let all our presences become hubs of nurturing vocations.

I believe that as a group of passionate, generous, joyous, and dedicated visionary disciples of Christ, we can faithfully and effectively take forward the choices and deliberations of GCXXIV. Through continued efforts, we shall achieve the goal and mission of our lives in the INM Province of Chennai by "bringing about positive changes within" and "creating innovative initiatives" for the integral well-being of all for the next six years to come. I pray that God's unfailing presence and guidance will make all of us effective and fruitful in the mission for the poor and needy.

I consider it a privilege and honor to accept the leadership of the INM Province on this wonderful occasion of the 101st year of its founding in India. I believe that with the collective wisdom of everyone and a common vision of mutual aspirations and a shared mission, a determined, committed strategy, we will be able to faithfully and successfully lead the province to new levels of significant progress that we never thought was possible.

Dear Sisters, I am once again deeply honored by the confidence you have placed in my ability to lead the province. I have only one wish, that is, to serve to the best of my ability for the integrity of life, loyalty to God, and remarkable service to all the people of God. I feel relaxed though the weight of responsibility lays heavy on me, because I feel that I will be ever supported and sustained spiritually by your prayers.

Our challenges are great, but the potential for meeting them does exist; hence, success is attainable. Let us all pledge to work together to meet these challenges. If we truly commit ourselves to such a pledge, history will show that we, in our day, met the demands that our times required of us. I count on your wholehearted collaboration and cooperation, which will be enormously helpful, and your support and commitment, which will be greatly valued in governing the province in the days ahead.

Once again, my deepest and the sincerest thanks to you all.

_____ -

Thank you, Sr. Celine and Sr. Nirmala, for the thoughtful and generous words. I am especially honored to have you, and I am so grateful to you.

I am further grateful to my sisters, who keep me on my toes and whose great work makes possible any recognition or commendations that I receive.

Your unique collaborative spirit and its truly diverse leadership will surely help me gain my footing.

Following in the footsteps of Don Bosco, Mother Mazzarello, and pioneers of the Land, I promise to do my best.

Thank you so much.

Thank you, Sisters, for your words of encouragement, for the confidence you placed in me, and for your promise of support to me and to my team

I wish to thank Mother Chiara for her encouragement to take on this role, a decision I didn't make it lightly.

I would like to thank you, dear councilors and team members, for accepting these roles and wish you good luck in the coming year. Let us engage ourselves and others in assisting and accompanying one another.