

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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February 2018

Dearest Sisters,

Loving Greetings from Provincial House, Dum Dum !

The two great events that took place in the Province is still very much fresh in our mind. The Triennial Evaluation of FMA PCI from 24 - 28 January 2018 and thereafter the visit of our beloved Mother Yvonne to the Province from 29 January -07 February.

The entire province together with the educating community prepared to celebrate these unique and historic events with a long preparation and prayer. The enthusiasm and joy to see *La Madre* in our Province vibrated in the hearts of the Sisters, young people, and collaborators. Finally, the auspicious day dawned when our beloved Mother Yvonne Reungoat arrived on 23 January in our midst together with Sr. Phyllis Neves, the Visiting General Councilor.

Mother General was welcomed inside the airport by Sr. Annie Thevarkunnel - Provincial Economer, Sr. Teresa Adampakallel - Vice Provincial, Sr. Esther Rani Abraham and me. A group of Sisters, students, teachers and past pupils welcomed her at the entrance of the airport. On her arrival at Auxilium Provincial House, Dum Dum Mother General was given a rousing reception by the sisters and the students and teachers of Auxilium Convent School Dum Dum in a typical Bengali style. A good number of Sisters from nearby communities also assembled at the school premises and joined in welcoming Mother. It was amazing to see how the great personality of Mother General captured the attention of everyone present and Mother too lovingly spontaneously mingled with the young people and every one present. She was then led to the Chapel to light the Indian traditional lamp, symbol of God's presence in the person of Mother Yvonne accompanied by a prayer of thanks and blessing.

Wednesday 24 - Sunday 28 January 2018: The inaugural function and the Triennial Evaluation

The historical moment of the Triennial Evaluation – FMA PCI commenced on Wednesday, 24 January, 2018 at the Auxilium Provincial House. There were 42 participants including Mother General, Sr. Alaide Deretti – General Councillor for Mission, Sr. Runita Borja – General Councillor for Youth Pastoral, Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil and Sr. Phyllis Neves – the Visiting Councillors, seven Provincials of India, 2 Delegates, a laity and a youth representatives from the seven Provinces of India. From our Province Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel, Sr. Clara Saminathan, Miss Jenelle Rodrigues and Suprova Murmu and Sr. Mini Chettayil, PCI Secretary and me participated in it.

The day began in earnest with a well prepared Morning Prayer and the solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Most Rev. Thomas D'Souza, the Archbishop of Calcutta. In his homily he highlighted the tenderness and compassion so much desired by St. John Bosco our father and founder, drawing his inspiration from the life of St. Francis de Sales whom he gave us as our patron.

The cultural inaugural ceremony held in the school hall was excellently organized and performed to the joy and satisfaction of all present, by a picturesque presentation of West Bengal in songs, dances and tableaux. The theme "Transformation through encounter" was beautifully depicted through a colorful folk dance. At the end of the mesmerizing programme, Mother General addressed the vibrant, colorful and enthusiastic audience expressing her immense joy and happiness on being here in Kolkata Province known for its distinct cultures, language and people. She was full of appreciation for the young people from the schools of Bandel, Barasat and Dum Dum for their amazing performance.

After a short break the participants of the Triennial Evaluation gathered in the Conference Hall where Sr. Rose Ezarath, the PCI President on behalf of FMA India, officially welcomed Mother General, the Councilors, Provincials and other members.

At 12 noon Mother Yvonne addressed the assembly inviting all to evaluate the choices of Pastoral Conversion identified in GC XXIII based on the "Memory of the Call" and the beauty of our vocation as believers. She dwelt on some important points, namely, Let ourselves be found by the Lord Jesus; Sharing the joy of the encounter with Him with Mary's Style. Mother Yvonne pointed out the urgency of living in the Encounter and of the Encounter; the means and ways of being transformed by the encounter in daily life and becoming evangelizers of joy.

The five days of Evaluation was lived in reciprocal enrichment through listening to Mother General's inspiring and thought-provoking conferences and deep intense study and sharing of what has been done and accomplished in the seven Provinces during the Post Chapter Journey (GC XXIII). As we came to the conclusion of the Evaluation, Mother said to all present "Dear Sisters, laity, young people, we have reached the conclusive time of these dense days of the Verifica. We have enriched each other reciprocally. The aspects to be strengthened, the paths still open, and the reasons for hope have been highlighted. And they are many! Have the courage to dream. We are not to dream only by ourselves, but we must dream as educating communities and also allow the young to dream. Thus the Five day Evaluation of the three Pastoral choices for conversion, sharing of Prophetic gestures in the Provinces and the experiences of the renewed Constitutions of the Institute, came to a successful and fruitful conclusion inviting all FMA and all those who are connected with our mission to be relevant for today's young people, with today's challenges in today's world, here and now to be missionaries of hope and Joy for the young and with young, listening to them and accompanying them at all circumstances.

Visit of Mother General to the Province: 29 January - 07 February 2018

On 29 January 2018, Auxilium Bandel accorded a grand and colourful welcome to Rev. Mother General, who made her gracious and loving presence felt with a warm smile which captured the attention of every one. Mother General in her message to the students said, "You are the joy of our life. You fill my heart with great hope for the future". She inspired the students to be happy and in the process spread happiness around them. She was invited to plant a sapling

which symbolized life and hope for the days to come. Mother Yvonne met the teaching faculty and motivated them saying that education is the base of the present and future and it is the greatest mission that exists in the world.

She also made a short visit to Don Bosco Seminary and the Basilica of Our Lady of happy Voyage. She was very happy to have met the Salesians and to know that we collaborate and work together. She thanked them for the Spiritual and other helps that they render to the Sisters.

On 30 January during the Eucharistic celebration at Auxilium, Dum Dum, 19 men and women from Auxilium Dum Dum and Barasat took their pledge to be members of the Association of Mary Help of Christians (ADMA) thus inaugurating the ADMA in the Province. The Holy Mass was presided over by Fr. John Puthiyedathuchalil SDB, the delegate of the ADMA in the Province. After the Mass, Mother addressed the new members of the Association. She spoke to them on being the living monuments of Mary, the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin and exhorted them saying, go to Jesus through Mary as it happened at the wedding feast of Cana.

During the morning hours Mother General met the Provincial council and in the afternoon she met the Animators of the Province. In her heart to heart to talk with the council and the animators she enkindled deep love for their role as animators as it is a gift and a responsibility. In the evening we had a get together of the Salesians and FMA in the Salesian Provincial House where Mother met with Provincial, Rev. Fr. Nirmol Gomes SDB and the Salesians from nearby communities of Kolkata. It was indeed a reunion of two religious families founded by Don Bosco in the presence of the 9th successor St. Mary Mazzarello on the vigil of the solemnity of St. John Bosco for a moment of prayer, goodnight and fellowship meal.

AYM Youth Fest 2018 – 31 January

Amidst great joy and delight Mother General Yvonne Reungoat was welcomed to Auxilium Barasat by the young people of the province gathered for the AYM (Auxilium Youth Movement) Youth Meet 2018. It was followed by the concelebrated Eucharistic celebration on the solemnity of the feast of Don Bosco participated by more than 400 young catholic students. teachers and religious.

After a short break, 1200 young people representing 15 institutions of the Province gathered together in the open stage prepared for the occasion. They performed a colourful and variety cultural programme which Mother General and all present enjoyed to the full. Mother Yvonne invited the young people to be messengers and proclaimers of Gospel joy. She interacted with the young people personally which overwhelmed each and every one present. This mega event was concluded with the joyous and enthusiastic students grooving to the beats of the theme song of AYM which filled them with enough zeal to last for many, many days to come. Mother General was extremely overjoyed to have celebrated the feast of St. John Bosco with the young people.

In the evening Mother met the Aspirants, postulants and novices at Aspirantate community Bamanmura. Among many other things she exhorted them to be happy and thus in their happiness discover God and His love for each one of them. She told them to be open and sincere with their formators and allow themselves to be accompanied and formed according to the charism of the Institute.

On 1 February Mother Yvonne met the Provincial Team. Sr. Elizabeth Valliyil, the General Coordinator briefed on the modality of the working of the provincial team. Each sector then presented a short report of their animation and activities. Mother enlightened the team on their responsibility in the animation of the Province. She presented the Team as an organ of reflection which studies the reality, the challenges of young people and of the society in connection with the Charism of the Institute.

Mother then met a group of 46 young sisters who were waiting eagerly and with great excitement to see and hear her. In her conference she reflected on Vocation as gift of God. He called us to be with Him and to remain with Him, only when we are with Him and in Him He sends us to the young people. She also stressed on the importance of personal prayer which is the source of strength and energy, in following Jesus radically.

In the afternoon mother Yvonne had the joy of visiting the tomb of Mother Teresa of Kolkata and to spend some time with Sr. Prema MC, the superior General of the Missionaries of Charity. Thereafter she made a short visit to the two communities of Gobra and Park Circus.

On 2 February around 130 women from the various communities gathered in Kalyani to give her a fitting tribute of love through songs, words of welcome and a variety of folklore of Bengal. She also visited the promotional centre for women where they carry out many Income Generation programmes for the needy women. In the evening she met the Salesian Co-operators and the Past pupils at Auxilium Dum Dum and thereafter the priests and religious of Dum Dum Dum area.

From 3-6 February, Mother General visited the communities of New Delhi. Sr. Annie T, Sr. Mini Chettayil and myself accompanied her to New Delhi where she was given a colourful welcome by the students, teachers and sisters of Vasant Vihar. In the same evening inaugurated the newly built Auditorium and unveiled the plaque at H.C.Auxilium R.K. Puram. Rev Fr. Jose Mathew SDB Provincial of Delhi Province blessed the new building. It was followed by a short felicitation programme by the students of R.K. Puram.

On Sunday 4, the Holy Eucharist was celebrated at Vasant Vihar community by Fr. Jose Mathew SDB, Provincial of New Delhi. Mother Yvonne then met the second group of Sisters from the houses of New Delhi, Bareilly and Nepal. In the afternoon together with the sisters Mother Yvonne visited the historical monuments like India gate, Gandhi Samadhi, Kutub Minar and Lotus Temple. She appreciated and enjoyed the beauty and value of all the edifices.

She also paid a short visit to the Salesian Provincial house and Technical Institute, Okhla. She was accorded a warm welcome by the Provincial and the Salesians. They were edified by the simplicity and motherliness of Mother Yvonne. They cherished her visit and appreciated the same. Mother Yvonne lauded the Salesian Family relationship that reigned between the Salesians and the FMA.

On 5 February, Mother had the joy of enjoying some cultural programme in both Vasant Vihar and R.K. Puram during which she also gave a fitting message to the students, teachers and parents who were present for the occasion. In the evening we made a short visit to Snehalaya and Ashalayam at Palamgaon. She was very much impressed by the service rendered to the under privileged children and young people. They too were very happy to have met her and experienced her motherly presence.

Back to Kolkata, the last group of Sisters had the meeting with Mother General on 7th. In the evening we had the thanksgiving Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Dominic Gomes Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Kolkata. He was very much impressed by the simplicity and the gentle personality of Mother General and thanked her for the FMA sisters who are rendering Educational service to the Archdiocese.

On 8 February we bid farewell to Mother General as she was leaving for Thailand for the next group of the *verifica*.

Dear Sisters, the Visit of our beloved Mother General to our Province was truly a God given gift and was a God-with-us experience. Those days were days of blessings and graces for our Province and for each one of us in particular. We really felt that Mother Mazzarello visited us in person in the person our beloved Mother General. I am sure that her visit has highly inspired and motivated us to continue our mission of education and evangelisation with greater audacity, authenticity, passion and zeal. Let us continue to accompany her with the support of our daily prayers and renewed fidelity.

Sudden Demise of our Beloved Sr. Geraldine Barratt

“Happy the servant whom the Lord finds him at his employment”

The Lord of life once again knocked at the door of our province and has found our dear Sr. Geraldine Barratt worthy to enter into her eternal Home. The unexpected departure of her home going took us all by surprise and has left a deep vacuum in the hearts of all of us. Though it is very painful to accept that she is no more with us, we humbly bow before the author of life and death and we firmly believe that she who spent her 38 years of consecrated life as an FMA with great joy and fidelity, now enjoys beholding the heavenly presence of the One who called her to follow him more closely.



On 23rd January Sr. Geraldine along with the sisters of her community of Kalyani came with great excitement and joy to welcome our dear Mother General, Mother Yvonne who was just arriving in the provincial house at Dum Dum. Indeed, she had the great satisfaction of meeting her and having even a picture with her and also with the other general councilors present. Thereafter she went to Don Bosco, Nitika for the Salesian Family Day. While participating in the celebrations, she felt unwell and was rushed to the Woodlands Hospital and was admitted in the ICU.

The doctors diagnosed her with very high blood sugar and a minor attack. She was under treatment to stabilize the sugar level before proceeding with further investigations. For the next two days she showed signs of improvement. On 26th January Sr. Rosina Thomas the superior of Kalyani together with Sr. Mary Sarkar and Sr. Elizabeth Makil visited her in the morning and had a few minutes of conversation with her during which she told them that she was feeling much better and expressed her desire of being back to the community. As usual Sr. Rosina carried the holy Communion for her. After receiving Jesus, Sr. Geraldine spent some time in thanksgiving. While the sisters were still with her she began feeling very uneasy and the doctors did all what they could to save her but she suffered a massive heart attack. Calling repeatedly the name of Jesus, she succumbed to death.

Let us entrust her beautiful soul to the mercy of God and offer her our generous suffrages. May her soul rest in peace.

(A brief life sketch of Sr. Geraldine has already been sent to you.)

Communications

World Feast of Gratitude, 2018

This year the Feast of Gratitude will be celebrated on April 26, 2018 in **Asunción in the Province of St. Raphael Archangel (PAR)**. The Theme proposed by the Sisters for this year's Feast of Gratitude is: **“By living the response to God's call with joy and hope, we re-awaken the plan of God in every young person”**. This theme is expressed in the slogan: **“With the young, let the chords of life vibrate, witnessing to the joy of following Christ”** which solicit us to give greater visibility to the joy and the beauty of the vocation to be more and more “a response of salvation to the profound hopes of the young people” (C 1). Together with the entire Institute let us prepare ourselves to celebrate, the Feast of Gratitude to Mother for the ceaseless gift of herself to the young, the Institute, and the Church.



Meetings and Retreats

Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel will be participating in the FMA Centenary Committee Meeting which will be held from 18 – 20 February at Kodambakkam Chennai.

Let us send prayers ahead for the Retreat of the Animators which will be held at Auxilium - Kurseong from 04 – 11 March 2018. It will be preached by Fr. Jose Parappully SDB

Arrival: 4th March before noon

Meeting: 12 – 13 March

Departure: 14 March

The Retreat of the Sisters will be held at Auxilium - Kurseong from 26 May – 02 June. It will be preached by Fr. Jose Kuttianimattathil SDB

Arrival: 26 May before noon

Meeting: 3rd June

Departure: 4th June 2018

Sincere gratitude to:

- ✚ Sr. Lucy MD and the community of Najafgarh for the 23rd set of Reflectionnaire on GC XXIII for the Recollection day.
- ✚ Sr. Rosina Thekumkattil and the community of Kalyani for the Novena in preparation for the solemnity of St. John Bosco.

- ➔ S. Elizabeth Valliyil, the General coordinator and the Team Members for Evaluating and planning for the coming year.
- ➔ To Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel, the contact person of the Triennial Verifica for coordinating the preparation of the Triennial Evaluation at PCI level.

🦋 Sr. Teresa Adampakallel, Vice- Provincial and the animator of the community of Auxilium Dum Dum for planning and coordinating the events of Triennial Evaluation – FMA PCI from January 24-28, 2018 and the Visit of Mother General from 29 January - 07 February 2018

🦋 To the community sisters of Auxilium Dum for the warm hospitality and for reaching out to the FMA - PCI Triennial evaluation participants and to the sisters of the province who arrived for various meetings.

🦋 To the Sisters, staff and students of Auxilium Dum Dum, Barasat and Bandel for the inaugural programme for the Triennial Evaluation – FMA PCI and for the Republic Day celebration.

🦋 To the communities of Auxilium Bandel, Barasat, Bamunmura-Aspirantate, Kalyani, Gobra and Park Circus in Kolkata and the communities of Vasant Vihar, R.K. Puram and Palam Gaon in New Delhi for making all the preparation to welcome our dear Mother General in our communities.

🦋 To the coordinators of INC AYM - Youth Fest 2018 for organizing a wonderful gathering of the young people.

🦋 To the coordinators of Social Ministry for organizing women's day celebration at Auxilium, Kalyani.

🦋 To all the sisters of the communities who offered a helping hand for the smooth functioning of the various gatherings that took place at Auxilium, Dum Dum.

🦋 To Stella Potteparambil for furnishing with a face-lift to the chapel with beautiful flower arrangement.

🦋 To our Salesian Provincials and the Salesians of Kolkata and New Delhi for the warm welcome accorded to our Mother General, Sr. Yvonne Reungoat.



Congratulations!

The General Chapter of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC) in Guwahati has re-elected Rev. Sr. Philomena Mathew as Superior General, Sr. Christine Mynsong as Assistant General, Sr. Asha Mao as General Councilor for Formation, Sr. Bridget Diengdoh as General Councilor for Evangelization, St. Rose Paite as General Councilor for Social Apostolate, Sr. Katherine Joseph as General Councilor for Education and Sr. Ancila Jose as Economer General. We offer our hearty congratulations and assure them of our prayerful support in their ministry of animation and guidance.



Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- ✠ Fr. Poonthuruthil James, SDB (66), of Dimapur Province who returned to his eternal home on 21st January 2018 after he met with a tragic road accident on 14th January.
- ✠ Sr. Rosary Muthusamy of Trichy Province who went to receive her eternal reward on 24th January 2018
- ✠ Mr. Thomas, elder brother of Sr. Teresa Korattiparambil, who passed away on 24th January 2018
- ✠ Mrs. Mary Veliyan, the mother of Sr. Rosy Veliyan who returned to her heavenly abode on 31st January 2018
- ✠ Paternal aunty of Sr. Abhai Minj who passed away on 4th February 2018.
- ✠ Fr. Joseph Pazhekadavan SDB (86) of Guwahati Province who passed away on 7th February, 2018 after a road accident.
- ✠ Mr. Johnson, brother of Sr. Paulsamy Aruna who passed away on 9th February 2018 in a bike accident.
- ✠ Fr. Anthony Abong B. Marak SDB of Guwahati Province who was called by the Lord on 12th February, 2018
- ✠ Mr. Baby Thomas, the nephew of Sr. Rosina Thomas who passed away on 15th February 2018 in an accident.

Prayers requested for:

- Sr. Cecilia Tamba who is undergoing treatment at Aspirantate - Bamunmura.
- All our sick and ailing sisters

Dear Sisters, I would like to conclude my letter quoting the Lenten message of Holy Father Pope Francis: "Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life. Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal" Therefore let us heed to the invitation of our Holy Father to live this time of Lent in a meaningful way by devoting more time to prayer, which enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception and then to find the consolation God offers.

Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)