



Provincial Office, Auxilium, P.B. 19877, Bandra, Mumbai 400 050

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INB/VII/22/17

May 2017

Dear Sisters,

Greetings from Provincialate, Bandra!

*St. Maria Domenica Mazzarello:* Like Don Bosco, Maria Mazzarello lived and radiated an intense educational and apostolic charity, convinced that this was the basis of community life, the principle of educational work, the source of mercy, the condition for personal equilibrium and happiness, and the practice of specific virtues such as friendship, good manners, and self-sacrifice. This charity was characterized by the spiritual maternity she showed in the formation of the sisters, her numerous journeys and the offering of her life, realized in the practice of a charity that is patient, kind and universal. God also gave her the particular grace of the discernment of spirits to help her in her mission. When Don Bosco visited Mornese on 8th October 1864 she remarked "*Don Bosco is a saint! I can sense it!*" As Superior Mary showed herself to be an able teacher and guide in the spiritual life. She had the gift of serene and comforting cheerfulness, radiating joy that drew other young people to dedicate themselves to the education of girls. Memories that we hold dear are Mother Mazzarello's reference to herself as the Vicar (second in line) to Our Lady, and her habit of calling Mary Help of Christians the true superior of the Community.

*Feast of Mary Help of Christians:* The month of May reaches its high point on the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, which has great importance in the Salesian tradition. One of the greatest victories of all time took place at the naval battle of Lepanto, Greece. A mighty Turkish fleet threatened to invade and overrun all of Europe. The saintly Pope Pius V called for rosary crusades and Blessed Sacrament procession everywhere. The Christian forces aboard their tiny fleet publicly prayed the rosary and received the Sacraments before going into the battle against their enemies who outnumbered them with bigger and more powerful ships. At first, the Christian fleet fared badly, but suddenly, in the midst of the battle, the wind which had been against them changed in their favour. This threw the Turkish fleet into confusion, with one ship shooting another. As the battle raged into the late afternoon, a great storm arose, sinking many more of the Turkish ships. Finally, the few that remained fled and the Turkish power over the Mediterranean was broken. To

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Commemorate the victory of the Naval Battle of Lepanto, Pope Pius V ordered, the institution of the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary on October 7, 1571 and the addition of the invocation "AUXILIUM CRISTIANORUM, ORA PRO NOBIS" (Help of Christians, Pray for Us) in the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Litany of Loreto). The feast in honour of Mary Help of Christians was later introduced by Pope Pius VII who was imprisoned by Napoleon in 1808 and was held captive for nearly six years. Following his release he instituted May 24th as the feast day of Mary Help of Christians, in gratitude for her intercession on his behalf. Don Bosco throughout his life constantly recommended recourse to Our Lady Help of Christians to all who came to him with their troubles and concerns. He himself had great devotion to Our Lady and had the utmost confidence in her intercession.

*Ascension of our Lord:* On the 28<sup>th</sup> May the Church celebrates the feast of the Ascension of our Lord. In celebrating the Ascension of Our Lord, we are celebrating His departure from us, "Where I go, you cannot come," said Jesus (John: 8:21), and now, St. Paul seems to suggest, we are something like blind men, forced to "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Corinthians: 5-7). St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, speaks in terms of glory that leads to greater glories still, as Ascension leads to Pentecost. Today our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven; let our hearts ascend with him. Listen to the words of the Apostle: If you have risen with Christ, set your hearts on the things that are above where Christ is. The Ascension does not mark the end of Jesus' relationship with the Church but the beginning of a new way of His relating to, the Church, with us and with the world that He came to save.

*Fr. Joseph Kowalski:* On May 29 we celebrate the feast of Bl. Joseph Kowalski, a Salesian Martyr of Poland. He was ordained a Salesian in 1938 at Krakow. His apostolate at the Salesian parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Dębniaki (Krakow) ended on 23 May 1941, when the Nazis arrested him along with eleven of his confreres. He became prisoner no. 17, 350 at Auschwitz. In the concentration camp in Auschwitz, he secretly heard confessions, celebrated Mass, said the Rosary, gave talks, strengthened his fellow prisoners. In 1942 he was sentenced to hard labour because he refused to trample upon a rosary. He was then tortured by guards of the Nazi death camp and drowned in the sewer. His countrymen began to venerate his memory. They were convinced that his sacrifice had attracted many vocations. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Warsaw on June 13, 1999. On the occasion of his beatification with 107 other Polish martyrs, Pope St. John Paul II, who had known Fr. Joseph personally, said: "If we rejoice today for the beatification of 108 martyrs, clergy and laity, we do so primarily because we have the testimony of the victory of Christ, the gift that gives hope".

*Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary:* On 31<sup>st</sup> May the Church celebrates the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth.

What graces the Blessed Mother brought to the home of her cousin! St. John the Baptist, while still hidden in his mother's womb, was cleansed of original sin. Zachary, Elizabeth's husband who had become mute for doubting the angel of God, was able to speak again. And Elizabeth was filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mary stayed three months at her cousin's home. With great kindness and love, she helped Elizabeth. It was a wonderful time for them both. Elizabeth's home was filled with grace through Mary's visit. We will receive many blessings too if we love and pray to our heavenly Mother, imitate her virtues and allow ourselves to be guided by her. Let us learn from her the profound meaning and necessity of silence and recollection in order to listen to the Word of God and his inspirations throughout the day. *"Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart"*.

### *Communications:*

- ❖ On 23rd May 2017, Four Postulants, VASAVA Khushbooben, PARMAR Prezy, MACWAN Jeniffer, PANDIT Rani will be initiated into the Novitiate during a Prayer Service when they will receive the Novice's medal. We wish our new Novices a rich spiritual and formative journey under the guidance of their Novice Formator Sr. Salome D'Souza.
- ❖ Sr. Magdeline Sequeira will be participating in the Asia Ongoing Missionary Formation Course, organised by the Mission Sector and the Salesian Province of Silchar, at Shillong from August 2017. The Course also includes a pilgrimage to the Holy Land from 21st – 30th August 2017. We wish her a fruitful and deeper experience of Salesian Missionary Spirituality.
- ❖ Sr. Hilda Mascarenhas will be participating in the YCS (Young Catholic Students) National Convention from 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at Don Bosco School, Park Circus, Kolkata.

### *Hearty Congratulations to:*

- ❖ Fr. Peter Gonsalves Sdb who has been appointed as a consultant for the Vatican's Secretariat for Social Communication by Pope Francis on 12 April 2017. Fr. Peter is currently the Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication Sciences (FSC) at Universita Pontificia Salesiana (UPS), Rome.
- ❖ Hearty Congratulations to our Silver Jubilarians: Sr. Maclined'Souza, Sr. Lavita Vaz, Sr. Sabina Almeida, Sr. Irene Pinto, Sr. Rita Fernandes, Sr. Antonette Monteiro (missionary). Thank you dear sisters for your loving fidelity to Christ and to the Institute. May Our Blessed Mother who guided and accompanied you in the past continue to sustain and guide you in the future.
- ❖ Warm Congratulations, prayers and good wishes to our 8 second year novices and 6 young Sisters on the happy occasion when they commit their young lives to God in the

Salesian way of life. May the Spirit strengthen their resolve to belong wholly and entirely to Christ at the service of the salvation of the young.

Dear Neo Professine (Novices to be professed) and Neo Perpetue, I would like to quote the exact words of our beloved Father and Founder, Don Bosco to the first batch of FMA on 5th August 1872. *“You now belong to a religious family that belongs to Our Lady completely. Be proud of your beautiful name of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians and often recall to mind that your Institute must be a living monument of Don Bosco’s gratitude to the great Mother of God, invoked under the beautiful title of the Help of Christians.”* Let us accompany our dear sisters with our prayerful support.

### *Sincere appreciation and thanks to:*

- ❖ Sr. Magdeline Sequeira and the team of Sisters and lay collaborators, and for organizing the Women festival in a big way and to the communities of MYC - Wadala and Auxilium - Wadala for hosting the event and offering their support and collaboration.
- ❖ The Community of MYC - Wadala for hosting the Annual Evaluation and Planning meet and to Fr. Joe Xavier SJ for guiding us in the process of drafting the prospective plan for the province.
- ❖ The various communities of our province for organizing Summer camps/Summer clubs and offering youngsters and children various skills and personality development programmes.
- ❖ Sr. Nilima Rodrigues and Team for organizing the Vocation Camp at Kune from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and to Sr. Teresa Dharmaraj and Community for hosting the same.

### *Prayers requested for:*

- ❖ Our sick Sisters and relatives.
- ❖ Our students Sisters answering various exams.
- ❖ Mr.Rajan, the nephew of Sr. Thelma Barrette, who is ill and in need of our prayers

### *Heartfelt sympathies to:*

- ❖ Sr. Thelma Barrette and Sr. Wilma De Souza at the passing away of Mr. Edward D’Souza their brother-in-law and uncle respectively in the United States of America.
- ❖ Sr. Marie D’Silva who lost her beloved brother Mr. Willibrod Jerome D’Silva on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- ❖ Fr. Jose Mathew Koorappallil and the Salesians of Delhi province at the demise of Bro. Jojo Andrew on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

- ❖ Fr. Raphael Jayapalan and the Salesians of the Chennai Province at the passing away of Bro. Julian Santi on 30 April 2017.
- ❖ Sr. Crescentia D'Almeida and the Sisters of INK province at the demise of Sr. Arogya Jyothi Gangarapu on 1 May 2017.

May the departed receive eternal Peace and their dear ones find comfort and strength.

On 13th May **the feast of Our Lady of Fatima**, we witnessed the joyful canonization of Francesco and Jacinto Marto, the two shepherd children, to whom our Lady appeared at Fatima exactly 100 years ago in 1917. Francisco, (11 years of age), and Jacinta (10 years of age), are the youngest non-martyrs to be beatified in the history of the Church.

During the first apparition, which took place on May 13, 1917, Our Lady asked the three children to say the Rosary and to make sacrifices, offering them for the conversion of sinners. The children did so, by praying often, giving their lunch to beggars and going without food themselves. In October 1918, Francisco and Jacinta became seriously ill with the Spanish flu. Our Lady appeared to them and said she would take them to heaven soon. Francisco died on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1919 and Jacinta died the following year on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1920. Pope John Paul II beatified Francisco and Jacinta on 13th May 2000 on the 83rd anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady at Fatima.

Let us join in celebrating and thanking Our Blessed Mother and take heed of the messages she had communicated to the three children. Our Lady asked for prayers (daily recitation of the Rosary), penance, sacrifice and reparation, as well as the consecration of Russia to Her Immaculate Heart. Our Popes – Pius XII, John Paul II and Benedict XVI have complied with the last request (Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary). Pope Francis consecrated the world to Our Lady of Fatima on October 13, 2013. But mankind has continued to sin and not done sufficient penance to appease the wrath of God. Consequently, the world is in danger of a just punishment from God for not heeding the message of His Son communicated by Our Lady of Fatima through the three shepherd children.

Affectionately,



Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas  
Provincial



## Itinerary of the Provincial

### May 2017

1-11	Personal Work
12-15	Provincial Office
16-24	SHTC- Nashik- Retreat - Batch IV & First Professions
21	Blessing of the New wing of the Hostel - Maria Vihar
25	Ahmednagar - Final Profession
26	Provincial Office
27	Madanthyar – Inauguration - New Wing of Hostel
29	Kasarkod - Final Profession
30-31	Provincial Office