



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/41/2022

01.01.2022

My dear Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

At the very outset, I extend my warmest greetings of a Happy and Grace filled New Year 2022 to each and every one of you. The arrival of the new year is a special station, in the flow of time, which helps us understand that life goes on and on. And as the years grow, the time of our life on earth decreases as we move towards the dawn of eternal life. Every religion and every culture solemnly celebrate the beginning of the year. It is one of the ways of sanctifying time, that is, of recognizing that we are contained in time and that it is the work of God. The celebration of the beginning of the year is therefore a way of expressing our dependence on God, who is the Alpha and the Omega.



Therefore, let the beginning of this year be first of all a reason for faith, which pushes us to invocation, a reason for faith that we reflect well. This time, which the Lord gives us is a time of grace and of salvation. No instant of our time is without grace, because the Lord reserved it superabundantly, and it is a time for salvation, because in every instant of our time we can do something good for eternity; every instant of time can be transformed by us into a meritorious moment. Let us therefore, -welcome this new Year as a gift from God for our sanctification for it is still a reason for love, which prompts us to start well and to continue well.

Poet Nazim Hikmet said very beautifully: "The most beautiful of our seas is the one we did not sail. We have not yet experienced the most beautiful of our days. And what I would like to tell you the most beautiful, I haven't told you yet ". This normally is the desire of everyone to start the year with new words, with new gestures, looking at people with new eyes, with a truly blessing look towards others...and truly this is what a Christian perspective looks toward the dawn of the new year. It is a new year, but it is truly

new when Jesus is among us. It is new when it is dedicated to him and thus becomes a year of love and salvation. Thus, every past, present and future year will be a hymn of thanksgiving to the Lord for his works, for us and for all humanity.

Solemnity of Mary Mother of God

It is consoling for us Christians to begin the new year in the shining light of Mary's divine motherhood. The Church, not surprisingly, makes us begin in the sign of this great solemnity, because she wants our first gaze to rest on the Mother of Jesus and our first act of love is towards her who is also our Mother. The Virgin Mother, with her divine and maternal presence, is a sign and hope for humanity for a better world. A great joy fills our hearts at the thought that she will be close to us and accompany us along the path of this new year. We turn to her with filial trust, so that she may help us to live it in a holy way.



The Church on this day celebrates the Virgin Mary in her highest title, as the Mother of God, that is, as she who generated the Savior of humankind in the world and who continues to carry him and generate him in the heart of every person. On this first day of the year, as at Christmas, the Church honours Mary with the highest title of Mother of God recognizing her as the Mother of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, who is our only source of salvation and hope. The divine motherhood of Our Blessed Mother is an honor and a certainty for us. It is an honor, because there is a creature of our humanity who has this unique relationship with God, singular, ineffable, wonderful. And it is a certainty, because the Mother of God is still our Mother and if our Mother is so powerful before God, how much more can she help us her children look to our future with serenity.

In the Gospel of St. Luke 2, 18-20, we read that ‘...*All who heard were amazed at what the shepherds had told them. Mary, on her part, kept all these things, pondering them in her heart.*’... Mary represents the ideal believer, for she hears the good news and ponders it in her heart, and fully responds to it. Her heart becomes the place of discovering Jesus, and who He truly is. Mary and the Church’s entire life, is centered on that process of pondering who that child now born to us really is. Mary in contemplating her son becomes the Church reflecting on the Incarnation. It is this aspect of Mary’s motherhood that is most important for our new year, a year in which we continue our own journey of the heart towards God.

These expressions from Holy Scripture which describe in particular the affable heart of the Mother of God could become our guiding principle as we open ourselves to the newness of God’s love and grace in this New Year - *to be amazed, to guard, to meditate, to glorify and to praise* God. As we begin this new year, we wish each other the ability to marvel at the wonders of God, the ability to keep and meditate on the word of God, the strength and love to praise and glorify God in every event of our life so that every day that passes show us more and more this abundance of God’s love, grace and mercy which envelops everything and which will be fully revealed in eternal life.

55th World Day of Peace

On the first day of the year, the Church celebrates the World Day of Peace. World Peace Day, is the occasion that the Catholic Church celebrates by dedicating it to prayer and reflections on the state of affairs in the world for a future that leads to universal peace. True peace is the peace that descends from Christ and we Christians are invited to truly intercede and work, so that this peace may come into the world, which is not only the peace of arms, but it is the peace of families, the peace of conscience, the peace that every person must have in oneself.

On the occasion of the "World Day of Peace 2022", Pope Francis tries to answer to questions about education and how it is contributing to lasting peace. A peace capable of lasting over time and in the world can only be achieved by reacting with energy and establishing the numerous needs of current generations but also and mainly of future ones. Through the proposed theme, **"Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace"**, Pope Francis underlines the importance of intergenerational ties to build a world of lasting peace, in particular, the importance of education and dialogue between generations. In his message, Pope Francis stresses the need for mutual understanding between generations and for meaningful and transformative exchanges. He writes: *"Dialogue involves listening to each other, sharing different points of view, reaching an agreement and walking together. The great social challenges and peace processes necessarily require dialogue between the custodians of memory - the elderly - and those who carry history forward - the young"*. Everyone can collaborate in building a more peaceful world starting from their own heart and from relationships in the family, in society and with the environment, up to relationships between all peoples.



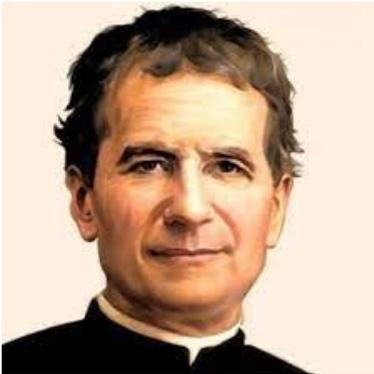
"Do all through Love, nothing through constraint" - Strenna 2022



The Rector Major Don Ángel Fernández Artime, SDB has rightly proposed that the theme for the Strenna 2022 can only be that of the Spirituality of Saint Francis of Sales in this year in which we will celebrate the fourth centenary of the anniversary of his death. The Rector Major further emphasizes that it will also be a wonderful opportunity to recognize and find oneself in the spirituality of St Francis de Sales and to appreciate even more the magnificent characteristics of Don Bosco's Salesian spirit and the precious values of Salesian youth spirituality. In this month when we celebrate many Salesian Feasts, the Strenna comes as an invitation for us to give heed to the words of St. Francis De

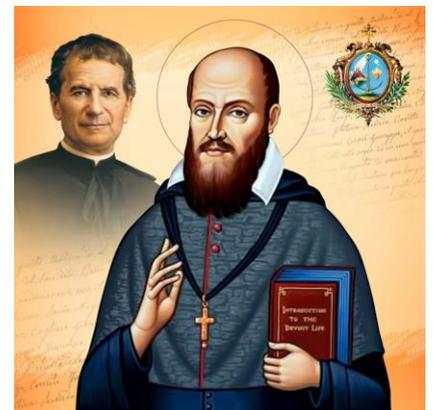
Sales to ‘do everything with love’. We have giant models in the Salesian Family who proved to the world even today that Love reigns triumph and that Loving Kindness is an effective bait that draws all souls to God.

St. John Bosco: Don Bosco our Father and Founder is indeed an apostle of Love who captured every single soul he encountered just with a pinch of great love. The feast of Don Bosco returns every year to remind us of the figure of a popular saint for his faith, charity, educational commitment, great love, passion and zeal especially towards young people. Don Bosco was a good Shepherd and strong support in times "of clouds and darkness" for the Church, humiliated and offended by the powerful, and for the society marked by pressing industrialization and urbanization. He was able to seek, gather, heal and bring home young people and adults, who were bewildered, exploited, away from their home or homeless. To them he was able to announce the joy of the Gospel with great love. Don Bosco was the Shepherd of evangelical joy and educated the hearts and minds above all of children and young people to feel the Lord close to him, to feel him not a stranger, a distant person, but as a traveling companion in life, to feel the love of God enveloping in every situation.



In a world that is much driven by evil forces and degrading moral values, we are called to follow the example and the testimony of love and commitment of Don Bosco who taught us, placing young people at the center of his work as an evangelizer, friend, father and teacher of youth. Don Bosco lived and witnessed in an admirable and fruitful way the love of God and devotion to Mary Help of Christians in his affection and predilection for the young, bringing God’s message of love, faith and hope in the hearts of all through the religious, educational, cultural and social action and mission. The teaching and testimony of St. John Bosco are still alive and strong in our communities and represent a necessary point of reference to face the current times challenges with greater love, courage and united commitment.

St. Francis De Sales: We know that Don Bosco was deeply impressed by the extraordinary figure of St. Francis de Sales who was an authentic inspiration to him, especially because he was a true pastor, a master of charity, a tireless worker for the salvation of souls. St. Francis de Sales once said, “*the measure of love is to love without measure*”. Francis took seriously the words of Christ, “*Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart.*” For to learn to love without measure, we have to look to Jesus Christ, the obedient Son of the Father. To advance in holiness is to advance in love. He often said ... ‘ask no more what God will do with me: I simply love him, regardless of how much he gives me or does not give me.’ Thus, he found peace, and the question of predestination - which was being discussed at that time - was resolved, because he was not seeking more than he could have from God; he simply loved him, and indulged in his goodness. And this became the secret principle that guided him throughout his life. Through the example and prayers of St. Francis de Sales may we learn to love without measure everything that God brings into our lives for His glory and for the salvation of souls.

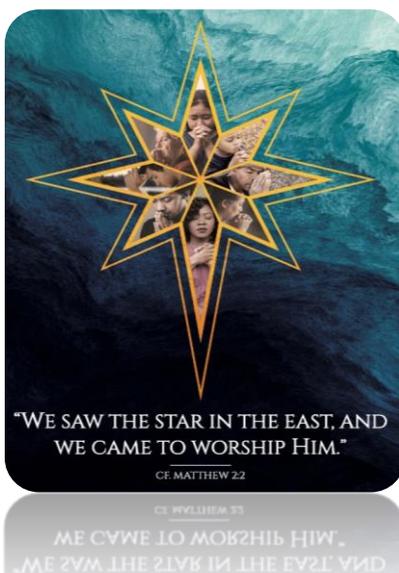


Blessed Laura Vicuna: “For me praying, working, playing sleeping, are all the same thing” were the courageous words of Laura Vicuna which truly reveals a heart full of love for God. For Laura, everything came from one Love, the presence of God in everyday life and which speaks tangibly of her daily holiness lived with much joy in an environment permeated with ideals sustained by sacrifice and offered with great love. Laura’s life is marked by great suffering but transfigured by greater love. Laura’s personality mirrored God’s love, and she became known as a friend to all. In response to learning of God’s love for her, Laura yearned to share that love with all she encountered, desiring to do so especially with her mother to the point that she made an offering of her life for the conversion her mother. Love for God and for Mary made her want to be everything for everyone. She was kind and thoughtful to all whom she encountered. She was known to be a reliable, gentle girl, admired and appreciated. But Laura was not born a saint. She grew in holiness by responding to the gift of the Spirit as she lived daily life seeing Jesus present in every person she met with much love. It was for her great courage that she took the resolution to love God with her whole heart with which she truly lived till the end of her earthly sojourn. May this giant saint of love inspire us to live our lives with great love in our encounters with God, with others and in our mission.



Unity Octave

The week of prayer for the unity of all Christians leads us to communion with Jesus' prayer "With me in them and you in me, may they be so perfected in unity that the world will recognize that it was you who sent me and that you have loved them as you have loved me." (Jn 17:23). This desire for unity invites us to pray for all Christians and with all Christians which is undoubtedly the heart of the entire ecumenical activity. Prayer and personal conversion are our main means of working for Christian unity. It could also be said that the best form of ecumenism consists in trying to live according to the Gospel, in order to be able to give life to the image of that Christ with whom we yearn to unite. Only by looking at the other person with the eyes of Jesus will we perhaps be able to personally discover some aspects of the richness of the Christian message of unity with a new clarity.



This year’s theme “***We saw the Star in the East, and we came to worship Him***” is chosen and proposed by the Christians of the Middle East - a precious opportunity to get back on the journey together, open to mutual acceptance, but above all to God's plan to be witnesses of his love for every person and people on earth. The star that appeared in the sky constitutes a long-awaited sign of hope, which leads the Magi and in them, in reality, all the peoples of the earth, in the place where the true King and Savior manifests himself. The star is a gift, a sign of God's loving presence for all humanity. The Magi reveal to us the unity of all peoples willed by God. They travel from distant countries and represent different cultures, yet they are all driven by the desire to see and know the newly born King; they gather together at Bethlehem to honor him and offer their gifts.

In this same perspective, Christians are called to be a sign in the world of the unity that Jesus desires for the world with a mission like the star, to guide humanity thirsty for God and lead it to Christ, and to be an instrument of God to bring about the unity of all peoples. The star that shines for the Magi is for everyone, lit first of all in the depth of consciousness that allows itself to be illuminated by love. We can all sharpen our gaze to see it, set out to follow it and reach the goal of meeting God and our fellow brothers and sisters in our daily life. During this week of celebration and prayer, let us pray that like the Magi, we will 'follow the star' to experience the joy of having found Jesus and share Him with others.

Family News and Communications

Inauguration of Auxilium, Khapmara: The new building of Auxilium Khapmara will be blessed and inaugurated on 24 January 2022. We are grateful to God for His loving providence that never fails us. We extend our sincere gratitude to Uncle Paul Wilkes, Director, Home of Hope, the Meldrum Foundation for their generous support towards this mission. My sincere appreciation to Sr. Gemima Pohrmen, Provincial Economer for the meticulous efforts and dedicated supervision of the work in all these past months and to Sr. Jubil Dkhar, animator and all the members of the community for the painstaking efforts made towards the realization of this day of blessing. May God bless each of them abundantly. We pray that the mission of Khapmara may be a sign of God's love to the many young people of the area and that the charism of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello may be kept alive in these areas through our mission.

PCI Meeting: The PCI Meeting will be held from 31 January – 3 February 2022 at Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirapalli. Along with me, Sr. Mary Lamare and Sr. Joplin Suchiang will participate in the meeting. Let us send ahead our prayers for its fruitfulness.

Apostolic Experience: The 16 Second year Novices will make their one month and half of community and apostolic experiences in the different communities of our Province – Chapahati, Garobadha, Umswai, Mawkyndeng, Rangblang and Umdang starting from the 4th of January 2022. We accompany them with our prayers that this time of grace may bear much fruits in their journey of committing their life to God. I thank the animators and community members of these communities who will closely accompany our 16 Novices in this journey. God bless you.

Congratulations: Our heartiest congratulations and prayerful wishes to Fr. Thomas Santiago SDB who has been appointed the 6th Provincial of the Salesian Province of Hyderabad. We assure him of our prayers in his noble mission of animating the Province.

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 month especially our sisters and members of the Salesian Family.

- Sr. Rosina Susngi and family members at the passing away of her brother on 14 December 2021.
- Sr. Irene Lalmuanpui and her dear ones who lost her brother on 29 December 2021.

- All our sisters who lost their relatives and dear ones in the month of December 2021.
- Sr. Meenakshi D'Silva FMA and the sisters of Mumbai Province (INB) at the demise of Sr. Ruth Misquitta on 18 December 2021.
- Fr. Provincial and the confreres of Chennai Province (INM) at the tragic demise of Fr. Suresh Xavier on 6 December 2021.
- Fr. Provincial and the confreres of Dimapur Province (IND) at the passing away of Fr. Thomas Vattoth on 8 December 2021.
- Fr. Provincial and the confreres of Kolkata Province (INC) at the demise of Fr. Samuel Mondol on 28 December 2021.

May the departed ones enjoy the loving embrace of God forever in His Kingdom and may all those who mourn their passing away be consoled by the strength and grace of God.

Once again, a **Grace filled New Year** to all! As we enter into the threshold of this new beginning, I wish that it may usher in God's abundant blessings in every way in our life and mission.

"The Lord bless you and keep you· The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you· The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you Peace"

{Numbers 6:24-26}



With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,
Affectionately,

Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial