



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

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01.02.2021

My dear Sisters,

Loving and prayerful greetings from Auxilium provincial House, Nongthymmai!

We have just concluded the first Annual Spiritual Retreat of this year 2021 on the feast of Don Bosco. It was indeed a moment of great joy and grace to end the days of encounter with the Lord with the celebration of the solemnity of our Father and Founder after the days of beautiful and in-depth reflections on the essence and relevance of the Salesian Spirituality during the days of the retreat. While we thank God for the moments of grace, I express my sincere gratitude to Fr. Jose Varickasseril SDB, the retreat preacher for revealing the depth of Salesian richness and to the community of FMA Outreach for hosting the retreat. May the Lord bless you! We pray for our sisters that the fervor of the retreat may continue to enthuse their passion for God and for humanity with the same zeal of Don Bosco in the educative mission.

We begin the month of February with the celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord which is also dedicated to Consecrated Life. The Church dedicates this celebration in a particular way to consecrated persons, to underline their particular vocation and mission in the Church. In reality, this event in the life of Jesus evokes, in some way, the presentation of man to the Lord, in the sense that every man and woman is called to dedicate his/her life to the Lord. Consecrated people are called all the more to give credible witness to consecrated life with their lifestyle and to testify that it is possible to live in chastity of thoughts and actions and to live dependent on God's Providence; that it is possible to live fully free even in obedience to the will of God and to be the witnesses of Holiness.

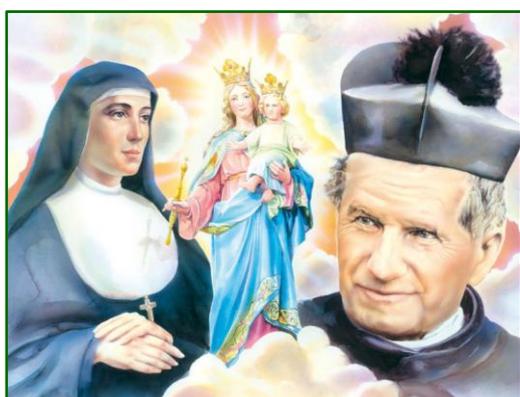


There is yet another aspect to the celebration of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. In reality, it is Jesus who presents himself to his people as the Light that brings salvation to the earth. Where the Lord is, in fact, there is salvation, that is, life, joy and hope. Simeon and Anna welcomed the presence of God and they were full of joy. This gesture is a sign for all baptized and consecrated Christians of the need to welcome the Lord in their hearts and lives who will then transform them into new creatures and bearers of joy and hope to the world. As we celebrate this feast let us pray that God's light may fill our world and all people with the fullness of His light. We offer our prayers

for all consecrated men and women who on this day renew their call to remain faithful in order to lead souls to God.

“I entrust them to you...”

The mandate “*I entrust them to you*” is the motto that has guided the entire life of Mother Mazzarello, of our first Sisters and of our Pioneers and which continues to resonate in our days. Reading through the life of Mother Mazzarello, we have learnt how she lived with ardent love and passion the dream of God to save souls in the Spirit of Don Bosco’s ‘*Da Mihi Animas*’. Her audacity to submit to and live the will of God was seen largely in her spirit of kindness, courage and a very sensitive heart. Looking at her courage to put herself at the service of her family and neighbour, at the simplicity of her dialogue with God and the love with which she dedicated herself to others and to the charism of Don Bosco truly proves that she had incorporated well the mandate given to her by God in all its fullness.



I entrust them to you

Through the theme for the year, we are reminded that this great legacy handed over to us is to be replicated in our personal lives and mission. This mandate then is a clarion call to introspect ourselves to see if we are faithful to our Salesian vocation to live with passion the *Da Mihi Animas*...to own up responsibility of taking care of those entrusted to us...to the commitment of building up my personal rapport with God for the sake of the young people and of the mission.

The Salesian Saints whom we commemorate from time to time and those who have paved the Salesian way before us, give us the assurance that everything is possible for those who love God...that it is possible to live faithful to our religious and Christian commitment if we but remain firm and rooted in our Salesian charism. During this month of February, we are invited to look up to our Salesian Saints (Saints Aloysius Versiglia and Calistus Caravario and Blessed Eusebia Palomino) who have imbibed and lived the passion of the ‘*Da Mihi Animas*’ and the mandate ‘*I entrust them to you*’ in their own situations. While striving to respond creatively and faithfully to the call of God, let us try to live the concreteness of life in the spirit of the ‘*Da Mihi Animas*’ and the ‘*I entrust them to you*’ by grasping the challenges and opportunities of our times, valuing each day as a concrete place of holiness to live the beatitudes in the Spirit of the Preventive System.

...become a CARING and LOVING Community”

As we journey ahead with the animating theme of the Province “*I entrust them to you: Become a caring and Loving community*”, we are invited to become aware of the need to give concrete essence and meaning to the invitation of this mandate. Perhaps it would be good to take note of few elements which can boost up our enthusiasm of becoming builders and caretakers of a Caring and Loving Community. In this regard therefore, I would like to share few insights with some reflections taken from Pope Francis’ new exhortation “*Fratelli Tutti*”. Drawing inspiration from the encyclical, I am encouraged to point out just three distinguishing elements that can guide us in our spiritual journey personally and as a community: **A-** Attitude, **R-** Respect, **E-** Effort.

The encyclical ‘Fratelli Tutti’ gives much focus on the right ATTITUDE towards life and our response to its various manifestations. It stresses on the attitude of *loving attention* that brings about a broken and bleeding world back to health. Our Holy Father gives the image of the Good Samaritan in the encyclical to remind us that love and attention is the mediation that creates friendship, social bonding and the recognition of the uniqueness of one another. The encyclical also proposes concrete **actions** to restore the world and overcome the ills generated by the pandemic crisis, which has now become a health, economic, social and political issue. The Holy Pontiff reminds us that we will never be able to proceed forward on our own individual selves but together we can build up on our positive attitudes and our careful attention towards the common good of all.

The encyclical also throws light on the importance of showing RESPECT to all. Pope Francis reminds us that all the people deserve to be shown dignity and respect because they are human beings, not because of anything they do, who they are or what their social status is. If we treat others with dignity and respect only then can we hope for interdependence and creativity of life to thrive. He goes on to say that we are defined by how we treat those in the greatest need: people who are poor, homeless, elderly, immigrants, those who live with disabilities, those who are ill, and those who have no voice. To be able to arrive at living and showing such genuine respect to all, the Pope encourages us to create a culture of encounter, one where dialogue is prominent and where we develop an attitude that seeks to resolve conflicts and care for others through loving and genuine kindness.



Pope Francis also reminds us that we need sincere EFFORTS to come out of our own selves and move out towards those in need. He emphasizes first of all of the fundamental need to make effort to come closer to God to be able to recognize others as our own brothers and sisters. He says *'The effort to seek God with a sincere heart, provided it is never sullied by ideological or self-serving aims, helps us recognize one another as travelling companions, truly brothers and sisters'* (FT 274). While we make the journey together of becoming caring and loving communities, it truly requires of us as our Holy Father says to make sincere efforts to recognize God’s presence in our personal lives and in the face of our brothers and sisters in the community and the mission. Only with sincere and genuine efforts can we recognize the fact of being all brothers and sisters and together to build a more beautiful and human environment to live in love and solidarity. *'Only in recognizing each other as brothers and sisters can we start anew, affirming the dignity of every human person, and walking together in hope'* says the Pope.

Looking at these reflections from ‘Fratelli Tutti’ based on Attitude, Respect and Effort, interestingly, the first letters of these words can be grouped as EAR or ARE. This poses before us a few points for reflection: Do we give a listening EAR to the call of God in every situation of life... or to the call of being upholders of peace and love? How ARE we dealing with every situation that comes our way? ARE we builders of a caring and loving community? How ARE we choosing to live and choose life? As we strive our efforts to build up a more caring and loving community, let us be encouraged by the words of our Holy Father who said *'...we are responsible for the fragility of others as we strive to build a common future [...] Solidarity finds concrete expression in service, which can take a variety*

of forms in an effort to care for others. And service in great part means caring for vulnerability, for the vulnerable members of our families, our society, our people'. As members of this great Salesian family and being entrusted with a legacy and mandate to carry forward, let us courageously forge ahead taking upon ourselves the personal responsibility of being its caretakers and builders of everything that is good.

World day of the sick

Since the day of its inception in 1992 by Pope John Paul II, the World Day of the Sick is celebrated every year on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes i.e: 11th February. The Church invites us to celebrate this day as an opportunity to draw the attention of society to those who fight against a disease every day or is committed to finding ways to live with it peacefully by our expression of affection and solidarity. For this year, the 29th World Day of the Sick, Pope Francis



has proposed as a theme: **“You have but one teacher and you are all brothers” (Mt 23:8) A trust-based relationship to guide care for the sick.** In his message for this day, he urges a path of healing grounded in a trusting and interpersonal relationship between the sick and those who care for them. He said "A society is all the more human to the degree that it cares effectively for its most frail and suffering members, in a spirit of fraternal love." Pope Francis

invites everyone to assume a more humane approach to one another especially the sick and vulnerable. The core of his message centers on the themes: *Fighting hypocrisy, Sickness and faith, Closeness between the “sick” and those who care, Fraternal solidarity and relationship.* This portrays the wholeness and significance of this day’s celebration- which is understood not just in caring for the physically afflicted but more importantly on building up interpersonal relationships. The Pope conveys the message that other than our competence of caring professionally, what is important is the attitude of care and proximity that we show to one another. While we pray through the intercession of our Blessed Mother for all the sick people of the world and resolve to care and love them in their human dignity, we pray that we may grow in the art of loving and caring for one another and build up a healthier and more conducive environment of interpersonal relationships, love and solidarity with all.

Family News and Communications

Congratulations: We congratulate our dear Mother General, Mother Yvonne for having received 'The appointment of Officier of the Légion d'Honneur' conferred on her by the French Republic on 1st January 2021 in honour of her commitment to fight against Covid-19 at humanitarian, educational, and social levels. The Legion of Honor is the highest honor established after the French Revolution. We unite in communion with our dear Mother General and the Institute to continue forging ahead to fight against the virus of Covid-19 and all other types of viruses in the world and society and in our efforts to spread the message of God’s love in our mission.

Nulla Osta: On 13th January 2021, the Holy See through the Congregation for the Causes of Saints granted the **Nulla Osta** for the opening of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Mother Rosetta Marchese FMA. This is indeed a happy and great news for the whole Institute as we rejoice God’s greatness revealed in our Institute. Let us pray through the intercession

of Mother Rosetta for the various needs of our Institute and make some sacrifices so that the process may go on steadily and faster.

****I kindly request all the communities to offer prayers for Tanisha M Sangma an orphan girl of 18 years who is looked after by our Sisters at Auxilium, Tura and Auxilium, Chapahati. She is suffering much at the moment from blood cancer and is seriously ill at GMC Hospital, Guwahati. Please pray for her through the intercession of Mother Rosetta that God may work His miracle on this young girl and that His glory may be revealed through the intercession of Mother Rosetta.**

PCI Formators Meet: From the 25-27th January 2021, the PCI Formation Sector had an online meeting to discuss and share ideas for inculturating and adapting the document '*Guidelines for the formation period of temporary vows*' to our Indian context. Sr. Rosa Pyngrope and Sr. Euginia Kyntiewlin Susngi made a presentation on the Chapter 'Indications for the Second Novitiate'. Sr. Plenish Marak, Sr. Selinda Wanniang, Sr. Kyntiewlin Kurbah and I also participated in the meeting which was very enriching. Each Province was given sufficient time much ahead of the meeting to prepare and present a Chapter of the Document with necessary modifications related to our Indian context. We thank Sr. Tamizharasi Kanickaraj, the PCI National Coordinator for Formation for organizing tactfully and interestingly the days of the meeting with much passion and zeal. I thank all the Sisters of the Formation Sector of our Province who have taken to heart this given responsibility of reading and analyzing the document together with the temporary professed sisters who gave their feedback and suggestions on the same.

Apostolic Experience: The Second Year Novices will make their apostolic and community experiences from 1 February- 2 March 2021. We thank the communities of Jowai, Lamyrsiang, Mawkyndeng, Mawkyrdep, Umswai, Rangblang, Mawroh and Mawpat Madan Sohphoh for their availability to accompany our Novices during this period of experience. We wish our 20 Novices God's blessings and all the best in their mission experience.

Annual Spiritual Retreat: The Second Annual Spiritual Retreat will begin on the evening of 21st February 2021 and will end on the evening of 27th February. All the participants are requested to reach the venue at FMA Outreach latest by lunch on 21st February and can depart for their respective communities by 28th morning as we will begin the next retreat on 1st March (evening). We send our prayers ahead for the Retreat Preacher, for all our Sisters and for the fruitfulness of the retreat.

Prayers for the sick and the departed

We extend our prayerful support to all the sick ones through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes. We offer our special prayers for:

- Sr. Isabella Suja who is recuperating after some days of hospitalization at Nazareth Hospital.
- The brother of Sr. Celestina and Sr. Tarsiana Thyрниang.
- The brother-in-law of Sr. Bergita Lyngkhoi.
- The nephew of Sr. Regina Nongbri.

And we continue to implore God's mercy on the suffering world and for deliverance and protection from Covid-19.

We offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers to all those who lost their dear ones in the past month.

- Sr. Maristella Jyrwa who lost her cousin brother on 4th January 2021.
- Sr. Kyntiewlyne Kurbah at the demise of her uncle on 7th January 2021.
- Sr. Bergita Lyngkhoi and Sr. Aitihun Lawai at the passing away of the cousin brother and maternal aunt respectively on 8th January 2021.
- Sr. Lucy Sangriang and Sr. Mildred Kharsyiemlieh at the demise of their cousin and aunt on 11th January 2021.
- Sr. Meristella Kharthangmaw and Sr. Rina Kharthangmaw at the passing away of their nephew on 13th January 2021.
- Sr. Estelle Rani at the passing away of two of her nephews on 21st and 23rd January 2021.
- Sr. Madona Lytep at the demise of her niece on 25th January 2021.
- Sr. Nanmerry Rongpeit at the loss of her paternal grandmother in January 2021.
- All the deceased Salesians, benefactors and members of the Salesian Family whom we commemorate and offer our special prayers today the 1st of February.

May the departed ones enjoy forever the eternal Peace of Heaven and may all those who mourn their passing away be consoled by the strength and grace of God.

Feasts of the month:

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| • Blessed Pius IX | - | 7 February |
| • Blessed Eusebia Palomino | - | 9 February |
| • Our Lady of Lourdes | - | 11 February |
| • The Chair of St. Peter | - | 22 February |
| • Sts. Aloysius Versiglia and Calistus Caravario- | | 25 February |

Lenten Season

We are fast approaching the Season of Lent with the celebration of the Ash Wednesday on 17th February 2021. Celebrating the Lenten Season in this time of the pandemic connotes a deeper and profound meaning for us Christians. In these past months of the pandemic, we are very much familiar and got accustomed to the term ‘quarantine’ which presents a certain analogy with ‘Lent’. While we know that the term "*quarantine*" comes from forty days, Lent is also a period of forty days which thus becomes for us a sort of "*spiritual quarantine*", a period of purification of our souls from sin and an opportunity to live in newness of life. Just as the coronavirus pandemic requires a period of treatment to regain bodily health and strength, so too the season of Lent is a time of *spiritual combat against the spirit of evil* to be able to live one's life to the full. Lent, like quarantine, is presented as a ‘favorable time’ (2 Cor 6,2) to activate the antibodies necessary to win the battle against evil. It is a time of beneficial ‘pruning’ of falsehood, worldliness, indifference and of all the other ‘deadly disease’ caused by the ‘virus of sin’.

The Church gives us the remedy to fight this battle through Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving which are intertwining with each other and are complementing one another in every sense. Let us prepare our hearts and our lives to welcome the Lord in this time of grace and make the necessary change in

our attitudes and behaviours that are not pleasing to God. May this time of Lent rekindle more profoundly in us the great love and mercy of God to shake us from our spiritual torpor and spur us to recover the essential values of life through “*Prayer*, as an openness to God; *Fasting*, as an expression of self-control even in depriving oneself of something, in saying “no” to oneself; and finally, *Alms*, as openness and call to charity towards others.



I wish each and everyone of you a fervent and Holy Season of Lent!

With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,

Affectionately,

Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial