

Provincial Circular

FMA PROVINCE OF MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS KOLKATA (INC)

**Provincial Office - The Salesian Sisters
10 P.K. Guha Road, Dum Dum
Kolkata 700 028**



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January 2019

Dearest Sisters,

Loving and Prayerful greetings for a very holy, happy and grace-filled New Year !

As we begin the New Year, Mother Church invites us constantly to imitate the most important features of Mary's Motherhood: receiving the Word of God in faith, treasuring it in her heart and pondering over its significance for one's life.

Following Mary's example, we need to introspect or ponder and see whether we are living our lives by chance or by personal choice. On the New Year day, our Heavenly Mother invited us to make a review of our life and recall to our mind the steps we need to take in order to live a meaningful and purpose-driven life, journeying the path to holiness. As we read in Luke's Gospel, Mary is like those believers who produce a hundredfold fruit (Lk 8:15) after hearing the Word, holding it fast in an honest and good heart, go on to "bear fruit with patient endurance" (Lk 8:15).

This feast of Mary's motherhood points to the whole Church's mission to be a mother. As members of the Church and as Daughters of Mary we too are called to become 'spiritual mothers' to others by "doing" God's Word. To live by the Word like Mary, we are exhorted by our Constitutions Art. 4 to strive to make her (Mary's) dispositions of faith hope and charity and her perfect union with Christ our own and to open our hearts to the joyous humility of her Magnificat to be helpers (mothers) like her especially among the young people. This requires a great deal of holiness in our life in order to touch the hearts of the young and to lead them to experience God's powerful love for them.

As we begin this New Year dear Sisters let us resolve to live our lives in holiness with a deep joy that comes from the Lord. Let Joy characterize all our activities and let it be made visible for our young people. Let us traverse the path of holiness not alone but together with and for the young in the style of Salesian holiness, the daily life that Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello lived with the young people of Valdocco and Mornese.

Holiness in the Salesian Family

In the month of January, the Church celebrates the holiness of a number of Salesian saints. We are privileged to belong to a congregation which has a history of numerous saints, blessed, venerables and servants of God who were the living reflections of the Gospel lived

in the spirit of our holy Founders. Every saint in our Salesian Family tells us that holiness is possible and we recall with gratitude the saints of this month: Bl. Titus Zeman (8th), Bl. Louis Variara (15th), Bl. Laura Vicuna (22nd), St. Francis de Sales (24th), Bl. Bronislaus Markiewicz (30th), and St. John Bosco (31st). I would like to make a short reflection on some of them for our inspiration and emulation.

Bl. Louis Variara

He was a Salesian missionary to the lepers in Agua de Dios, Colombia. When he joined the mission in 1894, the mission numbered 2,000 people, of whom 800 were lepers. As soon as he arrived he became the life and soul of the patients, especially the children. He then developed the Salesian charism of sacrifice and founded the Congregation of the "Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary". Like Don Bosco he was exemplary in obedience. Even in the face of calumny he said nothing.

Bl. Laura Vicuna

Although she was only twelve when she died, Laura Vicuna had grown to a maturity of faith well beyond her years. In an age of sexual licence, when often girls and young women can be at the mercy of sexual predators, the life of Laura Vicuna has something to say in our own day. Laura did not let the sordidness of Mora destroy her innocence, nor did she allow her heart to become embittered. Instead, she prayed for her mother and also for her lover. In September 1988, Pope John Paul II beatified Laura, calling her a 'Eucharistic flower whose life was a poem of purity, sacrifice and filial love'. Her life is a testimony to the words of St. Paul: 'However much sin increased, grace was always greater' (Rom. 5:20).

St. Frances de Sales

Francis de Sales took seriously the words of Christ, "Learn of me for I am meek and humble of heart." As he said himself, it took him 20 years to conquer his quick temper, but no one ever suspected he had such a problem, so overflowing with good nature and kindness was his usual manner of acting. His perennial meekness and sunny disposition won for him the title of "Gentleman Saint." His gentle character was a great asset in winning souls. He practiced his own maxim, "A spoonful of honey attracts more flies than a barrelful of vinegar."

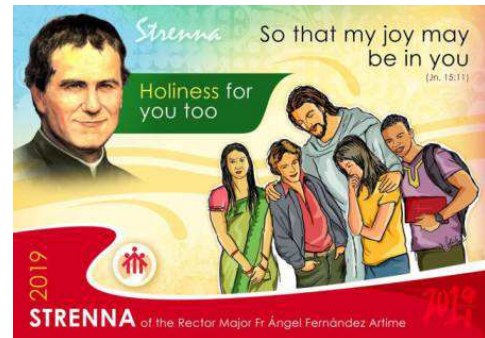
St. John Bosco

Our Father and Founder St. John Bosco educated the whole person—body and soul united. He believed that Christ's love and our faith in that love should pervade everything we do—work, study, play. For John Bosco, being a Christian was a full-time effort, not a once-a-week, Mass-on-Sunday experience. It is searching and finding God and Jesus in everything we do, letting their love lead us. Yet, because John realized the importance of job-training and the self-worth and pride that come with talent and ability, he trained his students in the trade crafts, too. At the end of his life, he could say boldly, "I have done nothing by myself," saying it was "Our Lady who has done everything" through her intercession with God. In fact he died, after conveying a message: "Tell the boys that I shall be waiting for them all in Paradise." In Don Bosco's house there was room and a welcome for a whole variety of people, of all sorts of character and temperaments, yet in the light of faith the facts show that

no personal situation constitutes an obstacle to holiness and that there are many paths along the road to holiness and they are very personal.

Strenna 2019: Holiness for you too

The Rector Major, Rev. Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime, is inviting the entire Salesian Family and extending the call to holiness with his Strenna 2019, 'So that My Joy may be in you (Jn 15: 11): Holiness also for you . Rector Major lays emphasis on an important reality, the path of daily holiness lived not alone, but together with and for the young and in the style of Salesian holiness. Daily sanctity becomes a reality in our lives when the Salesian Charism is lived to the full. I invite you to read, meditate and make an in depth study of the Strenna in the community and also to live in our daily life the invitation of our dear Mother General to be attentive each day to discover some sign of holiness in the sisters and in the young people.



Communications

History Writing Commission Meet

Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel will be participating in the core group meet for the History writing of the FMA presence in India at the Provincial House, Kodambakkam from 24-26 January 2019. We wish them all the best and assure them of our prayers.

Regional Congress of the Salesian Cooperators

Srs. Rosina Thomas and Maria Pettayil delegates for the Cooperators of Kolkata and Delhi will participate in the South Asia Regional Congress of the Salesian Cooperators which will be held on 25 and 26 January 2019 at Citadel, Salesian Provincial House, Chennai. We assure them our prayers for its success.

Salesian Family Day

«*So that my joy may be in you* » (Jn 15: 11) **HOLINESS FOR YOU TOO**, is the Strenna of the Rector Major Rev. Ángel Fernández Artime for the year 2019. On 23 January 2019, there will be the Salesian Family Day at Don Bosco Siliguri (for North Bengal zone) and at Salesian Provincial House, Kolkata (for South Bengal zone). All of us are cordially invited by Vice-Provincial, Fr. Joseph Pauria SDB. I recommend all of you to participate in the gathering.

34th World Youth Day

The 34th World Youth Day 2019 will be celebrated from 22 - 27 January, 2019 in Panama. The theme for occasion is, "I am the servant of the



Lord. May it be done to me according to your Word.” (Lk 1:38).

Holy Father Pope Francis in his video message regarding the theme said, “Her words are a brave and generous “yes”. It is the positive reply of one who understands the secret of vocation – to go beyond oneself and place oneself at the service of others. Our lives only find meaning in service to God and to other people. Mary was a happy woman, and this is because she replied generously to God and opened her heart to God’s plan for her. When God has a proposition for us, like the one he had for Mary, it is not intended to extinguish our dreams, but to ignite our aspirations. Propositions like this are meant to make our lives fruitful and produce many smiles and happy hearts. To respond to God positively is to take a first step towards being happy and towards making many people happy”. Let us send prayers ahead for the success of the gathering.

27th World day of the Sick

XXVII World Day of the Sick will be solemnly celebrated on 11 February 2019 in Calcutta, the feast day of Our Lady of Lourdes.

«You received without payment; give without payment» from the Gospel of St. Matthew, is the title of the Holy Father’s Message for the 27th World Day of the Sick. In his message Holy Father urges everyone, at every level, to promote the culture of generosity and of gift, which is indispensable for overcoming the culture of profit and waste. Catholic healthcare institutions must not fall into the trap of simply running a business; they must be concerned with personal care more than profit. We know that health is relational, dependent on interaction with others, and requiring trust, friendship and solidarity. It is a treasure that can be enjoyed fully only when it is shared. The joy of generous giving is a barometer of the health of a Christian.

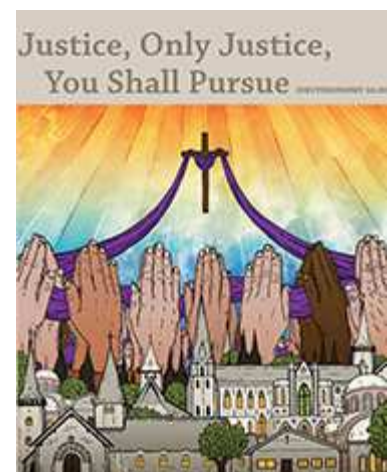


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See attach for Holy Father’s Message

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is “Justice, Only Justice, You Shall Pursue” (cf. Deuteronomy 16:20). This powerful message is chosen in view of promoting truth, equality and unity. As we pray for Christian unity we are encouraged ‘to form a united witness for justice and for Christian Unity that becomes a means of Christ’s healing grace for the brokenness of the world. Only by heeding Jesus’s prayer “that they all may be one” can we witness to living unity in diversity’.



Sincere gratitude to:



Sr. Celine Jacob, Provincial of Bangalore for organizing, Sr. Shiny Karackatt for coordinating the programme and the Provincial House community for the hospitality and

the support gave to our sisters during their First Phase of the Second Novitiate, which was held at Sacred Heart Convent, Bangalore from 15th November to 15th December, 2018. 4 sisters from INK, 2 sisters from INT, 1 sister from INM and Srs. Neera Tigga, Clara Rai & Siljera Marak from our Province participated in it.



Sr. Nirmala Tigga and the community of Geyzing for preparing the Novena in preparation for the Christmas.



Sr. Elizabeth Valliyil and the community of Auxilium, Bandel for hosting the annual retreat of the sisters from 27 December 2018 - 3 January 2019. It was preached by Rev. Fr. Vargehese Kalluvachal, the Rector of Salesian College, Sonada. The theme of the retreat was "Renewal of the Religious". It was developed gradually with the following sub topics: Emotional Wounds, Forgiveness, Beatitudes, Religiosity, Evangelical Vows, Community life, Prophetic Apostolate, Prayer life, Sense of humor, Role of Mary and Eucharist. It was time of introspection for the participants of the group.

Condolences - Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- ✠ Sr. Valsa Kallirikumkalayil's father Mr. Joseph who passed away on 12th December 2018.
- ✠ Sr. Mary John Valayath father Mr. John who returned to his heavenly abode on 17th December 2018
- ✠ Sr. Archana's cousin brother Nelish Tirkey (23) who met with an accident and passed away on 19th December 2018.
- ✠ Sr. Alice Minj who went to receive her eternal reward from the Province of Guwahati on 21st December 2018
- ✠ Mr. Milliannus Beck, the father of Neha Beck (aspirant) who passed away suddenly on 26th December 2018 due to stroke.
- ✠ Fr. Jose Alapurackal SDB from the Salesian Province of Kolkata who was called by the Lord on 27th December 2018.
- ✠ Mr. Joachim Kispotta father of Sr. Aruna Kispotta who left his this world for eternal reward on 2nd January 2019.

Dear Sisters,

Wish you a Very happy Feast of St. John Bosco, our Father and Founder and our Salesian Saints St. Francis de Sales and Bl. Laura Vicuna. May they help us to follow the path of holiness "walking the path of the beatitudes," which does not require doing "extraordinary things, but to follow every day this path that brings us to heaven, to family, back home." (Pope Francis).

Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)