



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

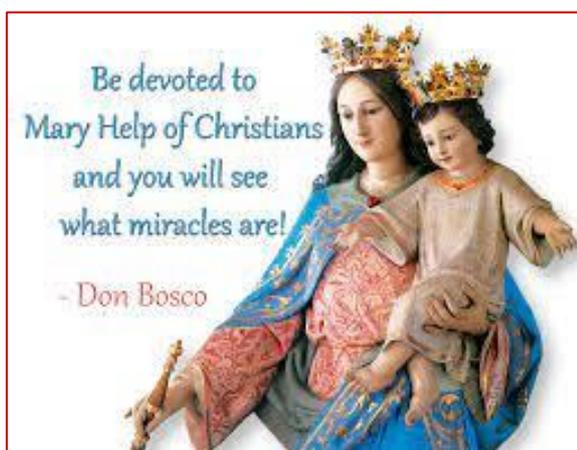
CIR/EG/INS/33/2021

01.05.2021

My dear Sisters,

Loving and prayerful greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

The month of May fills us with nostalgic feelings of living it in the company of our Blessed Mother and of many giant Saints of our family – St. Mary Mazzarello, St. Dominic Savio and others. Throughout all times, Mary has always been a model of great faith adhering to every prompting and call of God with love and generosity. By her readiness, she entered into the loving encounter with God and neighbour with great sense of trust and faith, in the God to whom nothing is impossible. These divine attitudes of our Blessed Mother have been spelled out rightly in the Constitution of Vatican II *Lumen Gentium*: "... the Mother of God is a figure of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ" (n. 63). Mary teaches each of us thus, to walk the paths of history and the environments of our life by an attitude of great and sincere trust in God and love for one's neighbor. In her, we find a person clothed with humanness and divinity, who serves God with purity of heart and who reaches out to others with prompt availability and generous service. Her availability to God is seen in her generous 'YES' to Him at the annunciation and her human traits well expedited when she moved out beyond to help those in need as narrated at the Visitation to her cousin Elizabeth. She thus proved herself to be an outstanding model of true discipleship which we all ought to imitate and imbibe in our life.



By our specific vocation as Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, we have the privilege to honour her all the more as our Mother, our help, our inspiration and our journey companion in life. Our FMA Constitutions too highlight clearly the role of our Blessed Mother in the history of our Institute and invites us the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians to imitate her virtues especially that of faith, hope, charity and joyous humility and to become helpers like her especially among young people. [cf. FMA Constitutions Art. 4]. This article of our Constitutions connotes to us the message that Mary teaches us to invest time not only for our own physical and material well-being, but also for the human and

spiritual growth of those entrusted to our care; to experience 'closeness'; to activate our communities towards promoting a network of proximity, so as to integrate the services necessary for the needs of the community, families and individuals in difficulty.

Don Bosco our father and founder whose life is deeply linked to the figure of Mary continuously exhorted us to cultivate love and devotion to her. In fact, his earthly life and the spirituality that he transmitted to us are the most eloquent proof of this. His devotion to his Madonna under the title 'Help of Christians' found expression in all his pastoral work and action which he impregnated with great trust and audacity. Throughout the life of Don Bosco and in the history of the Salesian Congregation, the role of our Blessed Mother, the Help of Christians is so vividly seen and experienced. The many interventions of our Blessed Mother in the life of Don Bosco suffice to explain his faith in her intercessory power and substantiate his recommendation "*Spread devotion to our Blessed Mother and you will see miracles taking place.*"

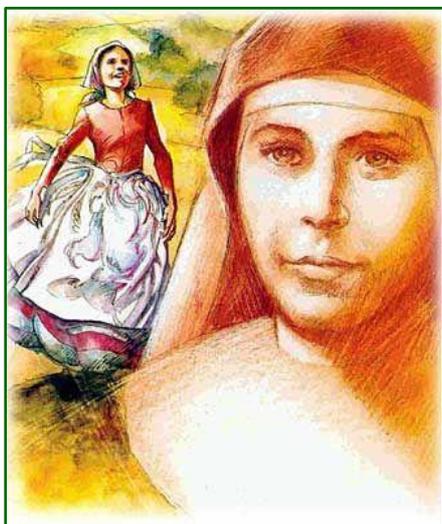
Reading through the various episodes in Don Bosco's life, we come to realize that it was in particular difficult times for the Church, that he became an apostle of devotion to the Help of Christians. In fact in 1862 he confided to Don Cagliero: "*Our Lady wants us to honor her under the title of Mary Help of Christians: times are so sad that we need the Blessed Virgin to help us...*" We are living today at a time when we are being challenged again by the second strike of the corona virus around the country and the world which subsequently pose great sense of fear, panic, anxiety and discouragement to many. It is in this time of great suffering that following the exhortations of our Holy father and founder Don Bosco that we are invited to turn our gaze to our Heavenly Mother, the Help of Christians for refuge and protection from all harm and dangers. During the days of the solemn Novena [15-23], let us turn to her in a very special way interceding for God's mercy upon our world with full faith and trust for she is our Mother and guide who will definitely walk by our side and shield us from all perils. As Pope Francis rightly said of her "As a true mother, she walks at our side, she shares our struggles and she constantly surrounds us with God's love," [Evangeli Gaudium]

Mary in the Life of Our Saints

Mother Mazzarello, our Saintly Mother and Co foundress whose feast we will celebrate on 13 May is a wonderful example and model of charismatic holiness. Just like Don Bosco she too developed an authentic Marian intuition that characterized and concretized her life in a fundamental desire to relive in herself the mystery of Mary, to model her life on Mary's heavenly virtues and to reproduce them in herself in her dealing with God and others. It is amazing to see the trust Mother Mazzarello had in our Blessed Mother right from her tender age. Mary under the title of Help of Christians was for her, as for Don Bosco, a person present and alive in her life; she therefore had such special rapport with Mary not only in the mystery of grace but also in accompanying her in her participation in the saving passion of Christ.

As a young person, her love and devotion to our Blessed Mother can be seen in her life of commitment in the Pious Union, whose Rule was impregnated with the figure of the Immaculate Conception as an ideal of consecrated and apostolic life. In the Immaculate Conception she found the impetus to fight against sin, the charm of purity, the zeal to guard and train the young women around her in the

workroom and in the oratory. As a daughter of Mary Help of Christians, Maria Mazzarello witnessed this Marian dimension with an ever wider, more ecclesial, apostolic and pastoral action. The mission of the Institute entrusted to her care, to lead and animate found fulfilment in her authentic devotion and complete trust in the Help of Christians.



At the beginning of the Congregation, Don Bosco desired that the Institute has the Marian Characteristics and that the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians to be the living monument of his gratitude to Mary Help of Christians. This characteristic Marian note desired by Don Boco was grasped, assimilated and appropriated by Mother Mazzarello and the whole community at Mornese. True devotion to Mary cannot consist only in devout practices - Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello taught us, but in perseverance and constant effort to model our lives on her in order to live those solid evangelical virtues which shine forth in Mary. This can be testified from her constant exhortation to the sisters "We are true images of the Madonna"

The great trust that Mother Mazzarello had in our Blessed Mother can also be testified from her humble attitude of placing the keys of the house every evening with filial and trusting abandon under the feet of our Blessed Mother considering her as the true superior of the house. The first community of Mornese made efforts to conform their lives as the authentic "living monument", and to incarnate the virtues of the Virgin in daily life, in order to reach the conformation to Christ as indicated by the Holy Rules of the Institute.

Mother Mazzarello would often affirm to her Daughters sincere love in the community and the practice of those virtues which would please God and our Blessed Mother. She would often repeat: *"If we will use charity among ourselves, if we are mortified and animated by a spirit of sacrifice, if we remain faithful to our Rules, then we can truly say that we are daughters of Our Lady [...] Let us commit ourselves to exercising ourselves in true humility and charity, bearing with each other's faults; exercise more in our works of piety, making our communion and prayers with enthusiasm and fervor and by practicing our vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. If it 'will be like this, believe it my good daughters, that Our Lady will be happy with us"* As we celebrate the solemnity of our saintly Mother Mazzarello, let us turn to her that she may help us to inculcate the virtues of our Blessed Mother in daily encounters with God and others and that we may live sincerely and worthily our identity as Daughters of Mary Hep of Christians.

Dominic Savio, a young saintly lad of the Salesian garden is another example of a great lover of our Blessed Mother. After a few months of life in the environment of the Oratory and under the saintly care of Saint John Bosco, Dominic's soul was fired with the zeal of his master, whose rule of life is **'Give me souls, take away the rest'**. Following the example of Don Bosco, who in season and out of season sought those souls wherever they were to be found, Dominic also went after them in his

own little world. In the Oratory he founded and directed the Immaculate Conception Sodality, a group of boys who by prayer, word and example carried on an apostolate among their classmates and proved to be of valuable assistance to Don Bosco in his work.

Mary Help of Christians occupied a unique and special place in the life of the young Saint Dominic Savio. Everything that he did, he would do in Mary's name and through her intercession. In fact, we read in the history of his life how at a very tender age he cultivated a very strong bond with our Blessed Mother that he eventually consecrated his life to the Holy Virgin Help of Christians and chose her to be his friend forever. We can testify this close communion he had with Mary from his famous prayer "*O Mary, I give you, my heart! Grant me to be always yours. Jesus and Mary, be ever my friends; and, for love of you, grant me to die a thousand deaths rather than to have the misfortune of committing a single mortal sin*". May this young Saint inspire us to cultivate more love and devotion, trust and confidence in our Blessed Mother, the Help of Christians as inculcated by our Father Don Bosco and as encouraged by our Saintly Mother Mazzarello.



Feast of St. Joseph the Worker

The Feast of St. Joseph the Worker was established in the Church by Pope Pius XII in 1955. This silent saint, who was given the noble task of caring and watching over the Virgin Mary and Jesus, now cares for and watches over the Church and becomes a perfect model for the dignity of human work. Celebrating Saint Joseph, the craftsman allows us to reflect and revalue the ethical depth and value of human work in a context in which it is scarce and its meaning and value are increasingly lost.



With his life as an honest worker, St. Joseph ennobles the manual work with which he sustained his Holy Family and participated in the project of God's salvation for humanity. As partakers in God's work of salvation, we have a unique role to play and valid contributions to make to the mission and the world, to use our talents and abilities as a service to meet the needs of others.

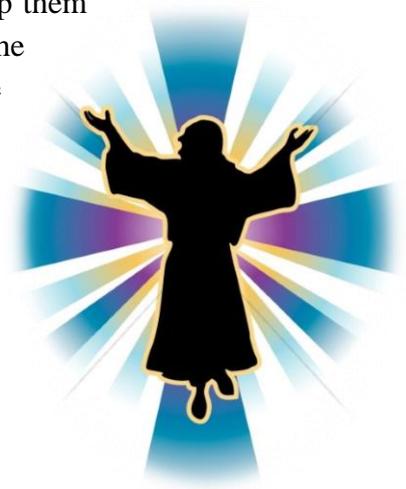
St. Joseph the Worker is the patron saint for laborers and precisely because of that they are affirmed in their dignity as working persons. They are also reminded to be faithful in their responsibilities not only to society in general but above all to their respective families, religious communities and especially to God and His mission. On this feast of St. Joseph, the worker we ask God for the grace to participate in his work and mission with creativity, passion and generosity. We entrust to St. Joseph our commitment to be credible witnesses of the sanctity and evangelical value of work. As we celebrate this feast, we turn to St. Joseph to help us grow more in generosity, in sharing the gifts and talents with one another and to recognize the dignity of every activity

entrusted to our care. May St. Joseph be our model of humility and authenticity, of passionate and honest work. In this year dedicated to St. Joseph, let us entrust all the workers, especially the migrant workers who are at risk of acute poverty to the care and protection of St. Joseph.

Solemnity of The Ascension

The Ascension of Jesus reminds us of the culmination of Jesus' Resurrection, of His official entry into that glory after His passion and death. It also reminds us of our own ultimate destiny i.e.: Heaven. In the mystery of Christ's ascension into Heaven, we discover the final goal of our existence- the immortal and eternal life of Heaven, where Jesus preceded us to prepare a place for us. The hope of one day being able to be with Jesus in Paradise fills our hearts with holy and irrepressible joy while we continue to nourish ourselves spiritually through His Sacramental presence in the Holy Eucharist.

We are in the month of May and it is good to think of Mary in this mystery of the Ascension. After the great event of the Ascension, Mary remained with the Apostles to help them and to journey with them. She was there to offer her maternal help to the apostles in the midst of the trials and struggles at the beginnings of the history of the Church. Mary was everyone's comfort: her luminous faith sustained; her unshakable hope was an encouragement to all; her maternal goodness was everyone's comfort. Mary lived the life of the Church, she participated in the Eucharistic assemblies, she was the first in the service of the poor. This fact gives us Hope in our present days that she will continue to guide, to accompany the Church and every one of us especially in moments of great trials and difficulties.



Solemnity of Pentecost

The mystery of Pentecost is the fulfilment of the mystery of Easter. At Pentecost, we celebrate the day when at the birth of the Church, the Lord poured out the Holy Spirit to reveal to all peoples the hidden mystery of God's love to unite all people to Him. It reminds us of the gift of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to the apostles as the fulfillment of his work. With the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Church opens itself up and the time of love is manifested by believers because they have experienced being first loved by God through His passion, death and resurrection which precedes this great event of the Holy Spirit's descent. It is important to take note of the underlying fact that Pentecost cannot be understood except in relation to the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the "gift" par excellence of the glorified Christ; He is the reason for the Incarnation; is the object of the eternal counsel of the Father who has chosen and called us in Christ.

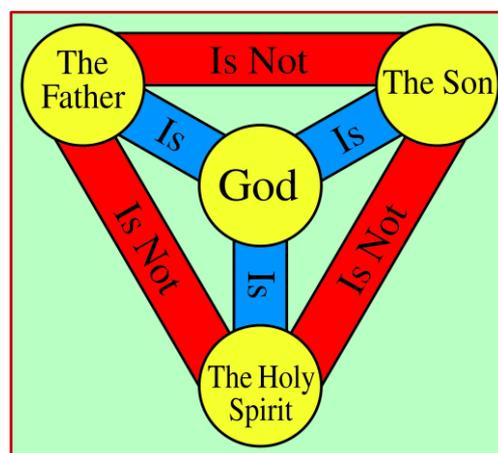


By the grace of Baptism, the Holy Spirit is already living and working in us and yet we await again at Pentecost the outpouring of His gifts as He did with the apostles to transform us into the image of Christ. The significant task of

the Spirit is to create and save the unity of the people, to consecrate and transform them from within. The Spirit did transform the life of the Apostles who were frightened and uncertain, and with His power a new history was born in the Church. Being filled with God's Spirit, as believers and disciples of Christ inspired by the attitude of openness and docility of Mary and the Apostles, we are therefore invited to live and experience the event of the Pentecost as a call to holiness - a holiness that consists first of all in living our personal history with the Gospel Spirit and then in living it within the history of our time, of our community and of our mission "with love". The solemnity of Pentecost also invites us to live our mission to be witnesses of the Risen Christ, to focus on the things of the Spirit that will lead to a life of Hope and Peace. May the Holy Spirit continue to spur in us the ardent desire and love for God and to conform us continuously into the image of Christ.

Solemnity of the Holy Trinity

In the Most Holy Trinity, we celebrate the divine presence of One God in three persons. It is a mystery that always arouses great wonder. We believe in one God in three persons, united in love and action: God the Father in his work of creation, the Son in his work of redemption and the Holy Spirit in his work of sanctification. Three divine persons always united in action and in a perfect bond. In connection with our daily life, each of our actions finds its beginning and its fulfilment precisely in the Holy Trinity. Every prayer, every celebration, our very daily actions are marked and filled with the Trinitarian presence. This means that we all immerse ourselves, without realizing it, in the greatest mystery of love: God, One and Three.



Pope Benedict XVI once explained the significance of this mystery of Love saying that "...it draws our attention not so much to the mystery, but to the reality of love that is contained in this first and supreme mystery of our faith. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one, because love is the absolute life-giving force, the unity created by love is more unity than a purely physical unity. The Father gives everything to the Son; the Son receives everything from the Father with gratitude; and the Holy Spirit is like the fruit of this mutual love of the Father and the Son." From the unity of the Holy Trinity we can draw the message that points the way to a collaborative ministry, which follows the example of the triune God and a point of reflection if our life in the community truly reflect the communion of love and cooperation present in the action that exists in the Trinity. May our life lived in community and every action that we perform be an act of adoration, of praise for God's wisdom and omnipotence and a reflection of the perfect communion of the Holy Trinity.

Family News and Communications

Congratulations: On 10 April 2021, Pope Francis has appointed Sister Pina Del Core FMA as the consultor of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. We congratulate Sr. Pina 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.

Welcome back home: We warmly welcome back to the Province Sr. Teresa Phawa after her 2 years' service at the National CRI, New Delhi. We implore God's blessings upon her especially for her safe flight to the Province on 10th May 2021.

Congratulations and Prayers: We offer our heartiest congratulations and prayers to all the Sisters, Brothers and Candidates of the Salesian Family particularly in India who will pledge their fidelity and preferential love for God through their religious professions this month especially on the 24th of May. We also extend our warmest greetings to all those who will celebrate the different anniversaries of their professions. May the Lord sustain their fidelity and generous self-gift with His manifold blessings and fruitfulness in their apostolate and mission.

Convocation for GCXXIV: In her new Convocation Letter dated 30th April 2021, Mother General has convoked the new dates for the General Chapter XXIV which is scheduled for 17 September - 24 October 2021. Mother is inviting us to intensify our prayers for the Chapter especially during the Holy Rosary. [The Circular is attached along here]

Rosary Marathon: As invited by our Holy Father, let us unite with the Church in the fervent prayer of the Holy Rosary which he termed the '**Rosary Marathon**' for each day of this month of May. The "prayer marathon" will stretch around the globe throughout the month with special intentions for the end of the pandemic. The Rosary will be led each day by various Marian shrines present in different parts of the world. The Rosary will be broadcasted each evening at 6 pm Rome time and 9:30 pm [IST]. For those who cannot follow the online prayer, kindly find an appropriate time with the community to pray fervently with the Church for this special intention.

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:

- All our Sisters and family members who are not well in the hospital and in the communities.
- Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot SDB, Provincial, Salesian Provincial of Shillong Province [INS]

And we continue to implore God's mercy on the suffering world especially for our country, we unite in prayers 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 passing away of her nephew on 11th April 2021.
- Sr. Makriana Marwein at the demise of her sister on 12th April 2021
- Sr. Rakhlena Thongni at the death of her paternal uncle on 17th April 2021.
- Sr. Celina Maslai at the passing away of her niece on 21st April 2021.
- Sr. Victoria Saioo and Sr. Embahlang Dhar who lost their aunt on 21st April 2021. The deceased is also the aunt of our two Novices Sr. Liadiana Saioo and Sr. Melinda Syngkon.
- Sr. Nelia Shullai at the demise of her maternal grandfather today 1 May 2021.
- Sr. Nirmala Lazar FMA, Provincial and Sisters of the Province of Chennai (INM) at the demise of Sr. David Elizabeth and Sr. Regina Sindhuraj on 6th and 16th April 2021 respectively.

- Fr. Matthew Thonikuzhiyil SDB, Provincial and the Salesians of Bangalore Province at the demise of Fr. Thomas Panakezam SDB who died on 24th April 2021.
- Fr. Jacob Iruppakaattu SDB, Provincial of Kolkata Province and the Salesians of INC Province at the demise of Fr. Sanju Mukul Kachhap SDB on 29th April 2021
- Fr. Jacob Iruppakaattu SDB, Provincial of Kolkata Province and the Confreres of the Province, Priests, religious and faithful of Kolkata Archdiocese at the passing away of Most. Rev. Lucas Sirkar SDB Archbishop Emeritus of Kolkata Archdiocese on 18th April 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 I conclude, I would like to encourage everyone with a message of Hope in this tragic period of the global pandemic. We are living in a time of great uncertainty, fear and anxiety with the rapid rise of the Virus Covid-19 especially in our country. The dreams of many are shattered, the hope of people is crushed, but as believers we place our trust in God and our Blessed Mother, the Help of Christians. She who was the protector of the infant Jesus, she who has shielded the Church from various difficult situations, she who has interceded for our founders at the various crucial moments of the Institute will certainly not abandon us. Let us intensify our prayers during this month especially with the fervent Novena to Mary Help of Christians. We place our hope and trust in Mary's maternal care and increase our faith in her assistance and intercession to make us strong and courageous in the face of the present crisis and to become the signs of strength and hope to the suffering world.

Feasts of the month

1 May	- St. Joseph the Worker	16 May	- Ascension of the Lord
6 May	- St. Dominic Savio	23 May	- Pentecost
13 May	- St. Mary Mazzarello	24 May	- Mary Help of Christians
16 May	- St. Louis Orione	30 May	- Holy Trinity
18 May	- St. Leonard Murialdo	31 May	- Feast of the Visitation
29 May	- Blessed Joseph Kowalski		

A very Happy Feast of Dominic Savio, Mother Mazzarello and of Mary Help of Christians to one and all!

With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,

Affectionately,



**Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial**

