



INB/ VII/26/17

September 2017

Greetings from the Provincialate!

Happy Birthday – Mamma Mary: 8th September

Our Lady's birthday brings us "the hope of the entire world and the dawn of Salvation". Let us celebrate with joy the birth of the Virgin Mary, of who was born the Sun of Justice...." "Her birth constitutes the hope and the light of Salvation for the whole world. The Feast of the Birth of Mary is an occasion for praise and thanksgiving in honour of the personal sanctity and vocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Mother of the Lord Jesus.

Mary is the symbol of hope and expectation of God's faithful people and at the same time she is the beginning of a new hope, the beginning of the dawn of that newness which her Son would bring for all creation. With Mary's birth, sorrow and darkness are extinguished. Each of us comes here with our hopes and aspirations, with our problems, concerns and anxieties which trouble our hearts. As we begin our pilgrimage, let us allow Mary to change our hearts, and ask Mary for the gift of that freedom & willingness to accept the word of the Angel in our daily life. Even today, if we have Mary, we have Jesus. Whoever is very devoted to her is very close to the heart of Jesus. We can make Mary's birthday special by whispering a Hail Mary often throughout the day.

Girl Child Day;

The Church in India dedicates the 8th of September to the Girl Child. Where would we be without Mother Mary! Where would we be if our mother was not allowed to be born? Every girl is a precious gift. She is born in the image and likeness of God, equal in dignity as much as a boy. However we live in a culture where sons are preferred over daughters. The elimination, discrimination and atrocities meted out to girl children must be condemned, as such crimes disfigure the image and likeness of God in human persons. Empowering girls can bring great changes in the world. Let us remember the millions of girls whose lives are stifled even before they see the light of the world.

As religious we are called to uphold the dignity of the Girl child. We are aware that girl children are less welcome in Indian society. Therefore it is a challenge for us, as we face the death-promoting forces that seek to eliminate human lives specially that of girl children.

Remembering St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata - 5th September

Mother Teresa once said, "A sacrifice to be real must cost, must hurt, must empty ourselves. The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, and the fruit of service is peace." She also said, "Give yourself fully to God. He will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much more in His love than in your own weakness."

She was a fierce defender of the unborn saying: "If you hear of some woman who does not want to keep her child and wants to have an abortion, try to persuade her to bring her/him to me. I will love that child, seeing in her/him the sign of God's love."

Teachers' Day. 5th September.

One of the most noble professions a person can commit herself to, is to be a Teacher. Jesus is the Teacher par excellence: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing all kinds of infirmities." His words accompanied his action. A Teachers' task is to guide children in discovering their true identity, to discover their God-given talents and help them use their abilities to excel in life and to share the same with others. Mahatma Gandhi says: *a Teacher should be an open book for a child to learn*. Hence it is important for a teacher to constantly be aware of the dignity of her profession.

When little Johnny Bosco was confused and expressed helplessness in the face of the challenging mission entrusted to him, through a dream, Jesus points to His own mother, and affirms Johnny saying: "I will give you a Teacher who would guide and instruct you to take care of the young".

We are aware that our very own, Maria Domenica Mazzarello, although did not receive a formal education, was an excellent educator of the heart. She taught much by the example of her own life. We are all involved in education in one way or the other. Let us renew our commitment to fulfil this noble task with dedication and love in the footsteps of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello. **THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR THE YOUNG. HAPPY FEAST!**

Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross – 14th September

There is no greater message today than the message of the Cross. St. Paul says that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but for us who are saved it is the power of God. As we celebrate the feast of exaltation of the Cross, let us recall that our own exaltation lies in that same Cross of Jesus Christ. Hence, we should be ready to carry

and defend our cross wherever we find ourselves because we shall be exalted by God's caring hands and loving heart.

The crucifixes we see hung up in the different places and the cross around our necks are important; they remind us that Jesus paid a price for us. St. Mary Mazzarello's often repeated sentence, pointing to the crucifix, was *'Jesus is on one side and I am on the other'*.

Today let us venerate this beautiful symbol of our salvation by saying the following prayer. *"We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."*

Our Lady of Sorrows - 15th September

On the 15th of September we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. The Blessed Virgin was chosen to be the Mother of God, right from the first moment of her conception. From the cross, Christ offers us the precious gift of his mother, saying, *"Behold, your mother."* Jesus leads us to Mary, for we need the maternal closeness of the Sorrowful Mother to sustain us when overcome by the terrifying trials of life. Through Mary's compassionate presence at the cross, the same event when it recurs in our life, she fills us with the courage to face life's sufferings. Mary loves us, and she gives us Jesus.

Mary's sufferings and sorrows are intimately united with the sufferings and sorrows of Jesus as we see in the Seven Sorrows of Mary. Her sufferings and sorrows make her united with us in our own sufferings and sorrows of life. Today let us remember to meditate on the seven sorrows of Our Lady and thank her for her great love and for the example of her life.

Blessed Joseph Calasanz and 31 Companions

Fr. Joseph Calasanz (1872-1936) was born in Azanuy. In 1886 in Sarrià he saw Don Bosco; by this time tired and suffering. He became a Salesian in 1890. He was secretary to Fr. Phillip Rinaldi. After returning to Spain he became Provincial of Terra Conense (Barcelona – Valencia). He was a man of great heart and a hard worker, interested in the salvation of his confreres. He was captured together with other Salesians while he was running from a Retreat in Valencia. He was killed with a single shot to the head.

Many members of Salesian Family were massacred; and thousands of priests, religious men and women and lay people were killed, simply because they were Christians. Amongst these were many members of the Salesian Family: 39 priests, 22 clerics, 24 Brothers, 2 Salesian Sisters, 4 Salesian Co-operators, 3 Salesian Aspirants and 1 lay Co-Worker; 95 in all. Through their intercession let us pray for an increase in faith and the courage to stand up for it in moment of persecution.

Beatification of Ven. Fr. Titus Zeman: 30th September

The Venerable Servant of God Titus Zeman, Salesian priest from Slovakia, martyred due to hatred of the faith. He was only 54 years of age. Venerable Fr. Titus will be beatified on 30

September 2017 in Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. Let us rejoice and thank God for this great gift of the beatification of the martyr Titus Zeman, and resolve to live with renewed fidelity the vocation received and to witness with courage even in times of trial and persecution.

Fr. Zeman was born in Vajnory, Slovakia, on January 4, 1915, the son of peasant farmers who were also the sacristans of their Parish Church. He suffered various illnesses from early childhood. After a sudden recovery at the age of 10, he promised Mary to “be her son forever” and to become a Salesian priest. He became a novice in 1931, made his perpetual profession in 1938, and was ordained in 1940. He remained steadfast against the Communist regime. In 1946 he was dismissed from the school where he taught, because he defended the crucifix. He managed to escape the “Night of the Barbarians” and the deportation of religious (April 13-14, 1950). He then looked for ways to help Salesian seminarians reach the priesthood. He organized expeditions to pass them through the Iron Curtain to Turin, but on his third venture (April 1951) he was caught.

Fr. Zeman had to face about 13 years of wrongful imprisonment and torture, experiencing hardship in prison and labor camps. He was forced to endure long periods of isolation and to work with radioactive uranium without any protection. He was branded as a “*man marked for elimination.*” In 1964 he was given five years on bail but was constantly spied on and persecuted. He was forbidden to exercise the priestly ministry publicly. He died in his home town on January 8, 1969, after a triple heart attack, a martyr for vocations. Already at the time of his death he was regarded as a martyr. In 1991, following the fall of the Communist government, a review of his case declared him innocent.

FMA-PCI 2017- *Sonaria*

The FMA-PCI 2017 held from 29th - 31st August was participated by 27 Sisters from the 7 FMA Provinces of India. It was a significant experience of togetherness, sharing and communion.

The meeting was presided over by Sr. Lucy Rose, Visiting Councillor. We thank her for her presence and animation. The first two days was set aside for the presentation of reports by the National Coordinators and to plan for the Triennial Verification at the PCI Level which will take place from 24-28 January 2018 at Kolkata. The group discussed and chalked out the programme for the three years of preparation for the Centenary celebration of FMA arrival in India in 2022. The last day was animated by Fr. Varghese Alengaden who enlightened the participants on topics which are vital in making religious life and our mission relevant in the fast changing socio-political scenario of India.

Triennial Evaluation & Annual Retreats

We are nearing the very important stage of our Post-Chapter journey, *The Mid-Term Evaluation* - which calls for much prayer and docility to the Holy Spirit. The Mid-Term Evaluation will be followed by the Annual Spiritual retreat. These moments are moments of

grace, and inner search that helps us confront ourselves in all sincerity and truth in the light of the Word of God and our post chapter journey. It is a gift offered to us by the congregation for our personal renewal and pastoral conversion to Christ, who constantly invites us to conform our ways of thinking and imbibe the interior attitudes of Christ.

	Date	Preacher	Venue
Triennial Evaluation	14 -16 October 2017	-	Dahanu
Retreat Batch I	18 - 24 October 2017	Fr. Isaac Arackaparambil Sdb.	Dahanu
Batch II	26 Oct. – 1 Nov. 2017	Fr. Isaac Arackaparambil Sdb.	Dahanu
Batch III	3 – 9 November 2017	Fr. Isaac Arackaparambil Sdb.	Dahanu
Batch IV (Animators)	30 Nov – 6 Dec 2017	Fr. Biji Thomas Sdb.	Lonavla

As the days are fast approaching let us intensify our prayers for the fruitfulness and success of these important spiritual events.

Communications:

- ❖ Sr. Teresa Joseph will attend the Seminar on interreligious dialogue to be held in Bangkok from 16 - 20 Oct 2017.

Forth coming Events:

- ❖ The Media and Social Communication Sector will be organizing the **MEDIA FESTIVAL 2017** on 16 September at MYC Wadala, on the theme “Youth and Family”.
- ❖ The Media & Social Communication Local Coordinators meet will take place on 22-23 September 2017 on the theme “*Promoting Pluralism through Media*” at MYC Wadala.

Sincere appreciation and Thanks to:

- ❖ To the communities of SJTC and Auxilium - Lonavla for hosting the FMA-PCI meet and seeing to the inaugural function and the Individual Sisters who helped out in various ways during the PCI meet.
- ❖ Sr. Catherine Pereira for organizing the SALFAM Local Coordinators meet on 13th August 2017 and to Sr. Leema Rose and Community of Pali for hosting the meet.

- ❖ Sr. Santana Pereira and the Catechetical-Evangelization Team for the special animation for the local coordinators of Maharashtra and Gujarat Region on 25-26 August 2017 at AYC Dahanu and for Goa- Karnataka Region on 28-29 August 2017 at Kasarkod.
- ❖ Sr. Rita Fernandes and team for organizing the Vocation Promoters meet on 28th August 2017 and the community of Kasarkod for hosting the same.
- ❖ Sr. Meenakshi D'Silva for organizing the YPP meet on 5 - 6 August and Sr. Mariet Luckose and the Community of Dahanu for hosting the meet.

Prayer requested for:

- ❖ Sr. Ruth Misquitta, Sr. Beatrice Monteiro and Sr. Rita Fragose, who are recouping from their surgeries.
- ❖ The mother of Sr. Devdit Fernandes who is still hospitalised with multiple clots in her brain
- ❖ The sick father of Sr. Shaila Jadhav whose health condition is unstable.
- ❖ The young nephew of Sr. Mangala Kolge who is suffering from an acute bone disease.
- ❖ Larissa D'Mello, the niece of Sr. Marget Misquitta, who is suffering from cancer.
- ❖ Mr. Benedict Fernandes, the brother-in-law of Sr. Sylvia Fernandes who suffered a paralytic stroke.

Heartfelt condolences to:

- ❖ Sr. Sylvia Fernandes at the demise of her elder sister Donaclera on 14th August 2017.
- ❖ Sr. Aruna Castellino at the loss of her brother Anand Castellino on 18th August 2017.
- ❖ Sr. Precilla D'Souza at the passing away of her maternal grandmother Mary D'Souza aged 100 on 18th August 2017.
- ❖ Sr. Smitha Monis at the demise of her maternal uncle on 23rd August 2017.
- ❖ To Rector Major and the Salesians at the sudden demise of Don Adriano Bregolin, the former Vicar General of the Salesians.
- ❖ Sr. Phyllis Fernandes at the passing away of her sister Mildred Norohna on 29th August 2017.
- ❖ Sr. Alka Almeida at the loss of her nephew Vinci Almeida on 31st August 2017.

May our dear departed loved ones live forever in the peace and joy of the Risen Lord and may those who mourn their loss find strength, comfort and hope in the prayer and solidarity of relatives and friends.

The Provincial Visitation to the communities will commence soon. I request the Communities to keep ready all the necessary documents and prepare themselves spiritually for this important encounter.

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Ritha Dora Thomas fma
Provincial

PROVINCIAL'S ITINERARY

SEPTEMBER2017

1 - 4	Provincial Office
5 - 6 am	Keshnand PV
6pm - 7	Mundwa PV
8 - 9 am	Koregaon Park PV
10 - 13	Provincial Office
12	CRI executive committee meet
13-14	Ahmednagar- team visit
15-16	Lonavla- team visit
17	Auxilium Lonavla- Provincial Council Meet
18	Kune PV
19-20	Provincial Office
21-22 am	Dahanu, PV
25	Departure for Guwahati
26- 30	YPP coordinators meet, Guwahati

