



INB/VII/17/16

December 2016

Warm wishes from the Provincialate!

We have already ushered into the new liturgical year with the Holy Season of Advent and are living intensely the days of the Novena to the Immaculate Conception of Mary. It is a privileged time to contemplate the Mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God and Mary's co-operative role in this great Mystery. She was preserved, all pure and sinless by a very special grace from God. The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX in the Apostolic Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*, issued on 8th December 1854. The Feast centers on the belief that Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary, was conceived without sin. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains thus:

Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. CCC. N. 491

Thus we celebrate Mary, "free from any stain of sin, fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature". CCC. N. 493 . It is she who can help us fight against sinful tendencies that rob us of the grace to welcome Jesus in our hearts.

For us, Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, this feast has a special significance, for on this day the oratorian heart of Don Bosco, drawn by compassion towards the abandoned young, spurred him to begin his mission among the youth, with a single Hail Mary, prayed with Bartholomew Garelli. As we make this Novena to the Immaculate Mary, let us ask her to accompany us in our Mission among the young and pray for the Spiritual needs of our Province. *Happy Feast of the Immaculate Conception to each of you!*

Annual Retreat: The Annual Retreat for Animators and Councillors commences on the 6th December 2016 at Lonavla. Let us support our sisters with our prayers as they spend these days in close encounter with the Lord. May each of them be enlightened, refreshed and renewed by the grace of God working in them. Let us also pray for our Preacher Rt. Rev. Bishop Thomas Menampampil, that he may keep good health and be accompanied by Holy Spirit as he proclaims God's Word.

Provincial Gratitude day: There is a change in the date and venue of the Provincial Gratitude day, as informed earlier. Although we shall have the Gratitude day Celebration on a sober note, we will keep up the Spiritual dimension of preparing for this day. The Vice Provincial, Sr. Agatha Dias will give us indications, to help us prepare for this event. The highlight of the actual day of celebration i.e, 12th February 2016 at Lonavla, will be a thanksgiving Eucharist followed by a fellowship meal.

Adieu Sr. Freda Morris & Sr. Ethelvina Rodrigues:

“Like a lighted candle, she burned on until she silently burned out”

Our dear Sr. Freda Morris, winged her flight to heaven all of a sudden on 11th November 2016, leaving us all shocked and unprepared for this loss. May her soul rest in peace!

Freda Morris was born on 2nd October 1942 at Mumbai. She was the eldest daughter of God-fearing parents, Mr. David Morris and Mrs. Emy Rose Morris. Mr. David loved his only daughter Freda, dearly and provided her with the best of opportunities, while her mother with her watchful discipline ensured that Freda and her brother did their best in everything. Freda was a talented girl. She excelled in sports and represented her school in various athletic events. However, it is Don Bosco who captured the heart of young Freda as she frequented the Novena every Saturday, at Don Bosco’s Shrine – Matunga (Bombay).

Sr. Freda has given her best to the Institute and Province during the past 50 years of her religious life. She was a trained teacher holding a Bachelor’s degree in Education from the Annamalai University – Madras and completed the Course in Salesian Spirituality at the Pontifical Faculty of Auxilium - Rome. She served as teacher in various schools of the Province and as Headmistress of the High School at Pali Hill – Bandra. Wherever she went, the past-pupils, teachers and parents adored her. From 1991 to 2003 she served as Superior of the Communities of Pali Hill, Baroda and Pune (Koregaon Park). In 2003 obedience entrusted her with the work of the “Ufficio Propaganda” and since then till date she zealously worked to tap resources of the rich and affluent (Mostly her past pupils and the staff who loved her) to collect funds, clothes, food-grains, oil, sugar etc, which were distributed to the poor and needy. Through her contacts and benefactors the Province has been able to reach out to many poor families.

During the last few years, Sr. Freda suffered from arthritis and found it difficult to walk due to the severe pain in her knees. Yet, she never made any excuse and was always there, where obedience called her. On 5th August 2016 the entire Province joined Sr. Freda Morris and her Companions in celebrating the 50 years of her Religious Profession. On her golden jubilee, when Sr. Freda was asked what her message to the younger generation of Sisters was, she just said, *“Be generous, give to the poor and you will draw down God’s blessings upon you! And to the young people she says, “Live the present moment and live it with love”!*

On 6th November 2016 Sr. Freda travelled to Dahanu to make her Annual Retreat. Since she was unwell and appeared weak and pale, she was brought back to her community at Wadala on 9th November. On the evening of 11th November at 4.00 p.m. the Lord found Sr.

Freda ready and invited her to join Him at the eternal Banquet. Before we even realized it, Sr. Freda had silently winged her flight to heaven. We are all grieved at her sudden passing away. We thank God for the gift of Sr. Freda Morris to the FMA Institute and in particular to our Province.

While we were still coming to grips with the loss of our dear Sr. Freda Morris, we received the painful news of the **home-going of our dear Sr. Ethelvina Rodrigues** on 26th November 2016. The funeral Mass was held on 29th November at Auxilium – Katpadi. Sr. Agatha Dias, Sr. Wilma de Souza, Sr. Phyllis Fernandes, Sr. Sylvia Fernandes and Sr. Sheela Furtado represented our Province at the funeral. Sr. Wilma de Souza gave the farewell message on behalf of the Province.

Sr. Ethel has been part of the life and mission of our Province, giving her best not only during her term of office as Provincial, but during all the years of her presence with us right from the inception of the Province of S. Mary Mazzarello – Bombay in the year 1981- 1982 until she re-joined the Chennai Province for better Medical follow-up of her eyes in 2010. Her motherly intuition and affectionate ways have traced fond memories in the hearts of the sisters who have shared life and interacted with her closely. We thank God for the beautiful gift that Sr. Ethelvina has made of herself to the Province, the Institute and to individual sisters. We pray that the Almighty Father may welcome her into His warm embrace. I am attaching to this circular, the brief profile of Sr. Ethelvina Rodrigues, presented by Sr. Magnificat Soosai, the Provincial of the Chennai Province.

Communications:

- ❖ The PAC Meeting for Animators belonging to the Provincial Animation Commission will be held on 6th December 2016 at Lonavla and will be Co-ordinated by Sr. Agatha Dias.
- ❖ The Formators Meet will be held on the 14th December 2016 at SJTC – Lonavla.
- ❖ A Training Program on the theme *How to Conduct Summer Clubs?*, Co-ordinated by Sr. Agatha Dias, will be organized from 27th – 29th December 2016, at Benaulim. About 30 young sisters will be participating in this Program.
- ❖ A National level training programme on CPP, will be organized by Sr. Moksha Anthonappa, the National Coordinator for YaR, from 20th – 23rd January 2017 at MYC Wadala. Participants will be the Sisters working for YAR.

Sincere appreciation and thanks to:

- ❖ Rev. Fr. Anthony Vincent CSSR and Rev. Fr. K. P. Vincent SJ. who preached the Annual Retreats for the Sisters. The Holy Spirit working in and through them, was very much visible, during the days of the Retreat. Both the Preachers were appreciated by the sisters who participated in the Retreat.
- ❖ The sisters who generously gave their services in helping out during the three batches of Retreats. I thank Sr. Stella Rebeiro, Sr. Regina Fernandes and Sr. Gemma Gudinho who

co-ordinated the catering sector and all the sisters and postulants who collaborated and helped out untiringly. May God bless your generosity and reward you graciously.

- ❖ Sr. Joanita Antao and the Community of Dahanu for hosting the three batches of retreats, at a stretch. I am grateful to them for the warm welcome they gave to the participants and for attending to all their needs.

Heartly Congratulations to Sr. Rita Mascarenhas on being appointed as the Vice-President of the AMRAT.

Prayers requested for:

- ❖ Sr. Gladys D'Souza who is still very feeble and is ailing
- ❖ Sr. Teresa Plathara who has fractured her ankle and recovering.
- ❖ Sr. Elizabeth Augustine who is unwell.
- ❖ The parents and relatives of our sisters, who are in need of our prayers.

Heartfelt Condolences to:

- ❖ Sr. Crescentia D'Almeida and the Sisters of the Bangalore Province at the demise of Sr. Jolly George on 16th November 2016.
- ❖ Sr. Magnificat Soosai and the Sisters of the Chennai Province at the passing away of our dear Sr. Ethelvina Rodrigues on 26th November 2016 at Auxilium College, Katpadi.
- ❖ To Fr. Jeyabalan the Provincial of Chennai and the confreres of Chennai Province for the loss of Fr. M. A. Augustine, sdb (90) INM who took his flight to eternity on 15th November 2016.

Most of you have just concluded your Annual Retreat, and the animators too will begin their retreat very soon. This is an opportune time for renewal and keeping alive the flame of fervor that has been kindled during the days of the retreat. The working of the Spirit among the sisters was felt in all the three batches and I recommend that we continue to allow this fervor to permeate our daily Community living. This would be a good way to prepare ourselves for the Feast of Christmas, the coming of our Savior. I wish you all a very ...

Happy Christmas and a Grace filled New Year 2017!

Affectionately,

Sr. Rita Thomas

Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas
Provincial

Provincial's Itinerary

DECEMBER 2016

1-2	Kasarkod (PV)
4-5	Provincial house
6-12	Annual Retreat Batch IV – Lonavla
13	Lonavla - Provincial Council meet
14	Lonavla - Formators Meet
15	Provincial house
16-18 (a.m)	Ahmednagar (PV)
19 - 20	Bableshtar (PV)
21 – 23	SHTC – Nashik (PV)
23 – 27	Provincial House
28-29	Nirmal (PV)
29 – 30	Uttan (PV)
31	Provincial House (Last day of year)

JANUARY 2017

1 - 2	Provincial House (New Year)
3- 4-5	Provincial Council Meet
6 – 8 (sun)	Auxilium- Wadala (PV)
9 -10	Provincial House
11	CRI Goa Unit meet (Goa)
12-13	Auxilium – Caranzalem (PV)
14-15 am	Mornese Vihar – Sulcorna (PV)
15-pm-16(4pm)	Velim (PV)
16pm-18am	Benaulim (PV)
19-22	CRWI Plenary Assembly, Goa
24-25	Carona (PV) (25 - evening departure for oros)
26-27	Oros (PV) (27 th night departure for Mumbai)
28-31	Provincial house