



Provincial Circular

Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/67/2024

01.02.2024

My dear Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

We are at the threshold of a new month that brings us new showers of blessings and opportunities for growth in the mission and in holiness. We embrace the new month with the celebration of the World Day of Consecrated Life which reminds us of God's profound love for us. The Church dedicates this celebration in a particular way to consecrated people, to underline their particular vocation and mission. In reality, the event of Jesus' life reminds us of the presentation of man to the Lord, in the sense that every man and every woman is called to live consecration to the Lord.

Consecrated people are called all the more to give credible witness to consecrated life with their lifestyle and to testify that it is possible to live in chastity of thoughts and actions and to live dependent on God's Providence; that it is possible to live fully free even in obedience to the will of God and to be the witnesses of Holiness. At the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, it is Jesus who presents himself to his people as the Light that brings salvation to the earth. Where the Lord is, in fact, there is salvation, that is, life, joy and hope. Simeon and Anna welcomed the presence of God and they were full of joy. This gesture is a sign for all baptized and consecrated Christians of the need to welcome the Lord in their hearts and lives who will then transform us into new creatures and bearers of joy and hope to the world.



Let us remember when the Lord called us to follow him, he calls us to stand by him, to walk in his ways, to imitate his life and to welcome his Word as a light for our journey. He has placed us in the Church and in the world, not just in our communities. The alliance with the Lord makes us a people, not realities closed in on ourselves but that becomes a gift to the world. Today, consecrated men and women are expected to be persons of prayer, of listening to the Word of God, of sacramental life, of

hope because we know that God does not break His promises but the time has come to be together and become prophets of Hope to the world. By our lifestyle, we testify to the world that it is possible to live in chastity of thoughts and actions; that it is possible to live dependent on the Providence of God, who, as he takes care of the birds of the sky and the lilies of the field, so, even more, takes care of every person created in his image; that it is possible to live fully free while still obedient to the will of God, expressed by the rule and exhortations of our Holy Constitutions. Ultimately, we can say that Religious are the witnesses of possible Holiness. Our mission is to demonstrate true and real the statement of the archangel Gabriel to Mary: "nothing is impossible with God" (Lk 1, 37).

As we reflect on the significance of Consecrated life, let us pray that the Lord may continue to guide and bless us in our whole lives, in everything that we say and do, so that by our exemplary lives and actions, we will always continue to grow ever stronger in faith, and continue to love Him at all times, remembering always how He has loved us so much, that He gave us all the perfect gift in His Son, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom all of us have received the assurance of eternal life and true happiness and joy with God.

Our Lady of Lourdes and 32nd World Day of the sick

The feast of the Virgin of Lourdes was chosen because many pilgrims and visitors to Lourdes have reported being healed through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. Pope John Paul II, who had written extensively on the topic of suffering, believed that suffering was much more than a salvific and redemptive process through Christ. He indicated in his apostolic letter "Salvifici Doloris" that suffering can be an opportunity to join the suffering of Christ and find meaning and hope in the midst of difficulties. On February 11, 1858, Mary manifested herself as "the Immaculate" to Bernadette Soubirous in the grotto of Massabielle, no less than 18 times until 16 July. This event means that we can well count the spiritual and privileged sign of God who chose this young and special messenger to announce the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. Bernadette is the apostle of the message of Lourdes which we can summarize in the canticle: *I bless you, Father because you revealed to the little ones the mysteries of your love.* As our Blessed Mother appeared to little Bernadette, she does appear to us too in different ways and through various persons and situations in life. The Church invites us to celebrate this day as an opportunity to draw the attention of society to those who fight against a disease every day or is committed to finding ways to live with it peacefully by our expression of affection and solidarity.

11·02·2024

**WORLD DAY
OF THE SICK**



It is not good that
man should be alone

This year the Holy Father has invited the Church to celebrate this day reflecting on the theme: “It is not good that man should be alone.” Pope Francis recalls the model of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37) with his “ability to slow down and draw near to another person, to the tender love with which he cares for the wounds of a suffering brother” and reminds us that “the first form of care needed in any illness is compassionate and loving closeness. To care for the sick thus means above all to care for their relationships, all of them: with God, with others – family members, friends, healthcare workers –, with creation and with themselves.” While we pray through the intercession of our Blessed Mother for all the sick people of the world and resolve to care and love them in their human dignity, we pray that we may grow in the art of loving and caring for one another and build up a healthier and more conducive environment of interpersonal relationships, love and solidarity with all. As we celebrate this day in communion with the Church, let us keep a special remembrance of all the sick people and those who care for them and let us remind ourselves that we have the duty of reaching out to the sick and weak ones with a heart open like that of the good Samaritan, that looks at them with compassion, embraces them with closeness and takes care of them with love and tenderness.

Family News and Communications

Spiritual Retreat: We wish God’s blessings on all the sisters of the Provincial Council and the Animators who will be having the retreat from 3-10 February 2024. The retreat will be followed by two days seminar and an outing. We assure them of our prayers that this time of grace may bring about spiritual renewal in their personal lives and mission.

Missionary Request: Mother General has requested again the generosity of Sisters to go for the mission ad gentes to proclaim the message of God’s love wherever God calls us. Sr. Ruth Del Pilar Mora, the General Councillor for the Missions has sent a letter in the name of Mother General requesting us to listen to God’s voice and serve Him in other parts of our Institute as missionaries. As we have begun the journey of the second century, let us pray that like our pioneers and missionaries who have come to our land, we may be enthused with passion and zeal for souls. Let therefore sincerely pray, discern and give heed to God’s voice to this noble vocation. May our holy Founders guide and inspire us to give heed to God’s call with generosity and sincerity to serve Him beyond our own confines. Let us continue to pray for the increase of more authentic missionary vocations. [*The letter is attached here along*]

New General of the MSMHC Sisters: We rejoice and thank God together with the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians who on 27 January 2024 have been blessed with a new Superior General in the person of Sr. Christine Mynsong MSMHC. We congratulate and assure prayers to Sr. Christine in her new task as the leader of the Congregation. May her mission in the Salesian Family be richly blessed with God’s assistance and grace. We extend warmest greetings and prayerful assurance also to all the members of her Council.

PCI Meeting: The PCI Meeting 2024 will be held at Auxilium Provincial House, Guwahati on 2 & 3 April 2024 on the theme “**Ecological Consciousness for Ecological Justice**”. Sr. Meenakshi

D'Silva, the PCI President has sent the Convocation Letter with all details of the meeting. We send ahead our prayers that the meeting may be successful for a more effective and fruitful FMA mission in India. The convocation letter and the voting papers are sent along here. Kindly send back the voting papers to the Provincial Office latest by **16 February 2024**.

Congress of the Mistress of Novices: From 7-27 February 2024, there will be the Congress of the Mistress of Novices of our Institute in Casa Generalizia, Rome. Sr. Rona Kharkongor will be participating in it and she will leave for Rome when the documents get ready probably on 7 or 8 of February. Kindly pray that her documents may be issued soon. We wish Sr. Rona a fruitful encounter with all the Mistress of Novices of the Institute in the company of Mother General and her Council. We wish her a safe and pleasant trip to Italy.

Workshop on Social Communication: There will be a Workshop on Social Communication with the theme "*Digital Dynomos 2024*" organized by the Social Communication Sector of PCI at Don Bosco Skill Mission, Bangalore from 9-11 February 2024. From our Province Sr. Iahunlang Kyrasian, Sr. Ibaniewkor Warjri and Sr. Sandra Mary Diengdoh will participate in it. We wish them an enriching experience and safe journey to Bangalore

ETG Meeting: The Sisters of the English Translation Group of the Institute will be coming to our Province in the month of March for their translation work. We warmly welcome them to our Province and wish them happy stay with us. We accompany them with our prayers that their work on behalf of the Institute may be fruitful.

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 sick sisters, relatives of our Sisters and members of the Salesian Family.

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

02 February	- Presentation of the Lord/ World Day of Consecrated Life
04 February	- St. John de Britto
07 February	- Blessed Pius IX
09 February	- Blessed Eusebia Palomino
11 February	- Our Lady of Lourdes and World Day of the Sick
14 February	- Ash Wednesday
18 February	- St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara
22 February	- Chair of St. Peter
25 February	- Saints Aloysius Versiglia and Calistus Caravario

On 14 February, we will enter into the season of grace and mercy with the celebration of the “Ash Wednesday”. Each year the Church gives us six weeks to take a long, loving look at our lives to see if our values and priorities are in line with God’s desires for us. Pope Francis tells us that Lent is a new beginning, a path towards continual conversion of heart and a time to love much. In this Lenten season let us delve into the mystery and depth of God’s love for each of us. Let us make sincere effort to spend time with Jesus. By coming to know him more intimately, we can love him more deeply and desire to be more like him in our daily lives. With and through a more intimate relationship with Christ, we can discern how to bring his truth and love into our broken and suffering world, into our families and communities, into our life and relationships with each other.

The Church gives us the opportunity and ways to live this time of grace through Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving which are intertwining with each other and are complementing one another in every sense. Let us prepare our hearts and our lives to welcome the Lord in this time of grace and make the necessary change in our attitudes and behaviours that are not pleasing to God. May this time of Lent rekindle more profoundly in us the great love and mercy of God to shake us from our spiritual lethargy and spur us to recover the essential values of life through “**Prayer**, as an openness to God; **Fasting**, as an expression of self-control even in depriving oneself of something, in saying “no” to oneself; and finally, **Alms**, as openness and call to charity towards others.



I wish each and everyone of you a holy and fervent season of Lent!

With assurance of prayers and loving accompaniment,
Affectionately,

Sr. Elizabeth George FMA