

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**



Cir/RE/33/05/2018

May 2018

Dearest Sisters,

Loving and prayerful greetings for a very fervent month of May!

Month of Mary Help of Christians

Month of May, month of Mary Help of Christians for us, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians has a special significance as it is rightly called the Salesian month because it is flavored with salesian holiness beginning with the feast of St. Dominic Savio, followed by the birthday of our saintly Mother Mazzarello and her Feast day culminating with the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians and the Feast of our Province.

Every feast of our Blessed Mother is a joyful event for us Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and much more this year as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin. Mother General in her circular letter 976 reminded us that for us, the 150th is not only an historical event, but an appeal to make that “living monument of gratitude to Mary”, raised by Don Bosco in the Church, shine with a new light. Circular 978 invites us to revive the Marian face of the Institute testifying that the living monument of Mary Help of Christians is alive and dynamic. It means making ourselves available to write a piece of history every day with the young people, because only with them is the song of the Magnificat complete and can shine with the typical beauty of the Salesian charism. This year, therefore, is an opportune time for us to revive in all our communities the Marian traditions of the Institute. We can ask ourselves, is our devotion to Our Lady and our apostolate in spreading this devotion still marked by the enthusiasm and fervor of our predecessors in the Institute?

Make Mary known and loved

The best homage we could give our Lady Help of Christians on her feast-day and the feast of our Province is an active, positive renewal of our Marian outlook as entrusted to our Institute by Don Bosco. Salesian tradition offers us ample means for fostering devotion to Our Lady. The first and most important of these is to create in and around

us a deeply Marian atmosphere which will reflect the Marian spirituality of our Institute so that Our Lady will shine forth in our communities as “The model” to which we must all conform. Let us therefore, make use of every opportunity to make Our Lady known and loved.

In 1878 Don Bosco told the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians who had asked him how they could make Our Lady known and loved: “Talk about Her to the children sent to us by Providence, and to the lay people we meet, telling them about favours received. Keep her feast days with every possible solemnity. Give presents of pictures and statues of Her, call new foundations after Her, and so on”. Therefore, let us make use of every occasion to make her known and loved especially by means of: preparing for her feasts with filial devotion and celebrating them with special solemnity and in a variety of ways; giving the 24th of the month the traditional note of fervor; making Her known through catechesis, through the lives of saints particularly devoted to Her, inculcating the practice of the holy Rosary, promoting the Marian Associations especially ADMA, speaking about the favours and blessings received through Her intercession etc.

Looking at Mary and bringing our young people to Her, we can be penetrated by her grace, absorb her spirit, because She is not only for us an ideal to be contemplated, but the mould which models and transforms us. May our life, be a life lived in Mary, with Mary and for Mary making our own the proposal of Don Bosco: “Everything with Mary, nothing without her”.

Model of Youthful Holiness: St. Dominic Savio

St. Dominic Savio, the model of youthful holiness is the youngest person canonized without being a martyr. We may ask ourselves: How could a 14-year-old be a saint? Dominic did not accomplish great works. And yet, he made a significant impact on the world. He did this by inspiring others to be better. We see Dominic’s impact on others in many ways. One that stands out is a club he started at the age of 12. The club was dedicated to Mary and named ‘The Immaculate Conception Sodality’. St. John Bosco described thus the goal of the club: “To obtain the special protection of the Mother of God in life, and especially at the hour of death.” It had three primary obligations that the members resolved to do, and then twenty-one rules that they would keep. The primary obligations are very practical and would be beneficial in almost any area of life:

1. To carry out with greatest exactness the rules of the school;
2. To help and encourage our companions: helping them by pointing out in a friendly way whatever needs correcting; encouraging them by being first in doing the right thing and supporting their own efforts;
3. To be always busy with something useful. This is a simple path to holiness: Follow the rules, help others and work hard. He was very faithful to his programme, sustained by intense participation in sacramental life, by a filial devotion to Mary and by joyful sacrifice.

Let us propose to our young people this simple path to holiness inviting them to be like St. Dominic Savio, missionaries of good example, good words, good action at home, with neighbours and companions.

A Marian Soul: St. Mary Mazzarello

St. Mary Mazzarello, whose feast we celebrate on 13 May, also stands before us, a completely Marian soul, enveloped in the light of our Lady from childhood to death. When Pope Pius XI was proclaiming the heroicity of her virtues, he said: "There is something great in a life that develops and unfolds under the guidance of such a Mother". In fact, Our Lady was for her the living incarnation of the ideal of sanctity which she always kept before her eyes. She held this ideal up to the Sisters and girls as well so that they could feel our Lady's attraction, love her and strive to imitate her. Mother Mazzarello in her first entrustment to Our Lady in 1857 made the promise of "avoiding even the smallest deliberate venial sin and of giving herself in charity to her neighbor". And in her last conference of 1880 she left to the Sisters this maternal souvenir: "Let us always act as if the Madonna were present with us, because she really is, even though we do not see her". In fact, Mother Mazzarello possessed trust of this sort and we read in Maccono's life of the Saint: "Her devotion to Mary Help of Christians knew no bounds. She considered her the inspirer and foundress of the Congregation! She loved her and begged her to be the real mother of her daughters and the real Superior General of the Institute. She prayed unceasingly to her to protect her and free her and her daughters from the danger of offending God and that all of them might live in poverty, humility and purity like Our Lady". Let this filial confidence in Mary continue to be handed down from one generation of Sisters to the other !

As we celebrate the Feast of our mother and co-foundress St. Mary Mazzarello, let us remind ourselves that she was not content only to bear the title "Daughter of Mary Help of Christians" but she set herself the task of making Our Lady known and loved, of spreading her devotion but above all striving to resemble her so as to be her true daughter.

Pope Francis establishes new feast of Mary: 'Mother of the Church'

Pope Francis has decreed that Latin-rite Catholics around the world will mark the feast of "the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church" on the Monday after Pentecost each year. This official celebration underlines a characteristic of the Virgin Mary, who is both mother of Christ and of the Church. Holy Father wished to promote this devotion in order to "encourage the growth of the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety". Honoring Mary as mother of the church on the day after Pentecost also highlights for Catholics that Mary was present with the disciples on Pentecost, praying with them as the Holy Spirit descended. Mary, "from the awaiting of the Spirit at Pentecost, has never ceased to

take motherly care of the pilgrim church on earth. "This celebration will help us to remember that growth in the Christian life must be anchored to the Mystery of the Cross, to the oblation of Christ in the Eucharistic Banquet and to the Mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the Redeemed, the Virgin who makes her offering to God," decree said.

Communications

Once again I like to bring to your attention the following events that will take place in the month of May in the province. Let us support our sisters with the gift of our prayers.

- ⇒ Srs. Delpina Teresa Bag, Rose Mary Ekka, Sabita Nayak and Sumitra Ekka who will make their Perpetual Profession on 25th May 2018 at St. John Bosco church, Kalyani. Rt. Rev. Joseph Suren Gomes SDB, the Bishop of Krishnagar will preside over the Eucharistic Celebration at 9.00 am.
- ⇒ Novices Salomi Bhuinya and Shashikanta Xalxo who will make their first profession on 24th May 2018 at Mazzarello Convent, Ranchi.
- ⇒ Postulants Anima Kujur and Martha Minj who will enter the Novitiate on 23 May 2018
- ⇒ 11 Junior Sisters who will be renewing their vows at Sacred Heart Novitiate – Ranchi and at Provincial House, Guwahati.

Welcome Back

We extend a warm welcome back to Sr. Basanti Ekka who returned to the Province on 1st May after completing her M.Sc. Chemistry at Katpadi – Auxilium College. We wish her God's blessings and a fruitful apostolic mission. We are grateful to Provincial Sr. Nirmala Lazar, Animator Sr. Samala J. Amalorpavam and the community for their support, encouragement, care and above all providing her with an educational ambient.

CRI National Assembly

Sr. Annie Thevarkunnel, on my behalf and Sr. Stella Potteparambil as the CRI Regional secretary will attend the CRI National Assembly to be held at SRM University, Chennai, from 27 - 30 May 2018. The themes for discussions are: Urgent matters facing us today, moving to the Peripheries: Learning from those who have done it.

Sincere gratitude to:

- ➡ The community of Bandel for the Novena practices in honour of St.Mary Mazzarello
- ➡ Sr. Annie Thevarkunnel, the Province Economer for organizing the Economers' Meet from 7 -10 May 2018 and the community of Auxilium, Dum Dum for hosting the same. 25 Sisters participated in it.

Congratulations:

- ➔ All the Sisters, Staff and students of all the ICSE & ISC schools for their excellent result with cent percent passed. God has really blessed your hard work.

Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- ✠ Sr. Philomena Prabalanathan's nephew Aloysius Michaelnathan who passed away on 4th February 2018
- ✠ Fr. Naikamparambil Jose, SDB (71) of Delhi Province who passed away on May 1, 2018.

Dear Sisters,

I would like to conclude my letter by quoting few maxims of Don Bosco about devotion to Mary Help of Christians. Let us make every possible effort to spread devotion to this heavenly mother of us. May she intercede for us and protect us and lead us to Jesus her Son Jesus.

"Mary our Help has obtained, and always obtains, special, amazing and miraculous graces for those who strive to give a Christian education to young people at risk by their actions, by their advice, by their good example or simply by their prayer."

"In this world it's as if we are in a stormy sea, in exile, in a vale of tears. Mary is the Star of the Sea, the comfort in our exile, the light that shows us the way to heaven drying our tears."

"Love, honour, serve Mary. Work to make her known, loved and honoured by others. Not only will a son who has honoured this mother not perish, but he will even be able to hope for a great crown in heaven."

"Mary assures us that if we are devoted to her she will count us among her children, cover us with her mantle and shower us with blessings in this world so as to gain heaven for us."



Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)