

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/48/03/2020

March 2020

My dearest Sisters,

Affectionate and prayerful greetings from the Provincial House, Dum Dum!

Holy Season of Lent

We have once again just entered into the Holy Season of Lent, which began on Ash Wednesday 26 February, a day of fast and abstinence. In Lent, more than any other season, we are invited to turn our attention to spiritual health. During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seeking the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by giving alms, and to practice self-control through fasting. In Lenten fasting tradition, the giving of alms is one way to share God's gifts - not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." (CCC 2446). Pope Francis would say, "Lent is a favourable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ". "Blow the trumpet [...] sanctify a fast" says the prophet (*Joel* 2:15). Lent opens with a piercing sound, that of a trumpet that does not please the ears, but instead proclaims a fast. It is a loud sound that seeks to slow down our life, which is so fast-paced, yet often directionless. It is a summons to stop – a "halt!" to focus on what is essential, to fast from the unnecessary things that distract us. It is a wake-up call for the soul. (Pope Francis - Ash Wednesday, 6 March 2019). Christian tradition name seven reasons for fasting:



1. From the beginning, God commanded some fasting, and sin entered into the world because Adam and Eve broke the fast.
2. For the Christian, fasting is ultimately about fasting from sin.
3. Fasting reveals our dependence on God and not the resources of this world.
4. Fasting is an ancient way of preparing for the Eucharist-the truest of foods.
5. Fasting is preparation for baptism (and all the sacraments)-for the reception of grace.
6. Fasting is a means of saving resources to give to the poor.
7. Fasting is a means of self-discipline, chastity, and the restraining of the appetites.

During Lent, we are once again reminded that we are called to conversion. “Repent, and believe in the gospel.” With these words, Jesus began his public ministry. He calls us to conversion. We hear this call anew every year during the season of Lent. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that our Lord’s call to conversion aims above all at the *conversion of the heart, interior conversion* (cf. CCC 1430). Our hearts are moved to this conversion when we look upon Jesus whom our sins have pierced. Saint Clement of Rome wrote: “Let us fix our eyes on Christ’s blood and understand how precious it is to his Father, for, poured out for our salvation, it has brought to the whole world the grace of repentance.”

“We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” is the scripture passage our Holy Father Pope Francis chose for his message for Lent 2020. He invites every Christian to share with him what he wrote to young people in the Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*: “Keep your eyes fixed on the outstretched arms of Christ crucified, let yourself be saved over and over again. And when you go to confess your sins, believe firmly in his mercy which frees you of your guilt. Contemplate his blood poured out with such great love, and let yourself be cleansed by it. In this way you can be reborn ever anew” (No. 123). While Lent is a time of repentance and fasting and remembering our death, it can also be a time of great spiritual growth and renewal.

The good news of Lent is that God gives us the strength to begin anew. He gives us his grace. He wants to create a pure heart in us. Let us therefore live the holy season of Lent with a spirit of repentance and conversion of heart. Let all our prayers, fasting and almsgiving lead us to personal renewal and growth in Christ. Let us open our hearts to God’s grace and live intensely this holy season, this journey of conversion towards Easter!

Solemnity of St. Joseph



On 19 March the Church honours St. Joseph who taught the child Jesus the skills of carpentry and guided him in the Jewish faith. He is offered to us as the ultimate model of manhood, fatherhood, and discipleship. Celebration of the feast of St. Joseph during the time of Lent, reminds us of his total self-giving to ensure the safety of Jesus and Mary. He is an excellent role model for family values and personal integrity as he showed the importance of working hard in our daily lives. St. Joseph was chosen by God to be the head of the holy family. He was a faithful husband to Mary and a devoted foster father to Jesus Christ. Sacred scripture portrays him as a pious man who always followed the will of God.

As we prepare to celebrate his solemnity, we would do well to reflect on the top three ways in which St. Joseph can illumine us:

1. St. Joseph was righteous: The gospel according to St. Matthew describes St. Joseph as a “righteous man” (Mt 1:19). St. Joseph was obedient because he and Mary took the infant Jesus to the temple for consecration in accordance with the Mosaic Law (Lk 2: 22-24). Joseph was a righteous man and was non-judgmental in his approach to Mary. Joseph reminds us to leave the judgment to God and never treat others with our limited understanding.
2. St. Joseph was chaste: The Church presents Mary as a perpetual virgin. St. Joseph did not have conjugal relations with her. He was chaste throughout his marriage, thus allowing it to serve, in a special way, as a pre-eminent sign of God’s loving union with humanity. Let us follow the example of St. Joseph by giving ourselves totally to God for the good of the community and our mission among the young people.
3. St. Joseph was industrious: St. Joseph was a carpenter by trade (Mt.13:55). As such, he knew the value of a hard day’s work. He also understood the challenges of providing for a family. His industriousness inspires us to greater diligence in our duties. Let us always strive to imitate St. Joseph and put forth our very best efforts in all our apostolate.

The righteousness, chastity and industriousness of St. Joseph made him the perfect model of fatherhood. He was privileged to have a happy ending in this life at the presence of Jesus and Mary. Let us entrust our life journey towards heaven to St. Joseph and the Holy Family.

Solemnity of the Annunciation

25 March we celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation. We contemplate on the Gift that God bestowed on the young, ever blessed, Virgin Mary: the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus the Word of God, took flesh in Mary’s womb when she conceived Him on this day. She responded to God the Father with freedom, joy and love. The Church celebrates and give thanks to God because on this day we commemorate a definitive step along the journey of salvation since man first departed the garden of paradise. The liturgy of the day speaks about obedience, about docility to God’s Word. Since salvation cannot be bought, we need a humble heart, a docile heart, an obedient heart like that of Mary.



We are continually reminded of the importance of this feast of our salvation in various devotional prayers such as Joyous mysteries of the Rosary and the Angelus. In one of his homilies on the occasion of the solemnity of the Annunciation, Pope Francis explained: “Mary, at the annunciation, humbles herself: she does not properly understand, but she is free: she grasps only the essential, and says ‘yes’. She is humble: ‘May God’s will be done. She entrusts her soul to God’s will’. Joseph, her betrothed, also lowers himself and takes this great responsibility upon his shoulders. Joseph also says ‘yes’ to the angel when in his dream the angel tells him of this truth. The attitude of Mary and Joseph shows that to reach us, God’s whole love takes the

path of humility. The humble God wanted to walk with his people. Jesus' humility ends on the Cross, and this is the golden rule for us Christians: to persevere, to advance and to humble ourselves. There is no other path".

Let us entrust ourselves to Mary and ask her for the grace of humility. Let us surrender ourselves to God every moment of our lives and go forward in His presence as consecrated persons, in obedience and docility of heart so as to bring forth Christ and His love into the world of today.

Communications



XXVIII General Chapter of the Salesians



The GC28 of the Salesians with the theme "What kind of Salesians for Today's Young People?" is in progress at Valdocco from 16 February to 4 April 2020. Let us accompany our beloved Rector Major Don Ángel Fernández Artime SDB and all our Salesian brothers with our prayers in this important and historic moment in the life of the Congregation. May the Holy Spirit hover over them to inspire and guide them in all their undertakings and decision making.

Launching the New Institute's Website

I am sure by now all of you might have login to the Website of the Institute and began profiting it from its new feature. The creative effort of Sr. Maria Helena Moreira, General Councilor for Social Communications, Sr. Gabriela Imperatore and team, which has given rise to the launching of the New Website for the Institute - www.cgfmanet.org, on the Feast of St. John Bosco, 2020. The intent of the IFMA website as a new informative space is to broaden our gaze on a world in constant change, interacting with the various audiences, so that all may be Interlocutors capable of giving sense and meaning to experience and co-creators of Good News. The IFMA website is set to tell the Good News by the FMA, Salesians, Laity, and young people of the Salesian Family about the life and mission of the Provinces in the different contexts of the FMA Institute. Let us make maximum use this social communication medium to enrich ourselves with the formative materials available in the website and also contribute towards it by supplying news and views.

World Gratitude Day

The World Gratitude 2020 will be celebrated this year in the Roman Province of St. John Bosco on 26 April 2020 in collaboration with the Sisters of *Mother of the Church Pre-province* and with the Sisters of



the General House. The **theme** proposed is: **Your life is a tree that bears fruit. Thank you, Mother!**

The **logo** represents a luxuriant tree reaching out towards the city, symbolically represented by the bridge over the River Tevere and by St. Peter's dome, which draws life from the river and gives it to the young in a circularity that opens to the newness indicated by the Spirit. The Institute is always nourished at the living source of Jesus and of the Church and in it has given witness of a consecrated life spent in total dedication to the young people, in the "*da mihi animas cetera tolle*" and in the response to the mandate "*A te le affido*". Our 'thank you' is for the life, for the beauty of the charism that we receive and give and for the mission that Mother carries out in the Institute.

The **Word of God** chosen is taken from **Psalm 1** and the Sisters of St. John Bosco Roman Province suggest a community meditation on the same.

Blessed is the one who has...

the law of the Lord as his joy;

and on His law meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted near streams of water, that yields its fruit in season;

Its leaves never wither;

whatever he does prospers...

Because the Lord knows the way of the just.

I am sure all of you received the letter of Sr. Chiara Cazzuola the Vicar General and have read it in the community. Let us re-read it again and prepare ourselves for this feast by taking it to heart the proposals to pray the *Our Father*, reading and sharing the *Circular letter of Mother General* with the Educating Community, urge the Educating Community, children and young people, to make a gesture that expresses the commitment of reconciliation and ecological conversion as we celebrate the Feast of Gratitude.

Logo for the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of the FMA Institute



The choice of the Logo of the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of our Institute (1872-2022) is made known which is created by Maria Fernanda Bastidas Zapata, a young girl belonging to the Province of Mary Help of Christians of Medellin (CMA) Colombia.

The Logo accompanies the Triennial of preparation for the 150th of the Foundation of the our Institute (1872-2022), which was officially opened by the Mother General Sr.




Yvonne Reungoat, on 5 August 2019, in the rooms of Mother Mazzarello at Mornese. Maria walks in this house the slogan proposed for the Celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of our Institute is visible in the Logo, in which the name MARIA remains unchanged, while the rest of the phrase is translated in the four languages. The phrase takes up the words

said by Don Bosco in 1885, in the house of Nizza Monferrato: “The Madonna walks in this house and covers it with her mantle” (cf. Cronistoria V, 51-52), and is accompanied by a blue and rose graphic element representing the mantle of Mary.

Retreat, Renewal and Profession


- The second Novitiate will be held at Sacred Heart – Novitiate, Ranchi from 15 April - 14 May 2020. Arrival of the sisters will be on 14 April.
- The Annual Retreat for the junior sisters, Novices and Postulants will be held at Sacred Heart Novitiate, Ranchi from 16 – 23 May 2020.
- The first profession will be held at Mazzarello Convent, Ranchi. Fr. Miachel Peedikayil will preside over the Eucharistic celebration.
- The Perpetual Profession will be held at Bandel Basilica on 26 May 2020 at 9.30 am. Archbishop Most Rev. Thomas D’ Souza will officiate the Holy Eucharist.
- The Annual Retreat for the sisters will be held at Auxilium Convent, Kurseong from 31 May – 07 June 2020. It will be preached by Rev. Fr. Thomas Vattathara SDB. It will be followed by a day of meeting.

Meetings and seminars

-  Sr. Lily Perumpettikunnel participated in the Indian Catechetical Association meet from 12 – 14 February at Nitika Don Bosco, Kolkata. The Theme of the meeting was “Education to Love: A Catechetical Perspective”
-  Junior’s meet will be held at Auxilium, Provincial House, Dum Dum from 20 – 23 March 2020. Arrival: 20 March & Departure: 23 March 2020
-  The Team Meet will be held at Auxilium, Provincial House, Dum Dum from 28 – 30 March 2020



Sincere Gratitude to:

-  Sr. Alice Chacko, the first National coordinator of the FMA PCI from the Province of Bangalore (INK) for having compiled the report from its inception until now (1989 – 2019). A word of appreciation and gratitude to her for the meticulous and herculean work accomplished by her to bring it a reality this document.

- Sr. Stella Pottetparambil and the community Auxilium - Barasat for holding a three day programme of “Training for Child Care Institutions” 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. 14 sisters from various communities of the Province participated in the training programme. A word of thanks to Miracle Foundation Lead Miss Riney Rachel, Miracle Foundation Lead for Salesian sisters Sr. Isabella Alphonse (INM), Core Master Trainer Sr. Arokia Sujatha Mary (INT) and Master Trainees Srs. Sherly Kalapurayil, Mary Puthuppallil and Anima Xalxo.
- Sr. Teresa Adampakallel and the community of Auxilium - Dum Dum for hosting the workshop for the National Coordinators from 22-24 February 2020 at Auxilium, Dum Dum, animated by Fr. C.M Paul SDB.

Condolences - Let us pray for our dear Departed:

- ✠ Sr. Teresa Puthempurakel who returned to her eternal home from the Province of Guwahati on 07 February 2020 from Adithya Diagnostic Hospital, Dibrugarh.
- ✠ Sr. Teresa Mukalayil who passed away from the Province of Guwahati on 09 February 2020 from St. John's Hospital.
- ✠ Sr. Barbon Arokia Jebamani who suddenly died due to a massive heart attack in Ulagampatti on 14 February 2020 from the Province of Trichy.
- ✠ My eldest sister-in-law Mrs. Rosakutty (82) who was called to her eternal home early hours of 19 February 2020.
- ✠ Sr. Teresa Korattiparambil's bother Mr. Sebastian who returned to his eternal abode on 21 February 2020.

Dear sisters,

“Rend your heart, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God” (Joel 2:13). Lent is journey that moves us towards the cross and a very special opportunity to grow in our relationship with God and to deepen our commitment to a way of life, rooted in Christ. It is a season where we are invited to re-turn, to re-new, to re-enter to explore our relationship with Jesus. Therefore, let us notice and respond to this invitation so that God will draw us closer to Him, and prepare us for a fresh experience of Good Friday and Easter.

Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Rose Ezarath FMA
(Provincial)