



# Provincial Circular

## Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/64/2023

02.10.2023

My dear Sisters,

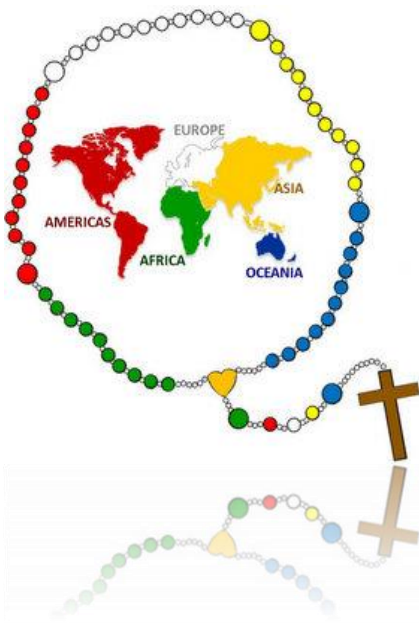
Loving greetings from Sam Phran, Thailand!

On this beautiful day of the feast of the Guardian Angel, I greet each of you from the 'Land of Smiles- Thailand' bringing along the affectionate greetings of Mother General and all the FMA Provincials of Asia Pacific who are gathering here for the Spiritual Retreat. I express gratitude for your remembrance and prayers for our journey and for the upcoming days of our Spiritual Retreat which will be held from tomorrow 3- 10 October 2023 followed by a two-day meeting with Mother General. I assure you of my prayerful remembrance during these days of prayer and reflection. As we have just entered this significant month of October, I wish each of you a happy and fervent month of the Holy Rosary and of the Missions. The month of October has a specific significance in the life of our Institute and in the life of every Daughter of Mary Help of Christians. As we step into this new month with all the graces and blessings that await us, let us entrust ourselves to Mary that she may be our companion and lead us by her hand to live and be ever more faithful to our consecration and mission in the Church. In this month dedicated to the missions and the Holy Rosary, we are specially invited to revive in us the missionary spirit and our love for Mary, the first missionary, who, carrying Jesus in her womb, left "without delay" to be "close" to her cousin who was in need, without fear, without waiting for the "best time" or the "convenient time".

Article 75 of our Constitutions says "*The missionary dimension is an essential element of the Institute and the expression of its universality which has been part of our history since the beginnings*" and it specifies that every Daughter of Mary Help of Christians should become witnesses of Christ and of the Church through our life of fidelity and witness. The missionary aspect of our vocation in the Church and in the Institute has got a distinguished mark that reminds us of our call to be missionaries after the example of our Blessed Mother. I am sure that in all our communities, different creative initiatives will be taken to live this month with greater intensity and to reemphasized the Marian and missionary aspect in our personal lives, in our mission and apostolate.

Celebrating this month of October recalls the great help and powerful intercession of our Blessed Mother, the Queen of the Holy Rosary in various difficult situations of the Church, of our lives and of our mission through the fervent recitation of the Holy Rosary. The Rosary remains today, as

yesterday, the daily prayer of the faithful and a popular synthesis of our faith. It is not so much a prayer to Mary but rather a prayer to Jesus with Mary. For this reason, the Rosary is the prayer of anyone who wish to spend some moments of the day with the Mother so that she can speak to him/her about the Lord Jesus. In fact, the prayer of the Hail Mary is nothing other than the repetition of the fundamental event of the Christian mystery: God becomes man in the Virgin's womb, so that man becomes a Son of God. The mystery of God's love is given for the salvation and hope of the world in the incarnation of Jesus Christ as we say in the Hail Mary. Cardinal Newman stated that: *“The Holy Rosary is the belief that becomes prayer.”* The Rosary also helps us to rediscover the presence of God in our daily life and inspires us to relive our life like Jesus following the example of Mary. The lives of Jesus and Mary were both lives of announcing the good news (the Gospel) and of charity (the mission).



Every month of October reminds us that the Holy Rosary and the Mission generate and support each other in Prayer and Work which are the keys to human and Christian journey of faith. The missionary action of the Christians is made up of explicit announcement of the Gospel, of Christian values and of concrete actions of solidarity in different ways. The Church is missionary because it takes care of the salvation of the whole human person and not just a part of him. This is why ecclesial missionary action is not just reduced to merely social actions but instead is a pastoral mission which "puts" Jesus at the center of whatever it announces or does. For this reason, the wisdom of the Church has always understood and proposed that prayer and missionary action must be the two "faces" of a Christian and much more of a consecrated person: just as the heart and hands belong to the same person, so prayer and missionary activity form the essential identity of a Christian.

The theme of the World Mission Sunday chosen by Pope Francis *“Hearts on fire, feet on the move”* inspired by the story of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, in the Gospel of Luke (cf. 24:13-35) is a clarion call for us to live this missionary mandate vested on us with greater love and fidelity. The Pontiff encourages all the faithful to become the missionary disciples proclaiming God’s love to all. In his message, he emphasizes on the three key elements that urges everyone to inspire others with the light of God’s word.

1. *Risen Lord’s Presence*
2. *Communion through Eucharist*
3. *Joy of Sharing the Gospel*

The beautiful month of October offers everyone the prayer of the Rosary and the reality of the missionary commitment to live a more fulfilled and committed Christian and religious life. Let us therefore put our sincere efforts to create a "Marian missionary" atmosphere in our hearts, in our lives and in our communities. Let us offer each other words, thoughts and "missionary" gestures of

charity and closeness that announces the message of God's love to each other and to everyone we encounter in life. Let us also offer our special prayers for all the missionaries especially our Sisters and for the increase of more missionary vocations in the Church and in our Institute.

### *Season of Creation*

On 4 October 2023, the Season of Creation 2023 will come to a close. I am sure all our communities have lived this important season in communion with the Church and the Institute with various creative events and celebrations. Let us continue to give heed to the exhortation of our Holy Father who said in his message for the World Day of Prayer for creation *“In this Season of Creation, as followers of Christ on our shared synodal journey, let us live, work and pray that our common home will teem with life once again.”*

St. Francis of Assisi whose feast we celebrate on the concluding day of the season of creation is known for his love of God in creation. Francis was profoundly in love with God, and had great care for both people and animals. In everything he demonstrated a love for God's creation. As caretakers of the common home, we are also given the noble responsibility of caring, respecting and loving God and all that He created. This year's theme ***“Let Justice and Peace Flow”*** invites us powerfully to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity and to uphold the dignity of human life in all its aspects.



St. Francis of Assisi gives us an example of a person who came to see creation as a gift and blessing from God. He developed a deep appreciation and a special sense that creation is the expression of God's love for each of us. From St. Francis we can develop this sense and awareness of creation as an expression of love in order that we may become aware of our response and our need to respect and care for all of God's creation.

*[Kindly may I request all the communities to send a report of the various celebrations of the season of creation with clear photographs to the Provincial Office.]*

### *Synod on Synodality*

The ***Synod on Synodality*** for which we have been reflected, discussed, prayed and prepared for with various input sessions and seminars since 2021 is already at our doorstep. On 4 October 2023, the historic event in the Church will begin with the inaugural Mass which will be presided over by Pope Francis. The Synod will be held from 3-29 October 2023 at Pope Paul VI Hall in Rome. There will be 464 participants and 365 will have the right to vote. For the first time, lay people will be full voting members of the synod, compared with earlier synods where only bishops had the right to vote. An extraordinary number of women, 54, will also be attending.

Let us remind ourselves that Pope Francis initiated the Synod for a Synodal Church with the theme – **For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission** in October 2021. The Holy Spirit, said our Holy Father, is calling us the twenty-first century Christians to create ways that we can truly be the community of disciples who are journeying together to bring the Good News to all the world. We are being invited to dig deeply into our baptismal identity and listen to the Spirit calling us to a future filled with hope. Pope Francis reminded us that “*The synod is a path of spiritual discernment, of ecclesial discernment,*



*which takes place in worship, in prayer, in contact with the Word of God.*” It is not an ecclesial “*convention,*” nor a study conference, nor a political congress. Not a parliament, but an event of grace, a healing process guided by the Spirit. In this time of grace, Jesus calls us now to empty ourselves and free ourselves from what is worldly. We are invited to ask ourselves what God wants to tell us in this time and in which direction he wants to lead us. Living this attitude of openness to God and His Spirit calls us to learn to exercise synodality which requires, in addition to prayer, a commitment to improve our way of life, our conviction and our fidelity.

As committed members of the Church, let us participate wholeheartedly in this event and intensify our prayers in our daily adoration and the daily prayer for the fruitful outcome of the Synod. May the Holy Spirit inspire and guide our Holy Father and the participants of the Synod and may our Blessed Mother accompany every discussion, reflection and decision that will be taken for the good of the Church and the spread of God’s Kingdom.

### *Moments of grace*

The month of September had witnessed three important events in the life of our province, namely the conclusion of the centenary celebration of FMA India, the visit of Mother General Chiara Cazzuola and the Discernment process for the new provincial guided by Sr Celine Jacob, the General Visiting Councillor. As mentioned in my circular of September, I once again renew my gratitude to each and everyone who had made the event a memorable and successful one. Undoubtedly, these celebrations were moments of renewal and introspection, and hence it calls us to greater fidelity and commitment in our personal lives and in our mission. Let us begin this second century keeping in mind the words of Mother Chiara who invited us to become pioneers of the second century. This in turn calls us to carry forth the legacy left by the pioneers and the successive Sisters with a renewed vigour and fervour to perpetuate the Salesian charism here in our land.

### *Family News and Communications*

**Congratulations:** We extend our warmest greetings, congratulations, and prayerful assurance to:

- Our Rector Major- Fr Ángel Fernández Artime SDB who was created Cardinal by Pope Francis on 30 September 2023 at St. Peter’s Square, Vatican.

- Rt. Rev. Ferdinand Dkhar DD who was consecrated Bishop of Jowai Diocese on 01 October 2023 at Ummulong Parish.
- Our missionary Sisters – Sr. Embok Suchiang, Sr. Ibansara Kharkongor and Sr. Idearland Lyngkhai who received the missionary cross at the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians, Turin on 24 September 2023. A total number of 13 FMA and 24 SDB received the missionary cross on this day.
- Our 16 Aspirants who received the Postulants’ medal at Auxilium, Saiden on 30 September 2023.

We thank God for each of them and for the ‘YES’ said to Him at different levels. May the Lord who has called and consecrated them, bless and accompany their mission forward. May the Good Shepherd guide and lead our Rector Major and Cardinal in his noble mission in the Church. May the Lord’s grace accompany his Lordship Bishop Ferdinand Dkhar in his pastoral mission of shepherding the flock. May our Blessed Mother and our holy founders lead the way for our missionary sisters and postulants in their journey of surrendering themselves to God’s will and His Kingdom. Let us accompany them with our prayerful support and remembrance.

**Meetings:** The following Sisters will participate in the various meetings this month of October:

- Sr. Mercillian Kshiar, Sr. Tistabha Bareh, Sr. Irine Lyngdoh and Sr. Aitihun Lawai (*the latter 2 are already part of the missionary course in this past month*) will attend the South Asia Seminar on the theme “*Evangelizing mission at the heart of the Salesian Charism*” organized at Don Bosco Institute (DBI), Kharguli- Guwahati from 3- 7 October 2023.
- Sr. Rose Mary Lyngdoh will participate in the course for the Physical Education Teacher and Coach organized by the Sports Authority of India at Patiala, Punjab on 11& 12 October 2023.
- Sr. Bashisha Massar, Sr. Joplin Suchiang, Sr. Theresa Phawa and Sr. Evelynjoy Kympat will attend the AINACS meeting from 10-13 October 2023 at Rajagiri School of Engineering and Technology, Kakkanad, Kerala.
- Sr. Plenish Marak, Sr. Maria Roibok Suchiang, Sr. Ribhalin Khyriem and Sr. Euginia Kyntiewlin Susngi will participate in the PCI National Formators Meet which will be held at Sacred Heart Provincial House, Bangalore from 13 -17 October 2023.

We wish our sisters all the best in the various meetings and fruitful outcome of the same.

**Happy Pilgrimage:** Sr. Aitihun Lawai and Sr. Irine Lyngdoh will leave for Jerusalem on 8 October 2023. We wish them safe journey and fruitful pilgrimage to the holy land from 8 – 18 October 2023. May the days of grace be accompanied by God’s blessings.

### *Prayers for the sick and the departed*

**W**e extend our prayerful support to all the sick ones, through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. We remember in our prayers particularly our Sisters who are sick in the hospital and in the communities, the members of the Salesian Family and all the sick relatives of our sisters.

We also offer our heartfelt condolences and prayers to all our Sisters and members of the Salesian Family who have lost their dear ones in the past month. 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.

Feasts of the month

- \* 01 October - St. Teresa of Lisieux
- \* 02 October - Guardian Angel
- \* 04 October - St. Francis of Assisi
- \* 05 October - Blessed Albert Marvelli
- \* 07 October - Holy Rosary
- \* 13 October - Blessed Alexandrina da Costa
- \* 15 October - St. Teresa of Avilla
- \* 22 October - World Mission Sunday
- \* 24 October - St. Loius Guanella
- \* 29 October - Blessed Michael Rua

I would like to conclude wishing every one of you a holy and fervent month of October in the company of our Blessed Mother with the exhortation of our Holy Father, Pope Francis:

“Let us always be willing to let ourselves be accompanied by the Risen Lord as he explains to us the meaning of the Scriptures. May he make our hearts burn within us; may he enlighten and transform us, so that we can proclaim his mystery of salvation to the world with the power and wisdom that come from his Spirit. May our hearts always yearn for the company of Jesus, echoing the ardent plea of the two disciples of Emmaus, especially in the evening hours: “Stay with us, Lord!” (cf. Lk 24:29). Let us set out, illumined by our encounter with the risen Lord and prompted by his Spirit. Let us set out again with burning hearts, with our eyes open and our feet in motion. Let us set out to make other hearts burn with the word of God, to open the eyes of others to Jesus in the Eucharist, and to invite everyone to walk together on the path of peace and salvation that God, in Christ, has bestowed upon all humanity.” [Extract from the Pope’s message for World Mission Sunday]



With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,  
Affectionately,

**Sr. Elizabeth George FMA**  
**Provincial**