



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

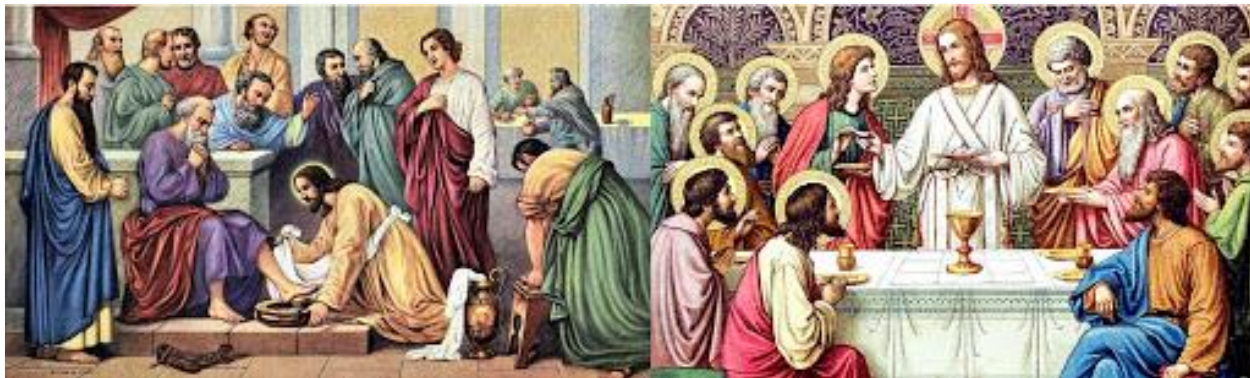
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My dear Sisters,

Loving and prayerful greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

We are blessed to begin this month with the celebration of the Holy Thursday- a day of Love which invites us to constant consciousness of our identity in being the reflection and bearers of God's love in our lives and mission. The celebration of this holy day adds a significant tone to living out concretely our religious call in the attitudes of Love and Care after the example of our Lord who humbled himself to express Love in its most concrete way. The Washing of the Feet and the Institution of the Holy Eucharist are perhaps the most tangible gestures that reveal Gods' love and that call for our sincere efforts to replicate His memory in our lives. This day is indeed a day of Love that becomes Eucharist; a day of Love that is transformed into service; a day of Love which becomes peace, fraternity and forgiveness.



Our commitment to live the spiritual journey ***“I entrust them to you- Become a caring and loving community”*** has a profound sense in the most humble gesture and sacrificial gift of Christ to humanity. We learn to love by experiencing God's love in the school of our true Master Jesus, in the concrete situations of our religious and social communities where we share our journey of life with one another. On a day like this, we are reminded of the Lord's coming to reawaken our conscience and our commitment to spiritual convictions that are real and genuine in our encounters with one another and with God. The human attitudes and behaviours of love and care is moved by the dynamism of God's love manifested especially in the gift of the Holy Eucharist which also becomes the ultimate call for us to live and express it in the daily circumstances of life- to live the Eucharist in its most explicit and concrete gesture of thoughts, words and deeds as also said St. Pope John Paul II *“...the Christian partakes of Christ's self-giving love and is equipped and committed to live this same charity in all his thoughts and deeds...”* (John Paul II, Veritatis splendor n.107). Therefore, it is

most essential for us religious in particular to replicate God's love in our everyday encounters and in becoming the Eucharistic persons to one another in daily life.

While we journey with the guiding theme “... *become a caring and loving community*”, the Eucharist comes as a source of strength and guiding principle in this journey. The gesture of Jesus in giving Himself in the Eucharist and on the Cross are examples for us to leave space for others too in our lives in order that we become channels of true care and love and to be Eucharist for the other. Today, with His many acts of Love, the Lord comes and prompts us to go back to being a community that loves, that cares, that serves, a community that announces, reminds, teaches, instructs and forms others in the holy truth of the Gospel with great joy for a higher morality and spiritual ideals of life- a community that truly becomes Eucharist for the others.

Become Eucharist...by being a community that loves and cares...

The underlying motive of the Eucharist is Love itself: the self-gift of God Himself to live with us in communion. For us consecrated persons in love with God, it is clear that the power of His love conquered us and that He continues to sustain us with it. We experience God's love in abundance and therefore, showing and expressing that sincere love and care ought to be the trait of a genuine disciple of Christ. Jesus is our model for loving one another especially in our religious community, a fact He makes plain in his own commandment to us at the last supper

“Love one another just as I have loved you.” Jesus' command invites us to imitate the love that He has demonstrated through our genuine interpersonal relationship, care for the integral well-being of one another, mutual respect and fraternal accompaniment towards building up a more loving and caring community. In these days when we are invited all the more to find new ways to stand together and build up the community in love, the significance of Holy Thursday gives us the tangible and original ways to do so – to show love, care, empathy and solidarity with each other.



Become Eucharist...by being a community that serves...

On Holy Thursday, Jesus set an example with His humble act of washing the feet of the Apostles. His action portrays to everyone the lesson of humility and service. He himself was the example par excellence of how to love and serve others. As religious, we have a duty to serve as the Savior did in many ways and more especially by performing simple acts of kindness every day. To become Eucharist by serving others in fact means to serve God and others with a sincere heart and with the attitude of Jesus. To be Eucharist and to love are not merely words but rather actions that are explicit in service as Pope Francis also said in one of his audiences *“Love is service! A humble service, done in silence and in secret”*. Our Constitutions Art. 50 gives us the concrete gestures of being a humble servant in community living by treating others *“with respect, affection and understanding, in an attitude of sincere dialogue, of good will and true sisterly friendship”*. This calls for our generosity to move towards others with humility and sincere desire to serve God in all.

Become Eucharist...by being a community that announces and proclaims the Gospel with Joy...

The Eucharist gives us the strength to witness and to proclaim the truth of the Gospel in our daily lives. We are called to proclaim it day after day, never ceasing, just as the disciples; to witness him in the daily events of life and in our encounters with one another. We can say that we are truly the explicit sign of the Eucharist by our witnessing presence in the community and in the mission. To be



witnesses is necessary to first examine our own life and our relationship with Christ. In his encyclical ‘The Joy of the Gospel’, Pope Francis reminds us that people are attracted by the joy they see in Christians. This characteristic trait ought to be an indispensable element in our religious community living in order to proclaim convincingly the values of the Gospel and the love of Christ among ourselves and others. We become the Eucharistic presence by the joy that originates from within, that radiates from a soul who is in the state of grace. Joy cannot be faked and therefore the witness is called to exhibit these graces evident in a life lived according to the cross of Christ.

May the example of our Lord become for us a model that guides and directs our path towards building up a more loving and caring community. May every thought, word, deed and service of ours be done with love and ultimately become the daily concrete Eucharist, the Eucharist that never ends.

Alleluia! He is Risen...

"He's not here. He is risen, as he said" is the recurring theme that runs through in Easter – a testimony of the victory of Jesus Christ who destroyed death and rose to save humanity. The resurrection indicates that the new day has begun, a new story imbued with the perfume of new hope. Contemplating on the resurrection of Jesus invites us to have a concrete experience of how everything changes in life- change in the way of thinking, acting, relating to God, people, things and situations around us, a change in the way we look at the various dimensions and manifestations of life and faith and to contemplate the infinite space of God's eternal love. The celebration of Easter gives us the reassurance that God does not leave us in the dark. He gives us many encouraging signals, He gives us many meaningful encounters, He offers us many comforting experiences and explicit messages in life. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is full with meaning for our lives, for where we are now and where God wishes to lead us- to move on from darkness to light, from fear to courage, from mediocrity to fullness of life, from anxiety and despair to hope in the power of the Risen Lord.



We have accompanied the Lord during the 40 days of Lent with our commitments, sacrifices and desires to be one with Christ in his passion and death. However, Easter gives us this message further that it is not enough to seek only the Crucified Christ; otherwise, our journey of faith and of witness will not be completed. It is necessary to experience the Risen Christ, it is necessary to experience that the tomb is empty to be able to become the worthy testimonies of the Resurrection as the Angel said “Go quickly and tell his disciples that He has risen from the dead and goes before you to Galilee: There you will see him!” (Mt. 28:7). As we sing triumphantly the glory of God and proclaim it with our faith, we are also invited to commit ourselves in becoming more and more the testimonies, missionaries, heralds and evangelizers of the Risen Christ in the daily Galilee of human history. May the Joy, Hope and Light of the Risen Lord illumine our hearts, shed light on our steps and guide our lives to encounter Him in our brothers, sisters and events of daily life as we fearlessly bear witness and contribute to building a new humanity.

Divine Mercy Sunday

In Easter the mercy of God is fully manifested. St. Pope John Paul II has constituted the feast of the Divine Mercy after the solemnity of Easter to remind us that the mercy of God is infinite and ever

new for His children. We celebrate this special Sunday to remind us that the God we believe in is a God who forgives us, because he loves us deeply. His mercy lies in His infinite act of love who gave His only begotten Son, who died and rose to give us the new life of grace and friendship with Himself and with others. The Sunday of the Divine Mercy, not only makes us understand the need to humbly recognize our sins and change our lives, but also prompts us to commit ourselves to a service of charity that is implemented through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Pope Francis reminds us in one of his Lenten messages: "The suffering of the other is a call to conversion, because the need of others reminds me of the fragility of my life, my dependence on God and on my brothers and sisters"



In Psalm 117, 1 we read "Celebrate the Lord for he is good, for his mercy is eternal". As we celebrate the Divine Mercy of God, let us experience the great and eternal love of God for us. We are

invited therefore to enter into the mystery of the event of salvation, which unites the death and resurrection of Christ to our existence and to the history of our redemption. This wonder of God's mercy has radically changed the fate of humanity. It is a prodigy in which the love of the Father unfolds in fullness and calls us to show mercy and love in return by following the teachings and examples of Jesus who is an epitome of Mercy. We pray that the Divine Love of God may move the hearts of everyone to pass on the mercy received to those in need in the world. As St. John Paul II said "The world will only become more human if, along with justice, we introduce into relations among men merciful love and forgiveness." (Dives in misericordia, n.7)

World feast of gratitude

The World Feast of Gratitude this year will be celebrated at the house

'Madre Angela Vespa' Rome with the theme "**Networked, for a culture of life**". The Pre-Province of Mary Mother of the

Church RMC invites us to focus our attention on the image of our Institute as part of the great network of the Church and the world. It calls to wing our gaze to the passion and zeal of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello who in their own times and capacity searched to maintain the unity of the charism in its progressive incarnation in other cultures which also prompted them to favor communication through different media. As educators

and members of the great network, the Province invites everyone to sit back and reflect on the answers we can give to the 'educational catastrophe' of our times and to highlight the precious contribution of our institutions of Higher Education to the formation of the FMA and of many young people in our context.



As Salesian educators, we are all the more challenged by the situation of the world that could be etched within the situation of the pandemic that could waste human potentials, accelerating declining progress and inequalities in the society. It is very much appropriate at this time of our history that we are motivated to ponder and give a positive response to the need of the hour especially in the field of education. While we move forward towards the world feast of gratitude, let us unite with the whole Institute in the educational thrust to be rejuvenated with greater passion and faith in the spirit of the Preventive System and get ourselves inter- connected with the web of young people and educating communities for a more dignified life. Let us continuously evaluate ourselves on *how do we promote the culture of life?* in our educational institutions as proposed by the Pre province and which acts as a motivating incentive to improve the culture and the climate of the current needs of our educative mission. While we offer our prayers for Mother General and for the host Province, let us commit ourselves to becoming effective channels of portraying God's love and charism of our Institute through our educative mission.

Family News and Communications

Congratulations: We extend our heartiest congratulations and prayerful support to Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil FMA who is appointed by Mother General as the Provincial of Kolkata Province (INC). May the Lord bless the Province of Kolkata with its new leader and let fall His abundant blessings and divine graces upon Sr. Leelamma in a special way in this important and noble mission of animating the Province.

On 24 March 2021, Pope Francis has appointed Sister Alessandra Smerilli FMA as Under-Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. We congratulate Sr. Alessandra for this new assignment entrusted by the Church and we assure her of our prayers that her noble mission may be fruitful and blessed by God.

New Apostolic Nuncio to India: Our Holy Father Pope Francis on 13 March 2021 has appointed Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli as the new apostolic nuncio to India. We support him with our prayers for the fruitfulness of his mission and for the growth of the Church in India.

Thank you: We extend our sincere gratitude to Fr. V. M Thomas SDB and Fr. Barnes Mawrie SDB who generously availed to preach the last two retreats of our sisters from 10-16 March and 19-26 March 2021 respectively. May the Lord bless them and their apostolate abundantly and we pray for all our Sisters that the grace of God may continue to sustain them in their personal lives and mission.

Prayers for the sick and the departed

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

- The father of Sr. Pherdalin Thongni.
- The mother of Sr. Rishalin Warbah.
- The mother of Sr. Mary Skina Marwein, Sr. Jobita Marwein (2nd year Novice) and Innocencia Marwein (Postulant).
- The brother of Sr. Camelia Wahlang.
- The sister of Sr. Lina Marbaniang.

And we continue to implore God's mercy on the suffering world and for the complete 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. Carmelina Sun at the demise of her nephew on 5th March 2021.
- Sr. Lidiani Sutnga who loss her maternal uncle on 9th March 2021.
- Sr. Eudashisha Sohshang at the demise of her grandfather on 14th March 2021.
- Sr. Pherdalin Thongni at the passing away of her nephew on 16th March 2021.
- Sr. Barihun Kharsyiemlieh at the demise of her grandmother on 23rd March 2021.
- Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA, Provincial and Sisters of the Province of Chennai (INM) at the passing away of Sr. Arockianathan Mary Josephine on 9th March 2021.
- Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas FMA, Provincial and Sisters of the Province of Mumbai (INB) at the untimely demise of Sr. Mary Chacko (a missionary in Zambia) on 21st March 2021.
- Fr. Provincial and the Salesians of Bangalore Province at the demise of Fr Mathew Thekkekara SDB on 1st March 2021.
- Fr K.M. Jose SDB and the Salesians of Chennai Province at the passing away of Fr Gerard Nelliyyotukonam on 22nd March 2021.

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.

As we enter into the glorious season of Easter, I take this opportunity of wishing everyone a very Happy Easter. Christ has risen to give us a reason for Hope. If the risen Jesus is the hope of the world, we believers and consecrated persons have the responsibility of planting and cultivating seeds of hope in our contexts of life especially in the ongoing traumatic and painful situation of the pandemic in many parts of the world and in some areas of our country as well. Let us strive to always sow the seeds of love, joy and peace, patience, benevolence, goodness and fidelity so that the message of Easter may continue to be joyful and express courage and hope in the lives of all.



With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,

Affectionately,

Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial