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**INB/VII/16/16**

**November 2016**

Loving greetings from Provincial House, Bandra!

I am happy to communicate to you the loving greetings of our dear Mother Yvonne Reungoat, the Asian Provincials and the Sisters of Sam Phran, Thailand. We the 16 Provincials of - PCI, CIAO, SPR made our Annual Spiritual Retreat from 12-19 October 2016. The retreat was preached by Mother General on the theme "*Accompanied by mercy to be missionaries of hope and joy*". Mother Yvonne, in her simple, yet profound style, stressed the important aspects of our Salesian vocation, Mission and Charism. The retreat was followed by 2 days of animation and dialogue.

I thank you for the support of your prayers during my retreat and I want to assure you that all of you and your dear ones as well as our novices, postulants, aspirants and candidates were very much present in my prayer. This retreat was a unique and rich spiritual experience for me and I am deeply grateful to God for this gift. May it continue to sustain my journey of holiness.

*All Saints and All Souls Day:* We began this month in the company of the Saints and remembering all our dear departed Sisters and family members with gratitude, in prayer. Let us allow ourselves to be inspired by the lives of our Saints and particularly by the lives of those saints who have been our contemporaries and have been Canonized recently. If they who lived in our very own times could attain such heights of Sanctity, definitely Sainthood is not beyond our reach.

Let us also continue to offer our prayers and suffrages for the departed members of the Salesian family, for those who have gone to their eternal reward recently and may still need the support of our prayers.

*Blessed Artemide Zatti Sdb.:* Blessed Artemide Zatti who is commemorated on 13<sup>th</sup> November was born on 12 October 1880 in Italy. In 1897, when Artemide was 17 years old, his family immigrated from Reggio Emilia to Bahía Blanca, Argentina. In Argentina, Artemide worked in a hotel and then in a brick factory. With true apostolic spirit, Artemide used his free time to help out in the Salesian parish to which the family belonged. He was

inspired by the life of Don Bosco and by the Salesian priests and felt called to imitate him. When he was 19, the Salesians accepted him as a student for the priesthood, but in two years he had to discontinue since, besides having difficulty with studies, he contracted a severe case of TB. He made a promise to Our Lady, Help of Christians, that if she would obtain a cure for him, he would serve the poor sick for the rest of his life. When he was cured, he promptly continued his training as a Salesian religious brother and professed in 1908. In 1911, Artemide was put in charge of the pharmacy and the hospital at Viedma, where he served the poor sick for 40 years with dedication and love. He knew the secret of balancing his prayer life and the daily tasks of caring for the patients and did it all in a spirit of Salesian Joy. He died on 15 March 1951 at Viedma, Argentina and was beatified on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2002, by Pope John Paul II.

Bl. Artemide lived what St John Bosco said to the first Salesians leaving for America: "*Take special care of the sick, the children, the elderly, the poor, and you will receive God's blessing and the respect of those around you*".

*Blessed Maddalena Morano:* On 15<sup>th</sup> November we commemorate Bl. Maddalena Morano. Born in Chieri (Turin) on November 15, 1847, Maddalena lost her father Francis when she was eight and she began to help her mother with her work. Thanks to her uncle, a priest, she was able to resume her studies. Her teacher appointed her to help the little ones. When she was 19, she began teaching at Montaldo Torinese. She did this with diligence and competence for fourteen years, earning the respect and esteem of the entire neighbourhood.

She was already an experienced qualified teacher and catechist when she followed Don Bosco's advice and set about fulfilling the dream of consecrating her life to God. As an FMA, she dedicated herself to a fruitful educative mission among the girls and young women of the working classes in Sicily. Trusting in God's abounding grace and the intercession of St. Joseph and Mary Help of Christians, she opened schools, oratories, hostels and sewing schools all over the island. Numerous vocations came, attracted by her zeal and the community spirit she created around her. Her manifold apostolate was appreciated and encouraged by the Bishops, who entrusted the work of catechesis to her evangelical creativity. Suffering from a tumor, Sr. Morano died at Catania on March 26, 1908. She was proclaimed Blessed by Pope John Paul II in 5<sup>th</sup> November 1994.

### *Closing of the Door of Mercy*

On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, the Solemnity of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Door of Mercy opened to humanity and particularly the Universal Church an opportunity to celebrate, touch and allow ourselves be touched by God's Mercy. It is almost a year since the Door of Mercy was opened to us and this is an opportune time to take stock of what change has this Jubilee Year of Mercy brought into our personal and Community life. We recall the words of Christ "*Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall be shown Mercy*".

On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, the Feast of Christ the King, the Jubilee Year of Mercy will conclude and our eyes will be fixed on the closed Holy Door. To look at the door, then, would mean to look beyond it, to recognize that dimension of Gospel love, where Mercy and Justice meet. The Jubilee indeed is drawing to a close, but may the acts of Mercy continue to be reflected in the life of the Church and in the personal life of each of us.

*Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary:* On 21<sup>st</sup> November we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, by her parents Joachim and Anne. This feast commemorates that dedication of herself, which Mary made to God from her childhood under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who filled her with grace at her Immaculate Conception. The tender soul of Mary was adorned with the most precious graces, as she was the one chosen and prepared to become the Mother of God's Son. Let our consecration of ourselves to God be made under her patronage, and assisted by her powerful intercession.

*Sr. Teresa Balestra Day:* The 22<sup>nd</sup> of November is the day on which we recall with joy the arrival of the first FMA pioneers on Indian Soil, under the leadership of Sr. Teresa Balestra. The FMA Mission Ad/Inter Gentes Sector of our 6 Indian Provinces invite us to celebrate this memorable days as Sr. Teresa Balestra Day. This commemoration will draw deeper meaning for FMA-India if we in our turn are capable of keeping alive the flame of the missionary zeal that our pioneers brought to our land. Our Mother General in her circular n. 964 invites us to become zealous missionary communities, proclaiming through our lives the wondrous news, that God is a merciful Father who manifests his true face in His incarnate Son. We must find ways and means to 'go out' as missionary disciples, placing our talents, creativity, wisdom, and experience at the Service of the Church and Institute to bring the message of God's tenderness and compassion to the human family.

*The Season of Advent:* The month of November ushers in the Season of Advent. It is a time that marks a spiritual journey that we undertake, in preparation for the feast of the Nativity of our Lord. Let us live this period "*tempo forte*" of the liturgical calendar in a spirit of joy, peace, hope and love. May this Advent, be a time of fruitful reflection on the Merciful and abounding love of the Father and an opportunity to radiate God's mercy through our deeds, by reaching out to the needy families in our locality. Let us also pray for our country which faces a war-like situation lurking at the borders and threatening the peaceful co-existence of Nations. May Christ the Prince of peace restore peace to our land and its people. **I wish you all a Holy Season of Advent!**

### *Communications:*

- ❖ Sr. Caroline Menezes will participate in a Bible Course from 6<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in New-Delhi.

- ❖ Sr. Reshma Rosario and Sr. Sunita Shah will be participating in the Inter-provincial Second Novitiate to be held at Yercaud from 15<sup>th</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016. We wish them and the junior professed sisters of the other Provinces participating in this formative program a fruitful and enriching formative experience.
- ❖ The 13th Annual NDF (National Development Forum) Meet will be organized at Shillong by Sr. Isabella Alphonse from 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The participants from our province are Sr. Magdeline Sequeira, Sr. Rita Lobo, Sr. Moksha Anthonappa and Sr. Roseline Pereira. We wish them an enriching experience.

### *Sincere appreciation and thanks to:*

- ❖ Sr. Isabella Alphonse, the National Coordinator for NDF, who visited our Centres supported through the NDF projects for an evaluation from 23 – 25 October 2016.
- ❖ Sr. Moksha Antonapa and her team of Sisters, Animators and Volunteers for organizing the Diwali Dhamaka at Auxilium – Wadala Campus on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and to Sr. Meenakshi D'Silva, Sr. Hilda Braganza and their communities for providing accommodation and other services for the fruitful outcome of this Annual Mega Event.
- ❖ Sr. Mercy Tennattil (Sisters the Mercy of the Holy Cross) for her efficient and effective animation on *Emotional Maturity and Inter-relationship* for the retreatants of the I Batch at Dahanu from 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016.
- ❖ Sr. Rita Fernandes and the communities of the Karnataka for organizing the vocation camp from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 at Kasarkod and to the Junior Sisters who collaborated and helped in the organization of the camp.
- ❖ The SDO together with Sr. Hilda Braganza and team for organizing the training program for Social workers and sisters in charge of Non-Formal Education in the Maharashtra region, from 8<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at MYC - Wadala.
- ❖ Sr. Hilda Mascarenhas and Sr. Sunanda Solanki and Community for hosting the Youth Fest organized by the Communities of the Karnataka and Gujarat Regions.
- ❖ Sr. Joanita Antao and Community for hosting the Workshop on CPP from 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016.
- ❖ Sr. Hilda Braganza and community for all the arrangements made for the month's mind Mass for Sr. Philomena D'Souza on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

*Annual Retreat:* As you are all aware, the Annual Retreat Batch II has commenced. I invite you to continue to keep the Retreat preacher Fr. Vincent Antony CSSR and the sisters making their retreat in your prayers. I also wish the sisters who will be making their retreat the coming days, a fruitful encounter with the Lord.

### *Prayers requested for:*

- ❖ Sr. Gladys D'Souza who has become very feeble and is ailing
- ❖ Sr. Teresa Plathara who has fractured her ankle and just undergone surgery.
- ❖ Sr. Latha Arogyaswamy who is recouping after a knee surgery.
- ❖ The mother and other family members of Sr. Irene Pinto who met with an accident and are recouping.
- ❖ The brother of Sr. Maria Achandil who is sick.
- ❖ Sr. Precilla D'Souza who is recouping after she underwent a surgery at Holy Family Hospital
- ❖ The parents and relatives of our sisters, who are in need of our prayers.

### *Heartfelt Condolences to:*

- ❖ Sr. Elveera D'Souza at the demise of her beloved father at Chikka Mangaluru.
- ❖ Sr. Joanita Antao at the passing away of her brother Roque Augustino Antao.
- ❖ Sr. Macline D'Souza at the passing away of her grandmother.
- ❖ Srs. Marietta and Teresa Vettickal at the loss of their niece Lilly Joseph.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 we celebrate the **140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first FMA missionary expedition** to America, which left on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1877, guided by Sr. Angela Vallese. Our Mother General, Yvonne Reungoat in her circular n. 964 invites us to make memory of this significant event by reviving in our Communities and Provinces the strong missionary impulse that characterized the Institute from the beginning. As we rejoice and thank God for the missionary ardor of our first sisters, who carried the seeds of the Gospel and the Salesian Charism to the far ends of America, let us strengthen in our hearts the commitment to become Missionaries of Mercy. To help us celebrate this event, the Mission Sector of the Institute will offer us some animation material, which could be used on the 14<sup>th</sup> of every month.

We are all missionaries, by our very Consecration, let us live this missionary call consciously and concretely, responding to the many invitations extended and helps offered by the Church and by our Institute. The Constant clarion call to live Mercy, give Mercy, touch Mercy and allow ourselves be touched by Mercy, continues to echo in our hearts and minds. Let the year of Mercy live on in our hearts and flow out into our everyday living. I recommend that we all read, meditate well and share as a Community the inspiring and enriching circulars of our Mother General (Cir. nos. 963 and 964) in which she spells out beautifully how mandate of Mercy can be lived by each of us in the Salesian Style.

Affectionately,



Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas  
Provincial

## Provincial's Itinerary

### November 2016

01-13	Dahanu- Annual Retreat Batch I & II
15 - 16	Pansora - <b>Provincial Council Meet</b>
17-25	Dahanu –Annual Retreat Batch III / Animation
26-27	Madanthyar <b>PV</b>
28-29 am	Shirva <b>PV</b>
29 afternoon	Departure for Kalathur
29-pm - 30	Kalathur <b>PV</b>

### DECEMBER 2016

1-2	Kasarkod <b>PV</b>
03	Departure for Mumbai
4-5	Provincial house
6-12	Lonavla - Annual Retreat Batch IV
13	Lonavla - <b>Provincial Council meet</b>
14-15	Provincial house
16-18 am	Ahmednagar <b>PV</b>
18pm-19	Bableshtar <b>PV</b>
21-22	SHTC – Nashik <b>PV</b>
24-28	Provincial house
29-30	Dahanu/ Sindoni <b>PV</b>
31	Provincial House (Feast of DB)