

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/47/01/2020

January 2020

Dearest Sisters,

Loving and prayerful greetings for a grace-filled and holy New Year 2020!

We have just ushered into the New Year 2020 and we welcome it with joy for it brings along new hopes, new opportunities, new surprises and many blessings. I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Peaceful New Year. I pray that the Lord Jesus and His Mother Mary may enrich your lives during this year with an abundance of Divine blessings. With *Mary, the Mother of God* whose feast we celebrated on first January let us go ahead during this year, reminding us to rely on the powerful intercession of our Heavenly Mother. We honour Mary primarily because God honoured her by choosing her to become the mother of Jesus, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, when He took on human flesh and became man. The angel said to Mary: *“You are going to be the mother of a Son and you will call him Jesus, and he will be called the Son of the Most High”*.

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 Con. 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 have commenced the 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, thus becoming generators of new life.

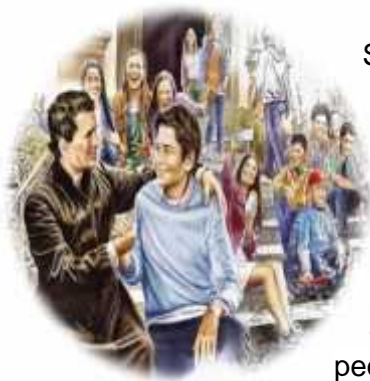
Mary can help us to live the generative power of the charism during this New Year supported by the joyful and unwavering certainty that the Holy Spirit effuses and infuses in our communities. Under her guidance we want to journey this path together with her maternal style and gaze placing ourselves in a listening attitude attentive to the educational challenges of the young people of today. Like Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello let us have an ardent desire to let ourselves be transfigured through a deep encounter with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and in Him to be women who generates life and radiate joy and hope to the new generation.

World Day of Peace

The 53rd World Day of Peace was observed on 1st January and the theme of the Holy Father's message this year was: "Peace as a journey of hope: dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion". The Pope says in his message that hope puts us on the path to peace, while "mistrust and fear weaken relationships and increase the risk of violence." He urges us to be artisans of peace, open to dialogue in a spirit of reconciliation, on a journey of ecological conversion that leads to a "new way of looking at life." Pope describes peace as "a great and precious value, the object of our hope and the aspiration of the entire human family", Pope Francis says, "it is a goal towards which to strive in spite of seemingly insurmountable obstacles". In the final part of the Message Pope Francis reminds us that peace is something that must be built up continually, and that it is a journey to be made together in constant pursuit of the common good. Pope Francis goes on to urge all men and women of goodwill to "renounce the desire to dominate others, to learn to look at each other as persons, sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters and only by choosing the path of respect, we can break the spiral of vengeance and set out on the journey of hope".

Pope Francis concludes his message for the world day of peace "The grace of God our Father has bestowed on us his unconditional love. Having received His forgiveness in Christ, we can set out to offer that peace to the men and women of our time. Day by day, the Holy Spirit prompts in us ways of thinking and speaking that can make us artisans of justice and peace".

Strenna 2020



Strenna 2020: "Good Christians and Honest Citizens", is based on the Gospel verse, "May your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." The Rector Major says that a *way to help the young live as good Christians and honest citizens is that of ourselves being women and men of faith, witnessing to Jesus in our way of living, educating to silence and then to listening to God who speaks*. He emphasizes that as a Salesian Family we must be attentive to the great human challenges of our world, such as people living an honest and committed citizenship that seeks the good, making the Church's social Doctrine present in everyday life, the option for the most disadvantaged. The Strenna gives us the opportunity to face some aspects like political commitment, freedom from corruption, migration, care of the common home, defense of human rights, especially those of minors. As our Mother General says in Circ.993, "It is a journey that makes us attentive to the empty jars of so many young people, that need to be filled with the new wine of love, of trust, of the certainty that in everyone there is a small seed that can be made to bloom in a marvelous way the 'good Christian and honest citizen' where we least expect it. Everyone, especially the poor, can give an innovative contribution to the building of a world that is more open to brotherhood and to peace". Together we can. Therefore let us join hands with the young people and the laity *in* this journey so that we can build a better India by implementing the '*politics of the Our Father*'.

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 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 (8), Bl. Louis Variara (15), Bl. Laura Vicuna (22), St. Francis de Sales (24), Bl. Bronislaus Markiewicz (30), and St. John Bosco (31). I would like to make a short reflection on some of them for our inspiration and emulation.

Blessed Laura Vicuna



Together with the whole institute, the educating communities and the young people who are entrusted to us, let us praise the Blessed Trinity for the holiness of Laura, great in faith, strong in hope, and heroic in love. Laura Vicuña found the secret of her life in Jesus. In the young Laura, loving Jesus became the most authentic and real commitment. Jesus filled her life with meaning and beauty, even as she carried the cross. The love of God is fundamental to every human love. Where there is love, there is also the capacity to hand oneself over to God and to live sacrifice. The holiness of Laura is a confirmation of the validity of the Salesian educational system when this is lived by the educator who seeks the same holiness walking with the young in fidelity to the Gospel. Laura makes us reflect on the importance of the family in the education of their children, on the right they have to live in a normal family that is the place of reciprocal love and of human and Christian formation. Let us entrust to Laura Vicuna all the families of the world of today.

Feast of St. Francis de Sales



On 24 January, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity that runs from January 18-25, the church will celebrate the feast of St. Francis de Sales. A bishop and Doctor of the Church, his preaching brought thousands of Protestants back to the Catholic fold, and his writings on the spiritual life have proved highly influential. God raised up Francis de Sales for this apostolic ministry of writer, preacher, bishop, spiritual guide, founder of the Visitation. God called him for this ministry against the odds, as it were, given his noble birth and first-born status. But he allowed God's grace to touch his heart. He allowed himself to become God's instrument.

We too have been chosen by God, called by God to work diligently in our mission to the young people, especially the poor, the marginalized of society, those who have never heard the Gospel, in the Salesian style, to be signs and bearers of God's love. Don Bosco tells us that he was attracted by two essential aspects of the moral and spiritual characteristics of Francis de Sales: a) his apostolic energy, his zeal for the salvation of souls, his defense of

the truth, his fidelity to the Church; and b) the Christ-like gentleness that imbued his zeal: his charming manner, his patience, his extraordinary sensitivity. Let us too emulate his apostolic zeal, and his gentleness and kindness in our community, apostolate and dealings with everyone.

Feast of St. John Bosco



Once again, the feast of St. John Bosco offers us an opportunity to look at our great Father, who was able to unite natural aptitudes and gifts of grace in the service of the young in a great educational work founded on the Preventive System. This feast is always an opportunity for us to rejoice, to express our gratitude to God for the charism that Don Bosco succeeded in passing on. Don Bosco was truly an apostle to the young. If we are to be true to him we need to live more intensely our own vocation as apostles to the young by committing ourselves to the proclamation of the gospel of joy through the pedagogy of kindness. We need to learn to love what the young love and in doing so help them realize that their highest happiness lies in seeking God's will and doing it with enthusiasm.

Don Bosco is today called the 'saint of JOY' because he taught his boys that '*Holiness consists in being joyful and cheerful*'. And he impressed on them that the joy and cheer that endures and that no one can take away is only found in living in God's presence and seeking to do His holy will with exactness and love. On his feast day of our father and founder, I would like to remind myself and you the concluding words of the Rector Major Fr. Pietro Ricaldone at the 10th General Chapter of the FMA in 1934: Don Bosco is holy, therefore, his life is holy; Don Bosco is holy, therefore, your Constitutions are holy; Don Bosco is holy, therefore, his works and his institutions are holy; Don Bosco is holy! You are his Daughters; it is important that you too should be holy! A very Happy Feast of Don Bosco to all!

Communications



Congratulations and Prayers to:

We praise and thank God for the gift of the two new Salesian Provincials of India Rev. Fr. Joseph Pauria SDB, the present Vice Provincial as the seventeenth Provincial of the Province of Kolkata who will assume office on 31 May and Rev. Fr. Agilan Sarprasadam SDB, as the fifth Provincial of the Province of Annai Velankanni, Tiruchy (INT). Hearty Congratulations and accompanied by prayerful wishes for their mission of animation and governance.

We rejoice with the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians of the Province of Kolkata at the appointment of the new Provincial Superior Rev. Sr. Sini Mathew who will be installed on 11 January 2020.

New PCI National Delegates

We appreciate and express our gratitude to Sr. Alphonse J. Isabella (INM), the PCI National Development Coordinator (NDF) and Sr. Phawa Theresa (INS), the National delegate for Salesian Family for their generous and valid contribution for the past years and we welcome with joy Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi (INT) and Sr. Lamare Mary (INS), the newly appointed NDF and delegate for Salesian Family respectively. We wish them God's blessings for their new mission.

Meetings and seminars

Sr. Rosy Veliyan will be attending the FMA centenary coordinator for FMA INDIA PRESENCE AT 2020 on 11 January 2020 at Provincial house, Bangalore.

A training Programme for the National Coordinators will be held from 22-24 February 2020 at Auxilium, Dum Dum, Kolkata animated by Fr. C.M Paul SDB. The participants from our Province are Sr. Clara Saminathan and Sr. Rosy Veliyan.

A Three day programme of "Training for Child Care Institutions" will be conducted by the Salesian Sisters India in partnership with **Miracle Foundations** for the Sisters in charge of Boarding from **14-16 February 2020 at Auxilium Convent, Barasat**

Sisters from the following communities will definitively attend the training programme.

Auxilium Barasat, Bandel, Monsada, Jumaikele, Ghutiapara, Mazzarello Ranchi, Auxilium New Chumta, St. Mary's Geyzing, St. Antony Jaigaon, Snehadan - Bareilly and Snehalaya - Palam Gaon .

Arrival: 14 February by 9.00 a.m or earlier. Departure 16 February afternoon



Sincere Gratitude to:

- Sr. Maxima Dung Dung and the community of Mirik for the Novena in honour of St. John Bosco
- Sr. Rosy Veliyan and the community of Bandel for hosting the Annual retreat for our 53 sisters from 28 December 2019 – 04 January 2020 and we are indebted to Fr. Jose Kuttianimattathil SDB, the retreat preacher for helping the sisters to delve into their life basing on the Word of God to discover the beauty and the preciousness of the call of God and the importance of forgiveness.
- Sr. Sherely Kalapurayil, the YaR coordinator of the Province for organizing a seminar on **Building Resilience in children** on 05 January 2020. Sincere appreciation to Dr. Fr. Saju Puthuessary SDB, a member of CWC Hooghly and Kolkata.

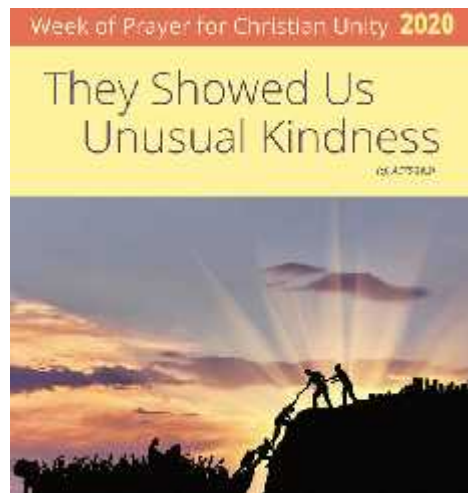
Condolences - Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- † Sr. Asirvatham Amalorpavam who was called to her eternal home on 19 December 2019 from the Province of Tiruchy (INT).
- † Fr. Mark Mondol SDB (54) who passed away from the Salesian Province of Kolkata on 01 January 2020.
- † The step sister of Sr. Matilde Xaxa, Mrs. Emelda Xaxa who died on 04 January 2010 in Gumla.
- † Fr. Justin Ekka, the maternal uncle of Sr. Aruna Kispotta and the former Parish priest of Jaigaon who went to meet the Lord on 06 January 2020.

Dear sisters,

I would like to conclude the Circular letter writing few lines on the week of Prayer for Christian Unity (January 18–25, 2020) since at this juncture it is fitting to pray for unity and peace not only among the Christians but also among the citizens of our nation when our homeland is torn apart with serious political issues, strikes etc.

The 2020 theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is “They Showed Us Unusual Kindness” (cf. Acts 28:2). The theme finds its origins in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 27:18 – 28:10). During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Churches of all faiths are called together to form a vibrant and prayerful witness for Christian Unity by heeding Jesus’s prayer “that they all may be one” and to show unusual kindness towards one another. Fr. Tom Orians, SA, Associate Director of the Ecumenical Institute notes that it was through their unusual kindness that a divided people were drawn closer together (cf. Acts 27:18 – 28:10). Therefore dear Sisters, let us pray for the citizens and leaders of our nation that through kindness we may all come closer to each other in unity and peace in spite the differences that prevail among us but let us start first among ourselves in the community, in our mission and in the neighbourhood which leads to embrace our nation.



Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)