



# Provincial Circular

## Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/13/2019

02.09.2019

Dearest Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

We have recently concluded the meeting of the Provincial Conference of India (PCI) held in our Province at FMA Outreach from 20-22 August 2019. The presence of the 7 FMA Provincials of India and the Delegates from all the Provinces was a moment of enrichment and fruitful sharing of the common vision and mission of FMA- India. I thank all the communities who have sustained this important event with prayers and sacrifices. A note of special 'thank you' to the community of FMA Outreach for hosting this event efficiently. The outcome of the same and the journey henceforth towards our Provincial Chapter invites us to a concerted union of ideas and efforts to make our educative mission more fruitful and more witnessing among the young.

I am just back from the North East Regional CRI Assembly of Major Superiors held at North East Diocesan Social Forum, Kharguli, Guwahati from 28-30 September 2019 and the North East Regional Pastoral Conference 2019 held at Don Bosco Institute, Kharguli, Guwahati from 30 August to 1 September 2019, the latter of which was also attended by Sr. Helen Puwein, the Youth Coordinator of the Province as an invitee.

The theme of the CRI Assembly was "*Accompanying Young Religious*" and the theme of the Pastoral Conference was "*Responsible Youth Leadership for a better Church and Society*". Starting from the Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation '*Christus Vivit*', both events were enriched by input sessions that gave elaborate reflections on the theme.

### *The gift of HOLINESS in everyday life*

Holiness is a gift which we can accept on a daily basis. The acceptance of such great gift lies in the '*Here I am*' of the ordinariness of the duties and daily commitments of our life. This calls for a patient and ordinary construction of a virtuous personality that characterises it as a gift and a task which is also a mysterious encounter of the action of grace and of human freedom. In this interweaving of grace and our freedom, the ordinary means of sanctification play a decisive role. For instance, in the ordinary fulfilling of our duties, in the efforts of building up relationships, in the sharing of fraternal life, in our endeavours to live fidelity and so on.

Holiness, ultimately, consists in the firm determination to live with love and in love every moment of one's life, making it a service in favour of the other: the daily fidelity to life sustained and purified by the gift of grace. It is a universal call for us, therefore, to respond to this invitation to Holiness by recognizing and making the seeds of daily Holiness grow in every duty, in every event which also becomes for us the challenge of daily conversion.



Sanctity in our ordinary tasks, sanctity in the little things we do, sanctity in our personal commitment, sanctity in our daily apostolate calls for a choice: choice for God's will or my will, for sanctity or sin. Holiness isn't a matter of perfect circumstances. Holiness is what we do with imperfect and ordinary circumstances and choosing to make them perfect and extraordinary with our lives.

The icon of GC XXIV "***Do whatever He tells you***" also calls us to fill our lives with the ordinary conditions and situations of daily life and allowing the Lord to transform these ordinary things of life into the best wine for His service. Delving into the history of our Institute we see that at its very inception, Don Bosco himself emphasized that the Institute needs FMA who desire to be saints above all, not through extraordinary means but through the way of daily work, attracting young people to become good Christians and honest citizens. The Canonical Visit of our dear Sr. Lucy Rose in this period of our history is another occasion for us to rediscover the essence of Holiness in our ordinary life.

## *Icons of HOLINESS*

### *Saint Mother Teresa of Kolkata- 5 September*

We celebrate the feast of Mother Teresa of Kolkata with great pride as the Saint of our land. Mother Teresa's personality can well be identified as an Apostle of the ordinary. She lived the ordinary ways of life in an extraordinary manner that truly made her great - giving a smile to a sick person, caressing the little children, feeding a hungry person, accompanying a dying one. She turned all these ordinary actions into extraordinary by adding to all of them the essence of Love. She herself insisted that love has to begin with those closest to us in the daily circumstances of life. As we reflect on the Holiness of everyday life, Mother Teresa gives us the example of what it means to capture the different signs of Love and to grow in Holiness through the daily common life.



Our everyday life in the community gives us the opportunity to taste and create an experience of living and journeying the paths of Holiness with those closest to us. As we celebrate the feast of this great model of Sanctity, it's another reminder for all of us sojourners on earth that we are all called to be saints through fidelity to the little things, deeds and encounters of our daily living. May St. Mother Teresa intercede for us in this journey.

### *Blessed Maria Carmen Moreno and Maria Amparo Carbonell- 22 September*

Blessed Maria Carmen Moreno and Maria Amparo Carbonell are the proto martyrs of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians who gave up their lives for the sake of God's Kingdom, and for love of their neighbour during the outbreak of the civil war in Spain.

***Maria Carmen Moreno Benitez*** was born in Villamartin, near Cadiz in Spain, on August 24, 1885, to a wealthy but deeply Christian family. After the death of her father she met the Daughters of Mary

Help of Christians in Seville. Expressing her desire to be an FMA, she was very much opposed by her elder sister. However, firm in her decision, she finally entered the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and made her perpetual vows in 1914. Sister Carmen's life as an FMA was spent between teaching, direction of works and community animation. The most intense years of her life were those spent in Valverde del Camino, where she also had the privilege of meeting Sister Eusebia Palomino.

**Amparo Carbonell Munoz** was born in Alboraya, near Valencia in Spain, on 9 November 1893 to a poor family. She frequented the school of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians near her home from where the seed of her FMA vocation germinated. However, she too had to overcome the misunderstanding of her family to respond to her vocation. She made her religious profession in 1923 and in 1929 her perpetual profession.



In 1936, Sister Carmen and Sister Amparo came to live together in the same community. Towards the middle of the year, the situation of the war grew worse and the sisters, novices and the boarding girls had to evacuate the place and often would come to the school from their families. In those days, two Italian ships sailed from the port of Barcelona, on which several of them could escape, though in the midst of very serious anxieties and difficulties. Sister Carmen and Sister Amparo in spite of this availed possibility to escape the war yet did not choose to go. Instead they made a courageous decision to remain amidst the perils of the situation in order to assist a sick sister of the community.

On the night of September 1, the steps of violence knocked at their door. Sister Carmen, Sister Amparo and their assistant, Sister Carmen Xammar, who had just left the hospital, were arrested. While the latter was released, the two generous sisters instead - Sister Carmen and Sister Amparo were taken for the persecution and were later shot dead. Their martyrdom remains the fertile ground for the seed of the Charism to grow and flourish to the whole world. Their life was short but their witness of fidelity to God was enormous. They were beatified together with other Spanish martyrs on 11 March 2001 by Pope John Paul II.

## *Teachers' Day - 5 September*

September 5 is a special day in India as we honour all the teachers who shape the minds and personality of students. All over India we salute the gigantic role played by teachers in forming the citizens of the country in the field of education. The contribution of teachers cannot be ignored. A very big 'thank you' and 'Happy Teachers' Day' to all the sisters who are directly involved in the teaching ministry and our teachers who collaborate with us in our educative mission among the young.

Don Bosco our father and founder, an exemplary educator for all times said "*Education is a matter of the heart*". Commemorating this day dedicated to teachers calls to our mind the great responsibility as Salesian educators who are entrusted with the mission of ensuring the holistic development of those under our care, by living out the Preventive system of Don Bosco. It takes us back to the essence and spirit of education - to speak to the young with the language of the heart and help them become agents of God's love and mercy in the society and the Church. Don Bosco himself taught us by his example how to love the young and to see Christ in each of them. His system of

education gives us an efficacious path to Holiness which needs to be perpetuated by us in our own days and times.

### *Happy Birthday dear Mother Mary - 8 September*

The Church celebrates the nativity of our Blessed Mother on 8 September. Right from the moment of her conception, Mary was granted the fullness of God's grace. Mary was predestined by God to come into the world and occupy a prominent place in the history of salvation. We rejoice at her birth for it is through her that God chose a mediation to connect Himself to humanity. While rejoicing at this precious gift of God to us, it would be appropriate to ask ourselves: What gift can we offer to our Heavenly Mother? What can we give her on this her special day?



Among the many gifts that we can offer, perhaps the ones dearer to her heart could be our own fidelity to her beloved Son Jesus, our generous effort to imitate her virtues, our prompt attitude of being a helper like her among the young people (Cfr Article 4 of our Constitutions) and our generous self giving to God and to our neighbours. (Cfr Art 44). As we celebrate this great gift of our Blessed Mother, let us rediscover in her a living presence who directs our lives decisively to Christ and who makes our personal relationship with Him ever more authentic (Art. 79)

### *Exaltation of the Holy Cross - 14 September*



The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross calls us to honour the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified and which represents His victory over death, the divine “tree of life” that brings hope to humankind. The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross commemorates the discovery of the true Cross by St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great during her pilgrimage to the Holy Land about the year 326.

The Holy Cross is for us Christians a symbol of Salvation and the altar of the new Covenant. In celebrating this great feast, the Church reminds us that the Holy Cross of Christ has a mystical and redemptive sign beyond its figure: it has no meaning in itself, if it were not for Christ the Redeemer who sacrificed His life on it and brought to fulfillment His earthly mission.

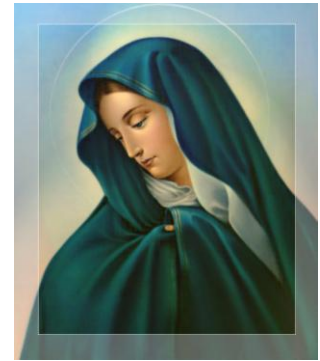
The Cross invites us to contemplate the immense love that God has for all humanity. Gazing at the Crucifix with open arms, we feel welcomed by the great embrace of the mercy of God to enter into genuine communion with Him and His people.

### *Our Lady of sorrows - 15 September*

Following the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross the Church celebrates the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. This feast dates back to the 12th century and is dedicated to the spiritual martyrdom of Mary, Mother of God, and her sharing in the sufferings of her Divine Son, Jesus.



Our Blessed Mother Mary was there for our Lord from his birth until the very day He was condemned, scourged and crucified on the Cross. She persevered and lived up to her role as Mother of Christ notwithstanding the many sorrows she had to undergo in life. Perseverance was very much part of her that she was crowned our Lady of Sorrows. She becomes for us a model that as good followers of Jesus, it is not enough to be courageous, patient and virtuous for a time. There is a constant invitation to persevere in our Christian and religious calling, to bear perseveringly the sufferings and demands that our Call entails.



Like our Blessed Mother, we are invited to allow ourselves be permeated by the guidance and the influence of the Holy Spirit; to always persevere in our endeavor to be more Christ-like, patient, loving, merciful and full of compassion.

### *Feast of the Archangels - 29 September*



We celebrate and honor the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael who triumphantly stand before God and whose mission is always oriented towards Him. The Church teaches us that they are servants and messengers of God who bring God to humankind. The angels are constantly at our side helping us to be totally for God and partakers of His life.

- **Michael** appears as the **defender** for the cause of God's uniqueness. Michael's task is to defeat the dragon so that in the life of humanity there is space for God. The second function of Michael, according to Scripture, is that of a **protector** of the People of God (cf Dn 10, 21; 12.1).
- In the narration in Lk 1, 26-38, we see the Archangel **Gabriel** as a **messenger** of the incarnation of God who knocks on Mary's door and, through him, God himself asks Mary for her "yes" to the proposal to become the Mother of the Redeemer. Gabriel, "**Force of God**", has the mission to guide the faithful towards the arrival of the Messiah.
- **Raphael** as appears in the book of Tobit is the Angel who is entrusted with the task of **healing**. Raphael is the angel closest to man, a loving guide and a visible presence of God.

The three Archangels have their particular mission of serving God day and night and while contemplating His Face, they glorify Him incessantly. In the light of the mission of the Archangels we can also make a reflection of ourselves and our mission in the Church and the society - on how can we become "angels" in our community, messengers of the Good news to one another: angels who announce God, who invite oneself and others to turn away from wrong ways and turn towards God; angels who heal the wounds and stay close to those in difficulties, angels who pray and intercede for others before God. The Archangels give us this example that we can truly become the faithful servants and messengers of God only if we stay close to Him at all times as they are.

## Communications

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**Foundation of the Provincial House:** On 19 August 2019, the foundation of the new Provincial House was laid by Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil, FMA the General Visiting Councilor and blessed by Fr. Glorious Syiemlieh, SDB Parish Priest of the Divine Saviour Parish, Nongthymmai. It was a happy moment for me to be present at this memorable foundation along with the members of the Provincial Council, Animators, Sisters, and representatives of lay collaborators and young people of the Province. It was a moment of joy that testified God's loving Providence and never failing Grace. As we begin this venture, may I remind all the communities of our Province to put a special intention during the daily adoration for protection and for Divine Providence. Let us combine our supportive efforts to this project with our generous contribution in different ways to make our common dream a reality. I thank in a special way Sr. Gemima Pohrmen, Provincial Economist who will spearhead this project with other lay collaborators. I also thank all the communities that made the initial investment that enabled us to start the work.

**Symposium:** The Salesians of Don Bosco of North East India, in connection with the celebration of the centenary of their arrival in North East, will organize a Symposium from 9-11 September 2019 at Sacred Heart Theological College, Mawlai- Shillong with the theme "Living *Don Bosco's dream in the North East today*" with a common point of animation for the year 2019 on Evangelization and Mission. The following sisters will take part in the said Symposium.

- Sr. Bernadeth Sangriang
- Sr. Happyline Mary Shadap
- Sr. Igina Kharjana
- Sr. Icydora Pasi
- Sr. Mary Concepta Pasi
- Sr. Maristella Jyrwa
- Sr. Meristella Rynghlem
- Sr. Rishailin Rongrin
- Sr. Roslina Phangchopi
- Sr. Teresa Kamsuan
- Sr. Tistabha Bareh

**Provincial Annual Congress:** The 41<sup>st</sup> Provincial Annual Congress of the Salesian Cooperators will be held on 14 and 15 September 2019 at Nandan Nagar, Tripura. A group of Sisters and many Salesian cooperators from the different centers of the Province will be taking part in it. Let us pray that the Congress helps to revitalize all our units and enthuse our cooperators to live their vocation with deeper commitment.

**Provincial Chapter XII:** The Provincial Chapter XII of our Province will be celebrated from 21-25 October 2019. Prior to it, there would be a two day animation programme and retreat for all the participants of the Chapter animated by Rev. Fr. Vattathara Thomas SDB. The participants are therefore requested to reach the scheduled venue at FMA Outreach by the evening of 18 October 2019. Let us intensify our prayers for the fruitfulness of this significant moment in the history of our Province and for the charismatic and vocational renewal in the life of each of us and those who collaborate in our educative mission among the young people.

## Prayers and Condolences

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Our sincere condolences and deepest sympathies:

- ✚ To Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA and the Province of Kolkata (INC) at the flight to Heaven of Sr. Teresa Theruvamkunel (T.O) FMA on 15 August 2019.

- ✚ To Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA and the Province of Chennai (INM) at the departure of Sr. Glorina James on 20 August 2019.
- ✚ To Sr. Celine Jacob FMA and the Province of Bangalore (INK) at the passing away of Sr. Lorenza D'Silva FMA on 27 August 2019.
- ✚ To Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot SDB and the Salesian Province of Shillong (INS) at the sudden demise of Fr. Kizhakechennadu Joseph (KJ) on 25 August 2019.
- ✚ To Sr. Rosa Mystica Myllemumlong and her family at the passing away of her maternal uncle today 2 September 2019.

May the dear departed ones rest safe in the arms of Jesus and enjoy forever the beatific vision and may they intercede for the needs of their Provinces and loved ones.

**For the Sick:** We offer our prayers for all the sick members of our communities and families through the intercession of our Blessed Mother. We pray in a special way for:

- ✚ The mother of Sr. Ephrilda Mawsor
- ✚ The mother of Sr. Clara R. Marak
- ✚ The sister of Sr. Regina Dkhar
- ✚ The aunt of Sr. Habathmulang Dkhar
- ✚ The maternal uncle of Sr. Rona Kharkongor and Sr. Lida Kharkongor.

As I conclude, I wish each of you a very happy month of September that will usher in God's abundance of blessings for our mission and in our daily endeavors for Holiness. May this time of intense preparation for our Provincial Chapter be a moment of community discernment and submission to God's Spirit to rediscover the opportunity and responsibility we have to build up and rejuvenate our educative mission.

Assuring you of my sisterly support and accompaniment!

Affectionately,



**Sr. Elizabeth George FMA**  
**Provincial**