



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

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03.11.2021

My dear Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

It is with a heart full of gratitude to God that I returned from the 24th General Chapter. I am grateful to God for the stupendous manner in which His grace paved the way for us to participate in the General Chapter XXIV in spite of the crisis caused by the Pandemic; grateful for the enriching experience of interculturality lived by the 170 participants from 97 countries of the world; grateful for the meaningful and thought provoking reflections and sharing on the theme of the chapter “*Communities that generate Life in the Heart of Contemporaneity*” in the light of word of God “*Do whatever he tells you*”. The presence of Mary was truly felt all through the Chapter. I am sure Sr. Celine D’Cunha too who participated in the Chapter shares similar sentiments. As you have been following the sequence of events, I do not intend to describe them once again.



“Do whatever he tells you”

Mother General described the Chapter as a charismatic experience which is a particularly significant event in the life of the Institute as it happens in the 150th year of its foundation. The Chapter work centered on the three nuclei - *vocational communities, synodal communities, missionary and prophetic communities*- which were studied and reflected in depth to arrive at the final document which will guide the journey of the entire institute for the coming 6 years. As part of the pilgrim Church in time and history, the chapter members, in the process of study and reflection, attuned themselves to listen,

welcome and respond the cry that rises from the heart of contemporaneity, in particular of the young people who are "the now of God".

I would like to quote a bit from the draft document of the chapter: “The concurrence of the Chapter with the first phase of the XVI Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, *For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission*, intensified listening to the Spirit to live the Chapter as a "Pentecost event". With humility, tenacity, and hope we commit ourselves to understand the dynamics of today's world in the community search for the will of God, in fidelity to the spirit of the origins for a passionate following of

Christ and a new apostolic dynamism. We let ourselves be guided by the Mother of Jesus, a sign of joy, hope, and daring to do whatever He tells us.

The theme of the Chapter fits into the ecclesial horizon of synodality and in the context of contemporaneity with its tensions and contradictions, hopes and opportunities. The appeal is to "scrutinize the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of the Gospel". In the awareness that every crisis contains seeds of growth, we have considered the pandemic as a lens to read our time and a telescope that enables us to look further, towards a better future. To this end, we consider challenges as an opportunity to respond to the lack of the meaning of life, the loss of joy, the darkening of hope, especially in young people".

Dear Sisters, we will have ample time to study and deepen this precious document of our Institute which will help us to live with responsibility our radical belonging to Christ as consecrated women, living our charism in its renewed freshness, capable of giving an adequate response to the challenges faced in our mission.

The election of a new Mother General and her team was another significant outcome of the General Chapter while the visit of the Holy Father Pope Francis towards the end of the Chapter will remain a cherished and treasured moment of the Chapter for every participant.

A month dedicated to the Holy Souls

We have just entered the month of November dedicated to the commemoration of our deceased loved ones that also reminds us of our earthly reality in the light of the Christian faith. We were created for God and to live with Him, after the earthly pilgrimage. The gesture of going to the cemetery, bringing a flower, saying a prayer for loved ones come spontaneous to everyone in this month. This is so because death with its mystery always disturbs the human soul or because of the desire to feel close to our loved ones that we undertake pilgrimages to the tombs and offer special suffrages for the departed. A Christian performs these gestures not only out of tradition but because, as we pray in the profession of faith the Creed, we believe in eternal life. Eternity is a concept that does not belong to human and earthly experience. We believe above all in eternal Life, because our God is not a God of the dead, but of the living as the Book of Wisdom defines Him.



Entering into the significance of this month, we are called not to limit ourselves only to reflecting on our deceased loved ones or limit ourselves to remembering what they were but, we are called to reflect on the gift of resurrection. In the resurrection we recognize our true destiny as Christians, that is, the true vocation to which we are called. We need to start from this and thus live the initial question of our life: "Where are we going?". We are therefore reminded that life is a journey towards the final encounter with Christ and therefore in this significant month, let us do much good that strengthens and matures our

Christian faith, not so much because it is ethical to do it, instead so that the seed of faith that God has placed in our hearts can sprout and become a blessing to others.

Season of Advent

While we contemplate on this significant moment of encountering God in eternal life, we are also given yet more opportunities to reflect and make the necessary commitments with the dawning of Advent on 28 November this year. The season of Advent calls us to remember the first coming of the Lord while disposing ourselves to welcome him into our hearts. But the Church invites us to widen our gaze: the Lord who came two thousand years ago and whose coming we celebrate at Christmas, will return as a glorious judge at the end of time. Therefore, the time of Advent and the whole Christian life are a time of joyful hope and vigilance for the coming of the Lord - as a response of love to a God who loves us, who is faithful to his promises and who expects our fidelity with the help of his grace. It fills us with encouragement and hope and motivates us not to wait till tomorrow or the next day but to be the people we want to be here and now, to start living the life we want to live today and not in some distant future. This holy season reminds us therefore not to delay in being good to one another, in actively caring for one another especially the poor, in praying a little more, and living more positively and to live God's dream for our lives TODAY. Let us live this holy season in an act of gratitude to God with renewed commitment to strengthen our faith to encounter God as we daily strive to:



- A** - Await with Alertness the day of our redemption
- D** - Deepen our personal relationship with God and others
- V** - Vigilantly keep watch the Lord's constant visits
- E** - Encounter God in every person and situation of daily living
- N** - Nurture the presence of God at all times
- T** - Trust in God and His overwhelming grace

A Journey together towards the centenary

Shortly we will enter into the final stage of the preparation for the Centenary of the FMA presence in India. I would like to remind here again the theme proposed for this year's preparation (November 2021- November 2022).



*Plan the future boldly: "Courage! Let us go ahead
with a great and generous heart" (L 47,12)
Prophets and witnesses for a transformed society in the
style of synodality.*

The line action that will guide our journey as FMA India towards achieving the said objective is *to accompany the young towards integral formation making them agents of social change.*

As we launch into this final year of our intense preparation, we are constantly being reminded to become prophets and witnesses in our contemporary society. Each of us is called to be a prophet and a witness to share the message of God's love and to carry forward the torch lit by our first missionaries. Let us live this year with greater zeal and passion as a gesture of love and gratitude to our missionaries. On this year of preparation, we are also invited to read and reflect together as a community on the book '**The Ambassadors return**'. May the lives of our missionaries inspire and spur us to revive the missionary spirit in our personal lives and in our mission.

Congratulations!

We extend once again our warmest and affectionate greetings to our dear Mother General, Mother Chiara Cazzuola who was elected at the General Chapter XXIV as the 10th successor of Mother Mazzarello. We offer her the gift of our prayers as she carries forward the baton of our charism to the generations to come. May the Holy Spirit and our Blessed Mother guide and accompany her in this noble mission of leading and accompanying our Institute. We also extend our warmest congratulations and prayerful support to all the members of the General Council. We assure Mother General and her council our prayers, collaboration and our fidelity in living out with authenticity the charismatic identity of our vocation to become the life-giving communities in our mission and in the society.



Congratulations!

- **Mother Chiara Cazzuola** - Superior General
- Sr. María del Rosario García Ribas - Vicar General
- Sr. Nilza Fátima de Moraes - General Councillor for Formation
- Sr. Runita Borja - General Councillor for Youth Pastoral
- Sr. Leslie del Socorro Sándigo - General Councillor for Salesian Family
- Sr. Ruth del Pilar Mora - General Councillor for the Missions
- Sr. Maria Ausilia De Siena - General Councillor for Social Communication
- Sr. Ena Veralis Bolaños - Economer General

- Sr. Chantal Mukase - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Celine Jacob - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Lidia Strzelczyk - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Maria Assunta Inoue - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Marta Liliana Riccioli - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Paola Battagliola - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Phyllis Neves - General Visiting Councillor
- Sr. Maria Luisa Nicastro - Secretary General

Our heartiest congratulations in a special way to Sr. Celine Jacob, FMA Provincial of Bangalore who has been elected at the GCXXIV as the General Visiting Councillor. We offer her our prayerful support as she embraces this mandate entrusted by the Lord and our Blessed Mother under her loving care.

A note of Gratitude

Our special note of gratitude to our beloved Mother Yvonne Reungoat for her motherly ways of leading and guiding the Institute in the past 13 years. Under her able leadership, we have seen, witnessed and experienced tangibly the miracles of God in every way. We thank her in a particular manner for the accompaniment of each individual sister and member of the Institute through her timely recommendations, exhortations and motherly gestures of reaching out to us in varied ways. We are blessed to have a Mother in her person who in turn became a blessing of God's love to all of us. May the Lord continue to shower His plenteous graces upon her and her mission. We are also grateful to God for the gift of Sr. Vilma Tallone, the former Economer General for her painstaking efforts and interest for the growth of our Institute and mission of our Province in every way. We are grateful to Sr. Piera Cavaglia, former Secretary General and all the other outgoing General Councilors for their dedicated services to the Institute. We express our special gratitude to Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil for the sisterly accompaniment of FMA India during the past 13 years. May God bless everyone of them and their future mission.



Family News and Communications

PCI President and Vice President: On 10 October 2021, Mother General has appointed Sr. Nirmala Lazar, FMA Provincial of Chennai (INM) and Sr. Meenakshi D'Silva, FMA Provincial of Mumbai (INB) as the President and Vice President of PCI respectively for the term of office 2021-2023. We congratulate and thank them for their generosity to shoulder this responsibility on behalf of FMA- PCI. We assure them of our prayers and collaboration in the common welfare and mission of FMA India. We also express our sincere gratitude to Sr. Margaret Mary Amalanathan the outgoing PCI President and Provincial of Trichy (INT) for the meticulous leadership and guidance to FMA India in the past years. We owe the same gratitude to Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas, the ex-provincial of Mumbai (INB) who generously guided the PCI as its Vice President and to Sr. Little Flower Ambrose, the PCI Secretary for the notable services and support

in the past years. May the Lord bless them for all the hard work, sacrifices and initiatives taken in the past for the growth of FMA India.

God's Blessings: We implore God's abundant blessings upon our dear Sr. Rosa Pyngrope who will be leaving the Province on 23 November 2021. We assure her of our prayerful support as she takes up the animation of the community Casa Madre Ersilia Canta, Rome. We thank her for her loving and dedicated services rendered to the province in her capacity as Vice Provincial and Mistress of Novices in recent years. May her generosity to say 'Yes' to God's call bring more authentic vocations to the Province. We wish her all the best and safe journey to Rome.

Congratulations: Hearty congratulations to Sr. Helen Puwein who received a certificate of appreciation and memento from the Legal Aid Department, Government of Meghalaya for the contributions, support and valuable services rendered to the people and especially to the Office of the Meghalaya State legal Services Authority through various Outreach and awareness programme for 2021.

Chapter Sharing and Annual Spiritual Retreats 2022: Kindly take note of the dates for the Chapter Sharing and the Annual Spiritual Retreats. May I request the animators of communities to kindly send the names of the sisters to the Provincial Secretary by the end of November 2021. We send ahead our prayers that the post chapter journey and the retreats may bear abundant fruits in our personal lives and in our communities.

DATES	EVENTS	PARTICIPANTS
17 November (Noon) - 20(Noon)	GC Sharing	Provincial Councilors & Animators (<i>This will conclude with the Provincial Community Day on 21 November</i>)
14 December (Morn) - 16(Noon)	GC sharing	School Sisters
16 December (Eve) - 23(Morn) <i>Preacher: Fr. Roy Anthony SDB</i>	Retreat	School Sisters
13 February (Morn) - 15(Noon)	GC Sharing	Perpetually Professed Sisters
15 February (Eve) - 22(Morn) <i>Preacher: Fr. Biji Thomas SDB</i>	Retreat	Perpetually Professed Sisters
5 March (Eve) - 12(Morn) <i>Preacher: Fr. Biji Thomas SDB</i>	Retreat	Provincial Councilors & Animators
21 March (Morn) -23(Noon)	GC sharing	Perpetually Professed Sisters
23 March (Eve) - 30(Morn) <i>Preacher: Fr. Biji Thomas SDB</i>	Retreat	Perpetually Professed Sisters
22 July (Eve) – 29 (Morn) <i>Preacher: Fr. Biji Thomas SDB</i>	Retreat	Temporary Professed Sisters (<i>This will be followed by the Juniors' Renewal Course and Professions and earlier date will be announced for their GC Sharing</i>)

Prayers for the sick and the departed

We extend our prayerful support to all the sick ones through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother especially our sisters, relatives and members of the Salesian Family.

We offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers to all those who lost their dear ones in the past months especially our Sisters and members of the Salesian Family. As we commemorate this month in loving remembrance of the departed, we pray that they may enjoy the loving embrace of God forever in His Kingdom.

Feasts of the month

13 November - Blessed Artemide Zatti

15 November - Blessed Magdalene Morano

21 November - Solemnity of Christ the King

25 November - Blessed Mamma Margaret

For A Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission

Pope Francis has formally launched the 2-year synodal path [synod on synodality 2021- 2023] with a call to ‘encounter, listen, and discern’- to “look at others in the eye and listen to what they have to say, to build rapport, to be sensitive to the questions of our sisters and brothers, to let ourselves be enriched by the variety of charisms, vocations, and ministries. “The pope invited the Catholics taking part in the synodal path to strive to “become experts in the art of encounter.” He has said that “*the purpose of this Synod, is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands.*” (Preparatory Document, #32).

This Synod, with its powerful theme, is a grace-filled opportunity for the people of God to go through a conversion experience and to journey with Jesus for a more just, inclusive, fraternal, free, equitable and peaceful world. **Communion, Participation** and **Mission** are the keywords which describe synodality

Communion: expresses the very nature of the Church. It is a way of listening to the Church which is made up of the faithful, bishops and priests; of a Church that questions itself about what God is saying to it in the difficult historical context we are experiencing, in solidarity with the efforts and desires that our contemporaries live. Communion is the grace to transcend our narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness – to reach out to others particularly the lost, the marginalized and the poor. It is an attitude of openness to realize that all are my sisters and brothers- in fact this is a Synod for all God’s people that includes everyone in the family of God. We, as Christians, are to manifest communion because that is the nature of God. God is a communion of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We are baptized in the name of that Trinity and thus should show to the world that same unity and communion.

Participation: The Synod calls for an involvement of everyone, priests, religious and laity, because we are all responsible for the Gospel to be brought to the world and for the Church. The participation of all is a requirement of the baptismal faith. From Baptism, our primary source of life, comes the equal dignity of children of God of all the faithful, despite the difference in ministries and charisms. For this, we are all called to participate in the life of the Church and in her mission. The Synod invites us, opportunely, to listen to everyone, without wanting to impose ourselves or cultivating rivalry but with attention to place ourselves at the service of the good of all. If we are all part of the body of Christ, then every part must be valued by everyone else not just for the purpose of letting each person express one's views. God uses all of our talents for the good of all and that every voice can contribute to the discerning of God's will by the community of faith.



Mission: is a journey we are all called to undertake; to move out of our comfort zones and go forth to build bridges of love, understanding and justice; to journey together towards a common mission of the Church and to walk together the pilgrimage of love. For this, only the Word of God can revive the enthusiasm and passion for Christ and for the Church, enthusiasm and passion necessary for us and for our communities. Only a wise gaze knows how to see that God continues to work something beautiful and holy in us, in the Church and in our communities.

The Holy Father invites us to set out and to open the "doors" and "windows" of the various ecclesial realities, but above all those of the life of each one. Like Peter we are called to take the road to go to meet the brothers. It is from the encounter, made up of attention and listening, that new opportunities, new horizons, new existential impulses come to life. We are called to put the culture of encounter back at the center of our experiences, to get back to being passionate about the other. Therefore, let us join hands in communion with the Church prompted by the exhortations of Pope Francis himself who said "let us have a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. Let us not miss out on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening, and discernment. In the joyful conviction that, even as we seek the Lord, he always comes with his love to meet us first". Let us unitedly invoke the Spirit of God to be at work in us and in the life of the Church as we strive to come closer together as a faith community that witnesses the love of God. May the Holy Spirit inspire and guide us onward this journey as a community of believers, directing us the path to walk together as we fervently pray the following prayer during these years 2021-2023.

*We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.*

*With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.*

*We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.*

*Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.*

*All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever.*

Amen.

I wish you a fervent journey together towards synodality in the company of our Blessed Mother as we will enter also in the novena days of the Immaculate Conception and the Season of Advent.

With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,

Affectionately,



Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial