



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/63/2023

01.09.2023

My dear Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

We are almost on the eve of the historic event that is going to take place in our province - the concluding ceremony of the FMA India centenary celebrations and the 100 years of the arrival of the 6 valiant pioneer missionaries to North East India which will be solemnized on 9 & 10 September 2023. We count ourselves blessed and fortunate to be living in this era of FMA history to be able to witness and be part of this grand event. We are doubly blessed and honoured to have with us on this significant occasion the presence of our Beloved Mother General, Sr. Chiara Cazzuola, the 10th successor of Mother Mazzarello who is also making her maiden visit to North East India. We extend to her a very warm welcome to the Province. Her entry into the Province is on a significant day- the feast of the Nativity of our Blessed Mother which is again exactly 3 months in anticipation of the arrival of the 6 pioneers to North East India on 8 December 1923. These are not mere coincidences but singular graces which need to be read as part of God's master plan for our life and mission.

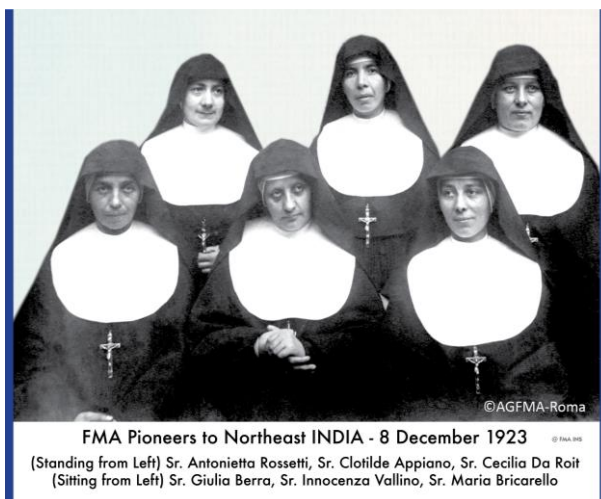
Along with Mother General, we are happy to have the three General Councilors – Sr. Celine Jacob, Visiting General Councilor, Sr. Runita Borja, General Councilor for Youth Pastoral and Sr. Nilza Fatima Moraes, General Councilor for Formation. We will also have as our guests two provincials and 3 sisters from CIAO, all the PCI Provincials, sister delegates and youth representatives from all the Indian provinces. We have sent prayers ahead and we intensify our prayers these days for the safety of everyone and for the success of the programme. In addition, we will have the entire FMA world turning towards this tiny part of the world tuning in their communication devices to be able to follow closely this momentous event taking place in our province.



*With Mary, through the course
of the Century and beyond...."*

As FMA PCI, the journey of preparation for the centenary celebrations was led by the guiding theme: ***“With Mary through the course of a century and beyond....”*** We have now reached the landmark of a century, a parallel journey of 100 years initiated by our twelve pioneers when the

Institute was just 50 years old. We thank the ways of Providence that brought the 6 pioneers to South India in 1922 and another batch of 6 pioneers to North East India in 1923. Their generosity has borne fruit a hundred-fold and today we have 7 provinces with the charism being planted and alive even in the remotest part of the Indian soil. We are the proud inheritors of a rich legacy handed on by these pioneers and others who toiled hard during these hundred years to preserve the freshness of the charism and raise new shoots of vocations. They are indeed the torch bearers who brought the light of faith, education and development through their dedicated service to the people with unmatched dynamism and dedication. The marks of their footprints are still visible on the sands of time. The tiny seed that they sowed in the soil of their mission land and watered with the sweat of



their brow has grown today into a gigantic tree bearing flowers and fruits. Perhaps the inspiring lives and magnificent achievements of these humble missionaries would have vanished into oblivion but for the painstaking efforts of our sisters of the history writing group who toiled hard to bring out the history volumes, narrating with scientific accuracy and professionalism the work accomplished by them across the length and breadth of India during the first 60 years of the century we are celebrating. Hats off to you dear Sisters!

Now as FMA, blessed to step into next century, we are the architects of a new century in the making. A great and responsible task awaits each one of us as we begin to charter the course of the next century. Rightly, we bow in admiration and reverence to our daring pioneers and the early missionaries who lived their missionary mandate and contributed to the growth and expansion of our charism, overcoming the innumerable and inevitable challenges that they encountered - challenges that were a typical of the time and place - such as the inclement weather, difficult terrain, extreme poverty, hostile ambient, poor or no means of transportation and communication, new languages, different cultures and food habits. Yet none of these difficulties deterred them from reaching their goal. They were persons of great vision, passion, resilience and enterprising spirit, who have left a legacy of perennial value for the future generations.

Today in the digitally and technologically advanced society we see a totally changed scenario with challenges of a different nature. Nevertheless, we have something to learn from these simple yet valiant and daring women. They had certain extraordinary qualities which enabled them to accomplish much with the little, they had. We salute them and thank them for the legacy they left behind for generations to come. May they who were humble yet powerful instruments in God's hands bless us from above to be courageous missionaries of our time. Celebrations like this are invitations to imitate the indomitable and extra-ordinary courage they exhibited as we in turn try to respond to the challenges of the new era with new missionary audacity. Let us pledge our creative

and dynamic fidelity to be contributors of the growth and vitality in the emerging second century of the FMA Mission.

On this solemn occasion, as a province we would like to send our centenary greetings and special remembrance to all our sisters who are outside the province as missionaries, as students, or as sisters rendering special service in the institute. We know you are spiritually present with us. We miss you and assure you of our prayers. Likewise, we also remember our friends and benefactors associated with our mission and who are unable to be physically present. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.

Landmarks of the centenary celebrations:

- Inauguration of the New Provincial House
- Release of Books
 - * FMA India History
 - * FMA INS Education Guidelines
 - * “*From Foundations to Heights: Exemplary Paths of Success*” – Success stories of the FMA Alumni
- Launching of FMA INS digital archive
- Handing over of *100 machines to VTC graduates*
- Inauguration of BCC Library

The highlights of these two days’ celebration include a one-day National Youth Meet on 9 September – a day dedicated to the youth - and the Grand Finale on 10 September. The Youth Meet will bring together youth representatives from all the 7 Indian Provinces of FMA, representatives of youth from Shillong Archdiocese and representatives from other youth groups like Jesus youth and Youth United for Christ. Director of North Eastern Regional Youth Commission (NERYC), Archdiocesan Youth Director of Shillong, SYM youth Director, MSMHC youth Coordinator and VSDB Youth Coordinator are the special invitees of the day. Rev. Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot SDB, Provincial of Shillong, will preside over the Solemn Eucharistic celebration of the day imploring blessings on all young people represented by this select group of youth.

During the cultural evening, the AYM youth of our Province will pay homage to the six Pioneers who came to North East India. Mother General will be felicitated as the Chief Guest of the day while Smt. Isawanda Laloo, IAS, Director of Sports and Youth Affairs, government of Meghalaya and Smt. Rosetta Mary Kurbah, Deputy Commissioner of East Khasi Hills be honoured as Special Guests. Sr. Runita Borja, General Councilor for Youth Pastoral and the Youth Coordinators of the Province will conduct sessions and various activities through the course of the day in order to make it a memorable experience for the youth.

The celebration will touch its zenith on 10th September with the Grand Finale which will have two important moments - the Solemn Eucharistic celebration and Cultural extravaganza. Most Rev. Victor Lyngdoh, Archbishop of Shillong will preside over the Eucharistic celebration which will be

the peak moment of thanksgiving for the gift of our Pioneers and for the flowering of the Salesian mission in India over the past 100 years. Rt. Rev. Lumen Monteiro CSC, Bishop of Agartala, Salesian Provincials and other Priests will join the Eucharistic celebration. The Cultural extravaganza which will include a musical opera on the life of the Pioneers and other cultural items that will showcase the rich diversity of the culture of the people where the Salesian sisters work in India.

The mega event of the closing ceremony of the centenary will be graced also by the presence of Mr. Conrad A. Sangma, honourable Chief Minister of Meghalaya and other state dignitaries. This is indeed a sign of their appreciation of what the missionaries have done for the upliftment of the society, a service which continues to be carried out today with dedication and commitment.

Season of Creation

The Season of Creation which begins with the World Day of Prayer for the care of Creation on 1 September is an opportune time that calls for our renewed commitment towards the whole of creation and above all the Creator Himself. The season which will end on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi (4th October) invites us to unite in prayers and communion with all our Christian brothers and sisters in our efforts to preserve and take care of the Common Home. The theme for this year's Season



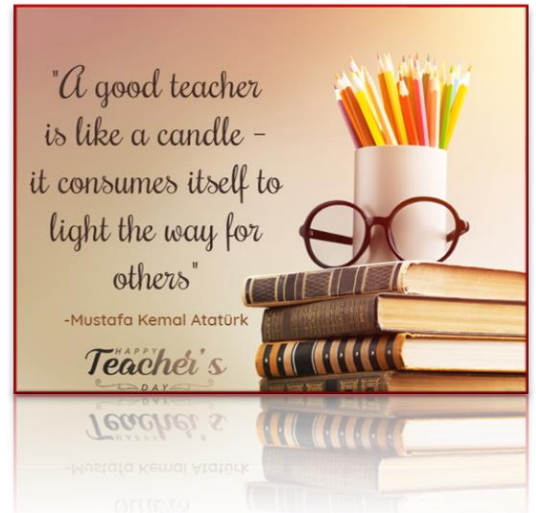
of Creation is "**Let Justice and Peace Flow**". We are invited to place climate justice at the heart of our prayers and action during this 2023 Season of Creation. We are vested with responsibility to do justice in all that we could and bring transformation to the face of the earth. Pope Francis in his message for the World Day of Prayer for

the care of Creation exhorts the Church that an essential element for any transformation to take place is the transformation of hearts and the renewal of relationship that comes as a gift from the Creator. In his words *“we should realize that an integral approach to respect for the environment involves four relationships: with God, with our brothers and sisters of today and tomorrow, with all of nature, and with ourselves.”* As we take part with enthusiasm in the celebration of this season of creation, let us pledge to show justice to God’s creation by our attitudes of love, of respect and of care for one another and for everything that God has created. But above all, let us transform our hearts to a closer communion with God and others to recreate a new creation that embraces all under the paternal love of God our Creator.

“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.” – extract from the message of Pope Francis for the Day of Creation 2023

Teachers' Day

Teaching is a profession which enjoys a lot of respect from everyone in the society, particularly from the student community because of the very nature of this profession. It has become a practice in India, since 1962, to observe Teachers' Day on 5 September, the birthday of the second president of India Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Don Bosco used to say "Education is a matter of the heart," and he has left us a system of education which shows the way to the heart of the children. On this day we wish all our teachers "Happy Teachers' Day" and thank them sincerely for their dedicated service in our different institutions. As educators after the heart of Don Bosco may they find the way to the heart of the young whom they educate. Happy Teachers' Day to all the FMA because we are all teachers and educators.



Family News and Communications

Centenary gift to the Institute: The Province of Shillong feels proud to have made a centenary gift of 5 FMA for the Service of the Institute during this centenary year - 3 for Mission Ad Gentes and two at the disposal of Mother General for the services required. We thank these sisters for their availability and generosity to return in some way what the missionaries have given us. May their example inspire other generous hearts who feel a call within the call.

New Provincial house- a dream come true: We read in the book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planteda time to break down, and a time to build up". The construction of a new Provincial House was a long-cherished dream of everyone in the province. We are happy to have realized this dream in this centenary year of the arrival of our pioneers to North East India. We are grateful to God's Providence which came trickling down in the measure needed through the sacrifices of our own communities, be it big or small. During the period of construction which also included the period of lockdown due to the corona pandemic, we experienced the amazing protection of God from sickness or any physical injury to any of the persons involved in the construction work, thanks to the incessant prayers raised up to God from all our communities. As we inaugurate and bless this house as a centenary memorial of the province, I wish to place on record the meticulous and painstaking planning and follow up by Sr. Gemina Pohrmen, the Provincial Economer, of the minutest details of the construction and furnishing of the house, with lot of aesthetic sense. May God bless her and her mission abundantly and all those who assisted her in different capacities towards the completion of the house.

Encounters with Mother General and General Councilors: The Sisters of our Province will have some treasured moments of encounter with our beloved Mother General after the closing of the

ceremony of the centenary. You have already been intimated about the programme of meeting Mother and I thank the communities for making the necessary arrangement to facilitate the movement of sisters. In addition to meeting Mother, our Junior sisters, Novices, aspirants and pre-aspirants will have the opportunity to meet and interact with Sr. Nilza Fatima Moraes, General Councilor for Formation. Let us thank God and make the best of these moments of encounter with our Superiors, who cherish great hopes of vocational fruitfulness in our Province.

Days of Discernment: As already communicated, Mother General has delegated Sr. Celine Jacob to stay back in the province to conduct the discernment process from 13-16 September, for the choice of the new Provincial. I believe we have been knocking at the door of heaven individually and as communities to obtain the light of the Holy Spirit so that each one of us will exercise this duty with wisdom and sense of responsibility. I do hope that you have read the letter of Sr. Celine Jacob and also reflected and deepened the material she sent on discernment.

Aspirants' retreat and entry into postulancy: This year the Aspirants at Saiden will have the retreat from 26(evening)–30(morning) of September 2023 preached by Fr. Jose Thekkekunnel SDB. They will have the reception of the postulants' medal on 30th at 11 am. Please remember these candidates in your prayers. There are 16 of them who will enter the postulancy. Let us thank God for the gift of these candidates and pray for their holy perseverance.

Provincials' Retreat: The Provincials of Asia- Oceania will have the spiritual retreat animated by Mother General in Sam Phran, Thailand from October 3-10 followed by inter-provincial meeting with Mother General. I will be away from the Province from September 1-14. In my absence Sr. Carmelina Sun, the Vice Provincial will take care of the ordinary running of the Province. I request your prayers for the fruitfulness of our retreat.

Inauguration of the New Presence at Deku: On 24 August, 2023 the province was blessed with a new presence at Deku, Garo Hills. Rt. Rev. Andrew Marak, the Bishop of Tura conducted the blessing of the house and celebrated the Holy Eucharist. Our sisters from the communities for Garo hills, several priests from the neighboring parishes and religious from the neighboring communities also attended the function. We are grateful to the Diocese for giving us this mission with a well-furnished house with wide scope for apostolate through the school education and pastoral ministry. I had the joy of inaugurating the house with representatives from the community of Nongthymmai and our communities in Garo Hills. We wish every blessing on the four pioneers – Sr. Juliana Sangma, Sr. Felicita Rynshon, Sr. Fulljoy Nongsiej and Sr. Tengmitchi R. Marak. I see a bright future for this mission with so many good and simple people around who seem to be very receptive and longing for the presence of our sisters.



Provincial Team Members: I would like to communicate to you that the Provincial Council has nominated the following sisters as members of the Provincial Team this year. I thank them for their availability and wish them all the best in their mission.

GENERAL COORDINATOR :	Sr. Rosina Susngi
FORMATION :	Sr. Plenish Marak (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Carmelina Sun Sr. Rona Kharkongor Sr. Rihunlang Muthoh Sr. Ribhalin Khyriem Sr. Euginia Kyntiewlin Susngi
YOUTH PASTORAL : (<i>AYM, Boarding, Hostel, Oratory</i>)	Sr. Wismary Kharbihkhiew (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Anita Dhar Sr. Bernadeth Sangriang Sr. Elisha A. Sangma Sr. Margret Kharmuti Sr. Mildaris Marwein Sr. Rani Pyngrope Sr. Aquila Makri
EDUCATION :	Sr. Bashisha Massar (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Joplin Suchiang Sr. Theresa Phawa Sr. Hunbih Dkhar Sr. Madona Lytep Sr. Brigitha Marak Sr. Evelynjoy Kympat
SOCIAL COMMUNICATION:	Sr. Euginia Laloo (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Teresa Kamsuan Sr. Jenney Iawphniaw Sr. Sandra Mary Diengdoh
VOCATION PASTORAL :	Sr. Carmelina Sun (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Lucy Marak Sr. Merciful Nongsiej Sr. Rose Mary Lyngdoh
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT :	Sr. Helen Puwein (<i>Coordinator</i>) Sr. Gemima Pohrmen Sr. Garnet Sutnga
<i>Young at-Risk</i>	Sr. Aitihun Lawai Sr. Janicia Nongrum
<i>Women Promotion</i>	Sr. Tistabha Bareh Sr. Maria Goretti Nongrum
VTC	Sr. Rosalin Warbah

HEALTH MINISTRY : Sr. Dorathy Kharduit (*Coordinator*)
Sr. Merilyn Bahun Wahlang

SALESIAN FAMILY
Salesian Cooperators : Sr. Christina Kharkongor
Sr. Kyntiewlyne Mary Kurbah
Past Pupils Sr. Mary Lamare

MISSION AD/
INTER GENTES : Sr. Maristella Ryngkhlem (*Coordinator*)
Sr. Celina Maslai
Sr. Regina Nongbri

***Sr. Lucy Ralte Zoramawii will be the referent person for the AYM in Mizoram*

My gratitude to Sr. Elizabeth Thannimootil Sr. Luigina Duia, Sr. Igina Kharjana Sr. Lydia Pala, Sr. Manoda Sangma, Sr. Pherdalin Thongni, Sr. Margreth Changte, Sr. Albrida Pyngrope, the outgoing members of the Team for their valuable contribution in the past years. May God bless and reward them.

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 remember in our prayers particularly:

- The mother of Sr. Maristella and Sr. Rina Kharthangmaw
- The brother of Sr. Carmela Lamare
- All our sisters who are sick in the communities
- All the sick relatives of our sisters, and
- Members of the Salesian Family

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

- Sr. Brigitha Marak at the demise of her brother and father on 20 and 29 August 2023 respectively.
- Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil and the Sisters of Kolkata Province (INC) at the passing away of Sr. Julita Kujur FMA on 13 August 2023.

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

- * 05 September - St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata – Teachers Day
- * 08 September - Nativity of our Lady- Girl Child Day
- * 12 September - Holy Name of Mary
- * 14 September - Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross
- * 15 September - Our Lady of sorrows

- * 21 September - St. Mathew
- * 22 September - Spanish Martyrs
- * 23 September - St. Padre Pio
- * 29 September - Feast of the Archangels – Michael, Gabriel & Raphael

As the curtain falls on the centenary celebrations, bringing to a glorious ending the celebration of the 100 years of toil and blessing of our pioneers and early missionaries, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who played different but significant roles to make this mega event a successful one. My sincere gratitude to the members of the Provincial Council for being the driving force behind the preparation and celebration. We have planned meticulously and worked in synergy to ensure the smooth flow of the programme. It would be difficult and unfair for me to mention individual names. But in advance of the celebration, I would like to mention the names of few individuals whose contribution cannot be ignored. I would like to congratulate Sr. Joplin Suchiang, the General Coordinator of the events and together with her all the different committees who planned carefully the details of the programme, to ensure the happy outcome of the celebrations. Special thanks also to Sr. Carmelina Sun, the Vice Provincial and animator of Nongthymmai and the entire community of Sisters, pre-aspirants, co-workers, and others who volunteered to help in the preparation. To other communities in Shillong- Sr. Teresa Kamsuan and the community of Mawlai, Sr. Elizabeth Thannimootil and the community of Bellefonte, Sr. Happyline Shadap and the community of FMA Outreach, you deserve my gratitude for your availability and flexibility for the smooth running of the celebration. A big thank you to Sr. Gemima Pohrmen, Provincial Economist for her hard work and commitment which has resulted in the completion of the new provincial house whose first residents will be Mother General and the other guests of the Centenary celebrations and for seeing to many other details of the celebration. A note of thanks to Sr. Euginia Kyntiewlin Susngi, Provincial Secretary for being willing to walk an extra mile wherever and whenever needed. Thanks to all our communities for your generosity to contribute in cash, kind and particularly making available your community members for helping out in various responsibilities.

My sincere gratitude to Archbishop Victor Lyngdoh DD, the Archbishop of Shillong whose presence and encouragement for us was never lacking right from the beginning of our preparations. I would like to strike my note of gratitude to Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot, Salesian Provincial of Shillong, his council members and all those who have helped and collaborated in this preparation for the celebration in various ways. My special thanks to Fr. Saji Stephen SDB and the community of Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong, Br. Albert Longley Dkhar SDB and the community of St. Anthony's College, Shillong, Fr. Anthony Kharkongor SDB and St. Anthony's Higher Secondary School, Fr. Michael Makri SDB and his team from Don Bosco Youth Centre, Fr. Augustine Kootala, SDB Parish Priest of Nongthymmai, Bro. Anand Lakra SDB, Principal of H. Elias Higher Secondary School, Salesian Cooperators, Past Pupils, Teachers and members of the educating community for their timely help and support. We wish that the celebration ahead of us may bring the desired fruits of spiritual and charismatic renewal and closer communion in our mission and apostolate. At the end of the celebrations, may we be able to say: "*We have done it,*" and "*God be praised.*"

With gratitude we step into a new century and welcome the blessings it will bring. Like our pioneers of the last century may we leave our exemplary foot prints for the coming generations to follow. May we not fall short of the commitment and generosity needed to be ambassadors of peace, hope and joy to those we encounter on our life's journey. A big thank you to our dear Mother Mary who walked with us during the first century. With Don Bosco we say "*She has done everything*" and may she continue to lead our way through the next century of our FMA India.

With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,
Affectionately,

Sr. Elizabeth George FMA
Provincial



**Dear Mother, Sr. Celine, Sr. Nilza,
Sr. Runita**

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C
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Dear FMA_PCI Provincials

Dear Sisters, Young People, Members of the Salesian Family and everyone