

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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Dearest Sisters,

Affectionate greetings and prayers to you all !

We have just entered into the Holy week, the most important period in the liturgical calendar, with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. During Holy Week, the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation accomplished by Christ in the last days of His life on earth, beginning with his messianic entrance into Jerusalem. This year's Holy Week is being observed in very different circumstances due to what the world is facing today, the pandemic Covid 19. All faithful and religious will experience Holy Week at home during these days. It is indeed in the context of an extremely alarming situation that we celebrate the Holy week, the mystery of His passion, death and resurrection, the victory over death. Though the circumstance of celebration will change, the Mystery of the Holy week remains the same, that of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection. This is ultimately what gives hope to the world which is now experiencing untold suffering.

I like to quote here what the Holy Father said in his message for the Holy week: "We will celebrate Holy Week in a truly unusual way, which manifests and sums up the message of the Gospel, that of God's boundless love. And in the silence of our cities, the Easter Gospel will resound. The Apostle Paul says: 'And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him Who died for them and was raised again' (2 Cor 5:15). In the risen Jesus, life conquered death. This Paschal faith nourishes our hope. It is the hope of a better time, in which we can be better, finally freed from evil and from this pandemic. It is a hope: hope does not disappoint; it is not an illusion, it is a hope."

Dear Sisters, as we live this experience of pandemic corona virus ,I like to invite you to make a deep reflection on our own lives and examine our lifestyle and activities, renew and relive our commitment and dedication to be communities that generate life and bring new hope for the world. In the midst of lock down and isolation we need to intensify our prayers, follow Jesus more closely on His way to Calvary experiencing His suffering but believing in His resurrection which brings Hope and Joy even in the midst of suffering.

Let us make good use of this time to intensify our prayers, personal and community, having adoration, and extra rosaries prayed for a mighty intervention from God to save the world from this impending disaster, even in our own country. Besides this, use the time for nourishing your spiritual life with reading of Spiritual books especially of Salesian literature. I am sure you have

received the proposal made by the Community of Nizza Monferatto, to read and reflect daily one letter of Mother Mazzarello written from Nizza, starting from 01 April to 13 May. There are 43 letters in all, beginning with letter No. 21, rediscovering in it the spirituality of Mary Mazzarello so that like her we may be able to bring new hope to the young people of today who live this painful experience of pandemic novel corona virus.

I invite all the communities to reach out, in whichever way possible, to the people around your locality who suffer hunger and lack basic needs of life keeping in mind the words of Jesus, "whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do it unto me." I thank the communities who have already taken various initiatives and are extending your help. Please continue the good works that you have begun and the Risen Lord will reward you abundantly.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen !



What joy we experience as we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. It reminds us that when we were baptized we shared in the fruits of Jesus' Passion, Death and Resurrection. If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God (cf. Col. 3:1). "Think of what is above not of what is on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3: 2-3).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is teeming with meaning for our lives. His saving death and His victorious rising to new life are God's answer to the sufferings of humanity. By the mystery of His passion, death and resurrection, God has come close to us in our suffering, and has conquered sin and death and every evil. He has come close to us by sharing our human condition, by suffering betrayal, by undergoing agonizing torture, and by dying a most horrific death.

The Creator is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. In Christ he came close to us as one of us to redeem us, and he experienced our sufferings. This is no God who stands afar off, but one who experienced what is ugliest in humanity from the inside. God, of course, knows all things. The reality of Easter morning reveals to us a God who walks with us in the ordinary circumstances of life and a God who bountifully showers His love on humankind every

moment of the day.

We are called to give witness to Jesus Christ in our daily life. We are called to put Him first. We are invited by Jesus to be His friends, to fall in love with Him and put to death our sin, and live in the newness of Christ's Easter life. He is the only one who can give us true peace and true joy.

Therefore let us embrace God's grace, love and peace in this Easter while recognizing His presence with us at all times as he himself had said, "I will be with you always, even to the end of time. "Wishing each one of you a very Holy and Happy Easter, an Easter which brings hope to the world stricken by this horrible epidemic.

Sweet memory of Sr. Mary George



The memory of Sr. Mary George whom the Lord called to Himself on 27 March 2020 in the midst of pandemic corona virus and lockdown in the country and the world at large, is still very fresh in our mind. 88 years of life lived to give glory and praise to God and out of which 65 years as an authentic FMA in spirit of the Da Mihi Animas!

Sr. Mary George was truly a person of God, prayer and charity and a true Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, a person who loved and lived her vocation to the full. Her love for the Institute was noteworthy as she took great interest in knowing and was concerned about all that happened in the Institute and in the Province as well. The Sisters in the Province bear witness with fondness her Salesian cheerfulness, love for vocations, passion for reading, love for each Sister of the province whom she knew by name.

Religious spirit was her outstanding characteristic and she never missed any chance to transmit the Salesian spirituality to the younger generation. She was the encyclopedia of Salesian traditions and her prodigious memory could narrate the history of the institute and FMA history in India. With her impartial nature she could strike the heart strings of every individual that came across her spectrum of life spent in almost all the provinces of India. She enjoyed and loved community moments to the core and was always a dynamic person who energized all the members and never missed any occasion to be present in community moments in spite of her age and ailments.

She was a guide, counselor and support to many. With her cordial, sociable and friendly relationships, sympathetic and hospitable nature, she conquered many hearts, that of teachers, students, parents, priests and religious. She was an outgoing person with numerous friends near and far with lot of communication and loving ways of enquiry and thoughtfulness. Children loved her very much and she had special love for the poor. Children always liked to accompany her to the school programmes and bring her back as she was truly a daughter of Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello with her genuine interest in them. She was a very good communicator, orally and textually and a good writer. The number of letters she has written to her dear and near ones, friends, benefactors and well-wishers testify to this truth. Every FMA could look up to her as a great model of Salesian charism lived in simplicity, cheerfulness, zeal, enthusiasm, charity, uprightness and great generosity.

Sr. Mary had the privilege of living with many of our pioneers including the first six missionaries who arrived in Tanjore, India in 1922. She would speak of them with great joy, gratitude and love. She had vivid memories of many of our missionaries who worked in India as she lived with them one time or the other in different communities of south India. She had many episodes to share with the young sisters about their missionary lives. We are grateful to her for the exemplary life

that she left behind for us to imitate and follow, to be a sign and expression of God's love to the young in the Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello way. Her sweet memories will linger on in our minds in the days to come.

I take this opportunity to thank Sr. Teresa A. and the Sisters of Dum Dum, in particular Sr. Luciana Rai, the Nurse for the care, love and attention with which they looked after and accompanied Sr. Mary in her last years of life in the community of Dum Dum. May God reward you dear Sisters for your generosity and kindness. And may Sr. Mary intercede for all of us before the throne of God to make us like her vibrant, enthusiastic FMA to respond to the deepest need of the young people of today.

World Feast of Gratitude

We have been preparing ourselves to celebrate the feast of Gratitude to express our gratitude to God for the gift of our dear Mother General, Mother Yvonne Reungoat for the 12 years of noble service she carried out as the leader of the Institute with great love and dedication.


The theme proposed by the Roman Province of St. John Bosco "**Your life is a tree that bears fruit. Thank you, Mother**", befits well to express our gratitude to our dear Mother General for the tireless effort and keen interest she has taken, to inspire in every FMA a great desire to respond generously to the call to holiness in the Salesian style following the footsteps Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello.

In preparation for this family feast of Gratitude we have reflected together as a Province on the Circular letter 992 of Mother General entitled "**Regenerated by the Holy Spirit communities that generate life**" and each community has drawn up a commitment to live the invitation of Mother General to be communities that generate life by being women of the Spirit called to a great mission that Spirit Himself entrusts to us; to be mothers, and consecrated women who generate life. This would be the most appropriate gift that we can offer to our Mother as a bouquet to express our love and gratitude. Let us then be determined to live what we have taken as the commitment.

Thanks to the communities for sending the 'thank you-commitment' and the photographs articulating the gesture that expresses the commitment of reconciliation and ecological conversion in the communities. Your positive and immediate response is worth mentioning. Sincere appreciation!

As we all know, the world is going through a great dramatic period of pandemic corona virus which claims thousands of lives. Therefore the feast of Gratitude as a big celebration will not take place. However, we all continue to offer our prayers for Mother General and celebrate the feast in a modest way in our own communities, thanking and praising God for the gift of our dear Mother General. Please do send your loving greetings to Mother General.

Communications:

 Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel participated in the meeting of the committee for History writing on the 100 years of FMA presence in India which was held from 15- 19 March 2020 at Kodambakkam, Chennai.



Congratulations and Prayers to:

Fr. Ángel Fernández Artime who is re-elected as the 10th successor of Don Bosco at the 28 General Chapter of the Salesians, to all the elected members of the General Council particularly Fr. Biju Michael Pulianmackal SDB of Guwahati Province who is elected as the new Regional of South Asia.



Condolences - Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- ✠ Sr. Sophia Pulingathil SMI who went to receive her eternal reward on 06 March 2020.
- ✠ Bro. Soosai Dennis SDB who passed away on 14 March 14 2020 from the Salesian Province of Hyderabad.
- ✠ Mrs. Soosai Mary the maternal aunt of Sr. Esther Rani Abraham who went to meet the Lord on 04 April 2020.

Dear sisters,

I would like to conclude my letter inviting you to take up a journey from within to the Risen Lord. To celebrate Easter is to allow Jesus to triumph over the craven fear that so often assails us and tries to bury every kind of hope and rejuvenation. It is to believe that God constantly breaks into our personal histories, challenging our conventions, those fixed ways of thinking and acting that end up paralyzing us. Easter is an invitation for all of us to break out of our routines and to recommence our lives, our decisions, and our existence with the power of the risen Christ. Jesus is not there in the tomb, He is risen! He awaits us in Galilee therefore let us proceed to meet the Lord believing in his promises "Do not be afraid! I am with you till the end of the ages"



**May the Risen Lord fill
you with His Joy and
Peace!
Wish you a Sappy and
Blessed Easter!**



Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)