



Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice
Salesiane di Don Bosco
Mary Help of Christians Province - INC
Kolkata - India



Provincial Circular

Salesian Sisters, Auxilium Convent
10 P.K. Guha Road, Dum Dum, Kolkata - 700028

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Dearest and loving Sisters,

Loving greetings to all of you from the Provincial House, Dum Dum !

The Immaculate Conception

We have already begun our preparation for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. God chose Mary, before the creation of the world, to be the mother of God. Because He had chosen her for the unique role, He specially prepared her. He preserved her from original sin. We too are chosen by God “before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4). God has chosen us and loves us as we are. We have great value and worth in God’s eyes. Being chosen also means that he has a plan and purpose for our life. Pope Francis says each of us is a mission, planned by the Father to reflect and embody, at a specific moment in history, a certain aspect of the Gospel. (Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, 19)



Our saintly Mother Mazzarello reminds us: “We are approaching the feast of the Immaculate. Our Holy Rule asks us that we celebrate it with great solemnity, and besides, it must be one of the most beautiful feasts for us, who are Daughters of Mary. Therefore, let us prepare ourselves well for it. We must plant beautiful flowers in our hearts to make a beautiful bouquet to offer to our dearest Mother, Mary Most Holy” (I will never forget you: Letter No.27). Therefore, let us listen to the exhortation of our saintly mother and prepare earnestly for the feast of the Immaculate and offer her the beautiful bouquet of our virtuous life lived in love and joy. Let Mary, the mother of Jesus be our mother always.

Advent Season

We are entering the season of Advent. It is an invitation for all of us to ‘recognise the visitation from God as we prepare ourselves for the solemnity of Christmas. The Lord visits each one of us with his graces at different times of the liturgical season. We have to know the time of His visitation. “When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman ... so that we might

receive adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4-5). Advent is not only the celebration of God’s coming to us but also, of our coming to him. Advent is a time of preparation - a time of hope, prayer, and time to seek out God’s will.

During Advent, we are hopeful of His second coming. We rejoice that we are remembered by God. St. John Paul II pleads to us Christians: “Never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire, and never become discouraged. Be not afraid.” We too must pray so that He who began the good work in us will faithfully bring it to completion in us and we may be worthy of God’s blessings till the end. Mother Mazzarello urges us to develop a spirit of union with God in her letter. “As far as you can, always preserve a spirit of union with God, remain always in His presence. Be very careful to give good example and to do things with the sole aim of pleasing God” (I will never forget you: Letter No.23). And so, let us prepare, like never before, to receive the joy, peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ at the commemoration of His birth.



New Year, A New Beginning!

I am reminded of a story that was read recently, of course, some of you might have read it already. But I would like to leave a message for the New Year with this story as we begin as usual another New Year nonetheless let this New Year let it be a special year and a gift from the Lord. Here we go with the story: Snow fell on everything, turning the world brilliant white. One morning, as the students settled in their seats, the classroom door opened and the principal came in. She had a girl with her, and she said to them: This is Maya. Maya looked down at the floor. The students all stared at her. Her coat was open and the clothes beneath it looked old and ragged. Her shoes were spring shoes, not meant for the snow. A strap on one of them had broken. The teacher, Ms. Mary, said, say good morning to our new student. But the students were silent. The only empty seat was next to George. That’s where the teacher put Maya. And on that first day, Maya turned to George and smiled. But he didn’t smile back. He moved his chair, his books a little farther away from her. When she looked at George, he turned to the window and stared out at the snow. And every day after that, when Maya came into the classroom, everyone looked away and didn’t smile at her. At lunchtime, no one wanted her in their company nor wanted to play with her. So, Maya played a game against herself.



New Year Blessings!

The weeks passed. Every day, students whispered about Maya, laughing at her clothes, her shoes, and the strange food she brought for lunch. Whenever she asked her friends to play with them, they said no. The days grew warmer and warmer. Grass began growing where snow

had once been. One day, Maya came to school wearing a pretty dress and fancy shoes. But the shoes and the dress looked like they'd belonged to another girl before Maya. So, they named her 'Never New'. All laughed at her. One day Maya brought a rope but did not come over to her classmates to ask if they wanted to play. After a while, she folded it double, rolled the ends around each hand and started jumping. She jumped around the whole schoolyard without stopping. She didn't look up once. Just jumped, jumped, jumped. The next day, Maya's seat was empty.

In the class that morning, the teacher talked about kindness. Ms. Mary had brought a big bowl into class and filled it with water. We all gathered around her desk and watched her drop a small stone into it. Tiny waves rippled out, away from the stone. This is what kindness does, Ms. Mary said. Each little thing we do goes out, like a ripple, into the world. Each gesture of kindness makes the whole world a little bit better. (Jacqueline Woodson; E. B. Lewis)

Dear Sisters, as we enter into the New Year let us create ripples in our community, through our gestures of kindness, compassion, understanding and love to make our communities a better place to live in. Also, may these ripples go out to the places of our apostolic mission and with whomever we come in contact with daily to make our world a better place to live in joy and love.


COMMUNICATIONS


Congratulations!


We rejoice and congratulate Sr. Minimol Chettayil, who was conferred with the Ph. D degree in Management during the Convocation of Seacom Skills University held on 18 November 2023 in the Bolpur campus at Kendradangal, Birbhum, West Bengal. She successfully defended her Doctoral Dissertation on 28 January 2022.




Gratitude and Appreciation!


 We congratulate and applaud our dear Sisters of INS, ING and INC who made a huge effort assiduously for the realization of the FMA Northern India Symposium with the theme: **'I Did the Sketch, You Do the Colouring'**. A special word of acknowledgement to Sr. Stella Potteparambil and Sr. Rosy Veliyan who presented the papers on *'Sharing in Christ Mission through Education'* and *'In Communion with the Local Church'* respectively and other sisters who contributed towards the presentation of the papers.


 A word of gratitude to Sr. Teresa Karakkal and the community of Monsada for helping the communities to prepare well for the feast of Mary Immaculate with the novena preparation.

 Sincere appreciation to Sr. Dorothy Torcato and the sisters of New Chumta for sending in advance the novena in preparation for the solemnity of Christmas.

Meetings and Courses

 Sr. Pramila Ekka participated in the 3rd International Conference on Education organized by Don Bosco Institute (DBI) Guwahati for School Principals and Administrators from 21 - 23 November 2023 at DBI Guwahati. The theme of the Conference was *“Reshaping School Leadership in an Era of Emerging Technologies and Policy Changes”*.

 Sr. Alma Bilung attended the AMRAT General Body Meeting held at the Pastoral & Development Centre, Proggaloy, Kolkata on 24 November 2023.

 The Annual NDF Meet was held at Wadala, Mumbai from 28-30 November. Sr. Alma Bilung, Sr. Paulina Toppo and the KSSDS staff Ms. Suzzane Shaw participated from our Province.

Let us pray for our dear departed - Condolences to:

✠ Sr. Premika Tirkey at the demise of her paternal aunt Ms. Pukli Tirkey (64) on 05 November 2023 due to a stroke.

✠ Sr. Lily D'Souza at the passing away of her brother Mr. Baptist D'Souza (74) 02 November 2023.

✠ Sr. Alphonsa Kurisingal, the Provincial and the sisters of Guwahati Province at the demise of Sr. Celine Porinchu FMA (86) on 28 November 2023 at St Mary's Convent, Maligaon, Guwahati.

✠ Rev. Fr. Provincial and the Salesians of Dimapur Province (IND) at the passing away of Rev. Fr Joseph Thettayil (TT) SDB on 13 November 2023 at Thabore, Angamali Don Bosco, Kerala.

Dear Sisters,

As we enter into the preparation and **celebration of the long-awaited feast of Christmas**, I would like to conclude with the words of Pope Francis which he said last year during the Christmas celebration which are relevant and echoing still today with the same freshness and vitality.

“The Christ child is surrounded in the lowly manger by Mary, Joseph and the shepherds were all poor and united not by riches nor great expectations, but in their affection for Jesus. The poverty of the manger thus shows us where the true riches in life are to be found: not in money and power, but in relationships and persons. God was born in a manger so that you could be reborn in the very place where you thought you had hit rock bottom. There is no evil, there is no sin, from which Jesus does not want to save you and he can. Christmas means that God is close to us!”. Let this message be a personal message for all of us to celebrate Christmas founded on relationships and persons.

Wish you all blessings of Christmas and New Year 2024 in anticipation. May the Babe of Bethlehem bless us with His peace, joy and love.

Yours affectionately in Our Lady,

Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil FMA
Provincial

