



**Cir/LP/27/01/2024**

**08 January 2024**

Dearest and loving Sisters,

*New Year greetings to all of you from the Provincial House, Dum Dum !*

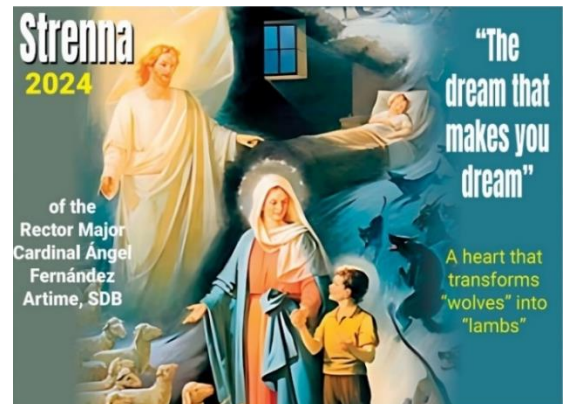
Let us journey ahead this year with hearts filled with gratitude and hope because it is never too late to change the course, start anew & and write fresh pages of happiness, peace and commitment in the book of our life!



**Jubilee 2025** Pope Francis has given us the theme of the Jubilee 2025, **"Pilgrims of Hope."** He has asked us to prepare for the jubilee with Prayerful preparation. The year 2024 will be dedicated to prayer. Pope says, that Blessed Mother can teach us to *"live each day, each moment, each effort with our inner gaze turned to Jesus. Joys and sorrows, satisfactions and challenges. All in the presence and with the grace of Jesus, the Lord. All with gratitude and hope."* United with the entire Church let us enter into the preparation of the Jubilee 2025.

**Strenna 2024 "THE DREAM THAT MAKES YOU DREAM" A heart that transforms "wolves" into "lams."**

In 2024, the Salesian Family around the world will celebrate the second centenary of the "dream-vision young John had at the age of nine in his home at Becchi" in 1824. It is well known in the Salesian Family as "the dream at nine years of age". The Rector Major Cardinal Fr. Agnel Fernandez Artime while presenting the Strenna called this prophetic dream 'a precious jewel in the charism of Don Bosco's family'.



The Strenna presents the essence of what the dream at nine years of age in its simplicity and as a prophecy, in its charismatic and educational value. This dream, a very famous dream-vision would become and still is an important pillar, almost a founding myth, in the Salesian Family's soaring imagination. This dream stayed with Don Bosco

in his entire life and has been part of the journey of the Salesian Congregation until today. As we are leading hundreds of young people every day in our apostolic mission the Strenna is an invitation for us to make courageous proposals to the young people to help them dream 'big', assured of the presence of Jesus, and Mary, the Teacher, the Lady, our mother of Don Bosco's dream. It is interesting to note that it is not John who chooses Mary, but that it is Mary who presents herself at the request of her Son, who will be the Inspirer and Teacher of his vocation.

The Rector Major ends his Strenna by inviting every one of us to read it again and to meditate on it personally. We too have many dreams in our hearts for us, for our young people and for whom we carry out our mission. Yes, let us build ourselves and our dream to continue to live the charismatic fidelity and make it a reality the dream of Don Bosco in the context of today. I wish that all of you read and reflect on the Strenna, individually, as a community and with the educating community, to live it in our everyday lives.

## *Feast of Blessed Laura Vicuña*

On 22 January we celebrate the feast of Blessed Laura Vicuña who is an example for all of us to become holy because she was only 13 years. Her main virtues were a spirit of service and availability toward others. Aware of what mortal sin was and how much it offended God, Laura, moved by her love for Jesus Christ and her mother, decided to offer her life for her mother's conversion and in reparation for her sins. With her gaze fixed on Our Lord, she asked Him to take care of her mother so that she wouldn't go to hell. She carried out the tasks entrusted to her with great generosity and dedication. These things enriched her soul, and Laura offered them up and did them joyfully and lovingly. One of her most famous quotes is, "For me to pray or to work is the same thing, it is the same to pray or play, pray or sleep. Doing what I have to, I fulfil what God wants of me; and this is my best prayer."



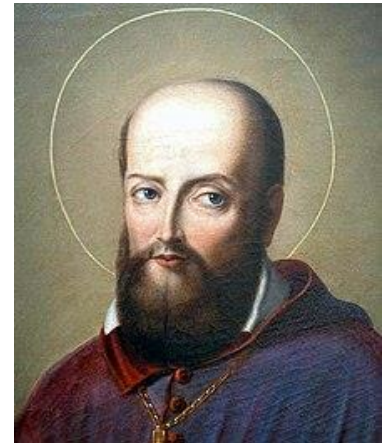
To be like Laura and to celebrate her feast is to imitate her virtues, especially her spirit of service, availability, awareness of the consequence of sin, generosity, and dedication, to make prayer and work the same and to fulfil what God wants from us.

## *Feast of St. Francis de Sales*

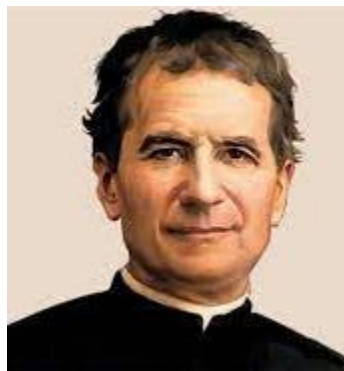
On 24 January, we honour St. Francis de Sales, Bishop, Founder and Doctor of the Church, who is known throughout the Church for his great holiness, scholarship, theological knowledge, kindness, and understanding of the human soul. Through these wonderful gifts, he brought countless souls to God throughout his life. St Francis guided countless souls from all walks of life, adapting to every individual's rhythm, and needs. He wrote that human souls differ from each

other than their faces. To all of his spiritual children, rich or poor, cultured or uncivilized, male or female, he gave the same loving care, the same unconditional devotion.

As we read his letters, we realize what is important for our spiritual survival is a loving friendship centred on Jesus. His motto 'Live Jesus!' invites us to possess the characteristics of kindness and contemplative dimension in our apostolic mission. His faithfulness to God, his simplicity in approaching others, and his enthusiasm and zeal in making God known to the people, with whom he was entrusted is remarkable and worthy to be imitated upon. Pope Francis has noted "A Church or a Christian who does not give witness is sterile; like a dead person who thinks they are alive; like a dried-up tree that produces no fruit; an empty well that offers no water! The Church wants men and women of prayer, masters of prayer that we may teach the same to the people entrusted to our care. For centuries after his death, even today, St Francis de Sales stands as a shining example for the effective communication of God's message to the world, that God still loves the world.



## Solemnity of Don Bosco



On 31 January we celebrate the solemnity of St. John Bosco, a saint of great kindness and goodness of heart. No one is born a saint. Heroic sanctity must be achieved by total and unconditional surrender of the personal will to the Divine will. On our part, we have to strive to perfect ourselves to win the heavenly reward through our merit and hard work. We have this example in our father and founder St. John Bosco.

Kindness was the principal trait of Don Bosco's character, according to Fr. Caviglia who grew up on the side of Don Bosco and studied him in depth wrote: "Don Bosco is a man of kindness, of goodness of heart. His was not merely a heart with concern for humanity but was like the heart of Jesus which moved with compassion for the hungry crowd, sensitive to every suffering and sorrow. A heart which, with a mother's love, stoops down to embrace little children. His heart was filled with fatherly kindness, tenderness and motherly concern for the little ones and the poor. We can say that if he ever committed a mistake, it was listening always more to the heart than to the head". From here we can learn volumes from the life of Don Bosco to be a sister of kindness in our community and in our educative mission and where we are called to serve the Lord in gladness. This can be the best celebration of his feast to be more like him in his kindness and goodness of heart.

## Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an international Christian ecumenical observance kept annually from 18-25 January. The love of Christ that unites all Christians is stronger than the

divisions that exist between various groups and take the path of love of God and love of neighbour.

In the passage selected for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2024 (Lk 10:25-37), Jesus reaffirmed the traditional Jewish teaching from Deuteronomy 6:5, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might”; and Leviticus 19:18b, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself”. Christians are called to act like Christ in loving like the Good Samaritan, showing mercy and compassion to those in need, regardless of their religious, ethnic or social identity. During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we ask the Lord to come to our assistance, to tend our wounds and so enable us to walk the way of ecumenism with confidence and hope.

## COMMUNICATIONS

On 08 December, at the Feast of Immaculate Conception, Pope Francis announced that the Catholic Church would celebrate the **First World Day of Children**. This new celebration will be held in Rome on the weekend of 25 – 26 May 2024. The initiative is being promoted by the Dicastery for Culture and Education to put children at the centre and to care for them like Jesus.

### *Congratulations*

- ✚ We congratulate and assure our prayers at the appointment of Most Rev. Vincent Aind (68), the Bishop of Bagdogra, as Archbishop of Ranchi.
- ✚ We convey our prayers and congratulations to Rev Fr. John Zosiama SDB and Rev. Fr Sebastian Kuricheal SDB, new Provincials elect of the provinces of Shillong and Guwahati respectively. We support their future mission of leading and guiding the provinces.

### *Gratitude and Appreciation!*

- ✚ We offer a warm welcome and congratulate Sr Ba-l- Thiang for her courageous step to be part of our province officially. We owe our gratitude to Sr. Elizabeth George and the sisters of Shillong Province for this gift.
- ✚ Sincere appreciation and gratitude to Sr. Celine Alexander and Sr. Rosy Veliyan, the Social Communication Coordinators of the province for the initiative taken to help the province make a meaningful and fruitful advent journey by preparing an advent series of 24 episodes ‘Auxilium Vision’. It included a brief reflection on advent themes and daily Gospel reflection of the season.

### *Meetings and Courses*

- ❖ Annual Team meeting will be held at Auxilium, Provincial House, Dum Dum from 10 -13 January 2024. All the Team members are requested to take an active part in it.

- ❖ In view of updating the team of the PCI Social Communication Sector, an updating course is being arranged by Sr. Maria Rajeshwari, the National Coordinator of the Social Communication Sector at Don Bosco Skill Mission, Bengaluru from 09 - 11 February 2024.
- ❖ The following topics of Basics of Artificial intelligence and its regard, 3D animation, Cyber safety- -rescue measures and Pro roles will be conferred during the meeting. Sr. Celine Alexander, Sr. Restitula Kharpran and Sr. Lemnom Mosang will participate in the program.
- ❖ The Young sister's 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be held at Auxilium Convent, Gobra from 14 -18 February 2024. It will be animated by Provincial Sr. Leelamma Palliaprambil, Vice-Provincial Sr Rose Kureekattu, Fr. Remesh Cherian SDB and Fr. S.Irundayaraj, the canonist of the Archdiocese of Calcutta.
- ❖ Auxilium Nisarg Mitra, the wing of Auxilium Skills Academy, is organizing a National Level Conference on WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) from 20 - 22 March 2024 at St. Joseph Vaz Retreat Centre, Old Goa. The conference will discuss and exchange ideas on how to address climate change, water conservation, air pollution, waste management, and other critical environmental concerns. It aims to promote environmental literacy and engagement among youth. Sr. Alma Bilung will participate in the conference.

### *Let us pray for our dear departed - Condolences to:*

- † Sr. Bridget Chettri at the demise of her cousin brother Mr Deep Raj Chettri (44) on 12 December 2023
- † Fr. Provincial and the Salesians of Bombay Province at the passing away of Fr Lawrence D'Souza (77) on 12 December 2023 after a cardiac arrest at Don Bosco School, Matunga.
- † Sr. Susanna Korah at the departure of her cousin sister Ms Teresa (85) on 04 January 2024 to her heavenly home
- † Sr. Elizabeth Makil at the return of her nephew Mr. Jose (57), to his eternal abode on 05 January 2024.

Dear Sisters,

I would like to conclude my monthly circular by wishing you all a very *Happy Feast of Bl. Laura Vicuna, St. Francis de Salesa and St. John Bosco.* I end by quoting a few inspirational quotes from our dear Father and founder St. John Bosco which can be a signpost for us as we prepare ourselves for the Salesian feasts during this month: "Do good while you still have time; Do not leave for tomorrow the good you can do today. There may not be a tomorrow; Tolerate the imperfections of others if you want others to tolerate yours; Without trust or love, there can be no good education; Remember, God does not reward results, but effort; Let yourself be guided by reason and not by passion".

Yours affectionately in Our Lady,  
Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil FMA  
Provincial