



**Cir. No. 42**

**DECEMBER 2020**

Dearest Sisters,

We have entered into the season of Advent – the New Liturgical year with lots of expectations and hopes for tomorrow. It’s a time spent in eager waiting for the Lord to enter into our hearts, homes, communities and the world.

### **THE SPIRITUALITY OF ADVENT**

Advent is the great liturgical season of waiting. The waiting that comes with Advent is fun because it’s finite. We know what’s coming at the end of our wait will be good, and we know exactly how many days we have left to wait for it. But much of the waiting that occupies us is open-ended. During this pandemic, ailing people wait for healing, children wait for an educational opportunity, students wait for the reopening of the school, poor people wait for economic support from all sides, young people wait for employment without knowing if it will come, the guilty wait for forgiveness and the voiceless wait for justice.

In the perspective of the theme of waiting, Bishop Robert Barron brings to light the spirituality of Advent alluding to the German Film **Run Lola Run** by Tom Tykwer. It is a tale of a young man, Manni who one day was doing a job for a crime boss. His job was just to deliver a bag of money to him with 1,00,000 DM (Deutsche Mark). Unfortunately, Manni leaves the bag on a train, which is picked up by a homeless man. This leaves Manni in quite a predicament. He is supposed to deliver the money to a gangster by noon, if he fails, then he is likely to be killed. Lola has twenty – minutes to save her boyfriend. Twenty short minutes to somehow find the money and get it to him. Lola is running and running trying to accomplish this goal. She slows to a trot then she looks up and she says, “I’m waiting, I’m waiting.” There is no indication in the movie that she’s the least bit religious. God is never mentioned once but there’s no question that at that moment it’s something like a prayer and then of course, oddly the whole plot resolves itself and she accomplished what she wants. It is as though the prayer was answered. Lola is an interesting Advent figure as she reflects the story of each one of us who run and run to achieve something in our lives and at the end, gape at the sky and say resolutely “I’m waiting.”

In the Bible, God promises to Abraham: “You’ll be the father of many nations” even though he and his wife were very old. For years nothing happened in the life of Abraham and Sarah after God made His promise. Both of them grew older. Probably people around him would have discouraged them to disbelieve the Promise of God. But Abraham **waits with trust** for the Lord to have His way.

In our lives too, we need to put ourselves on God’s timetable and not our own. Very often in our spiritual life, we do not allow God to accomplish what He wants to do in our lives. God

has promised something to us but we're not ready for it yet as we have to go through a kind of long period of training and discipline to acquire a skill.

While speaking about prayer, Saint Augustine says that God sometimes delays in answering prayer, because in the process of waiting, He wants the heart to expand in prayer, to receive the greater good what He wants to give. So we ask for something and we expect it but the heart is not prepared yet. The heart isn't big enough to receive what God wants to give and so God makes us wait. As we wait, the heart gets bigger, more receptive so that when God is ready on his timetable to give us what He wants, then we're finally ready to receive the greater good what God wants to share with us.

Advent is a significant time to wait for the Lord to act. It is a time to enter into the framework of God. It is time to submit ourselves to the timetable of the divine. Advent is a lovely time to enter into space, God has prepared for us. In our life, there are many moments where we wait, wait in a doctor's office, wait in a shop, wait in a bus stand, railway station. We hate waiting. But do we realize that it is a God-given space to enter into the sanctuary of our soul to speak with our Lord and listen to Him? Do we realize that it is a God-given time to intermeditate His grace and blessings for humankind through prayer? This can be one way of waiting for the Lord and spiritually to welcome Him with a prepared heart to receive Him. It is also an opportunity to receive Jesus who comes to encounter us through the Eucharist, at Christmas and His Second coming.

May our Blessed Mother Mary bring Jesus to the World as a Savior and Healer. May the year 2021 dawn with new dreams and new hope.

**FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND BIRTHDAY OF THE ORATORY:** "Everything began with a Hail Mary. From when Don Bosco met Bartholomew Garelli on December 8, 1841, the Feast of the Immaculate became the Birthday of the Oratory for the entire Salesian World. Tuesday, December 8 at noon, the Salesian houses all over the world will join together in a circle and will pray to the Madonna to recall the fruitful 'seed' of Don Bosco's Work on that distant day of 1841. The Immaculate dominates the oratory experience. Some providential coincidences led Don Bosco to attribute to Her a special intercession at the beginning of his work. "All of our great initiatives began on the day of the Immaculate," he would state (BM XVII). The paradigm was oratory. Don Bosco made the Immaculate a lively presence among the boys of Turin, and Mary Mazzarello did this among the girls of Mornese. Mary is felt by the educators and the young as a living, motherly, and powerful presence who gives them security and hope. Mary Immaculate, as the ideal of purity, exerts an attraction among the young. She helps them to grow as human beings and in the faith, to be strong and not give in to the temptation of being superficial Christian men and women, but to live responsibly and to always seek more and more what is above. May Mary our Immaculate Mother accompany us on our journey and may our Founders keep alive in us the enthusiasm of the "da mihi animas cetera tolle". Let's continue to pray together and present to Our Lady the sufferings and hopes of the entire humanity.

#### **WITHIN THE FAMILY:**

**STUDY OF THE DOCUMENTS IN PREPARATION FOR GC:** Our hearts overflow with gratitude for the lovely presentation of Holy Father's Catechesis "To Heal The World" by Sr. Arockiam Gracy Rani from 16 to 18 November and the Application of Fratelli Tutti by Fr. Godwin Rufus, the Principal of Arul Anandar College – Karumathur from 24 – 25 November 2020 for the entire Province virtually.

**A REVIEW OF MIRACLE FOUNDATION MEET:** Miracle Foundation India in partnership with Salesian Sisters of India conducted **Centre for Excellence Program** and a review from November 2019 to November 2020, through a Zoom Meet on 19 November 2020 from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. The opening session was animated by Ms. Nivedita Das Gupta India Country Head, Miracle Foundation India followed by the presentation of the updates on Mirale programme, Updates on Centre for Excellence Salesian Program, Province Level updates, presentation of Survey Analysis Report and Way Forward Plan and concluded with a discussion. Sr. Azarias Arokia Mary Selvi and Sr. Soosaimuthu Arul Mary from our Province participated in the meeting.

**CELEBRATE THE MEMORIES OF OUR PIONEERS:** To mark the arrival of the first missionaries to India, twin initiatives were taken to reawaken the missionary zeal among the sisters. An Inter – Province Prayer Moment was animated on 21 November 2020 lead by Sr. D’Cunha Celine of Shillong Province on the theme: Accept the Mandate: “I entrust them to you.” reviving the Family Spirit and strengthening Community Communion. The prayer moment concluded wherein all the participants with lighted candles committed themselves to pass on the light to the next generations.

On Sunday, 22 November 2020 at 6 p.m. there was a Zoom Meet to celebrate the Memories of our Pioneers with many Sisters, Teachers, Past Pupils, Family members and friends. This was organized by Sr. Hilda Braganza of the Bombay Province and the FMA India Media Team in collaboration with the 7 FMA Provinces. Sr. George Elizabeth the Provincial of Shillong in her inaugural message spoke of: “I entrust them to you” and “Do whatever He tells you.” Our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Elizabeth who exhorted the Sisters to treasure the wine of family spirit, generosity, forgiveness and compassion in the community.

It was a pleasant surprise to have our beloved Mother General, Mother Yvonne Reungoat for Celebrating Memories of our Pioneers. Still, her voice reechoes in our communities inviting us to renew our commitment of love and fidelity to the Institute and its mission, in setting our priority to work for Vocations and accompanying them and nurturing tender care for the formation assuring quality for the future of the Salesian charism. May her words to listen to the call of the Lord to be missionaries ad gentes, bringing the light of the Salesian Educative Mission in India and all over the world resonate in our hearts.

Our appreciation to all the Temporary Professed and sisters who helped them for a creative presentation of the lives of our Pioneers - Sr. Teresa Balestra (INM), Sr. Maria Angeleri (ING), Sr. Caterina Marnetto (INT), Sr. Luigina Appiano (INB), Sr. Consiglia Tarricone (INK) and Sr. Teresa Merlo (INS). We appreciate Sr. Braganza Hilda and the Media Team who coordinated the programme and simultaneously live-streamed the lives of our Pioneers through the Youtube. As we raise our hearts to God in thanksgiving for our zealous missionaries, let us resolve to take forward their legacy and make known the charism of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello to all people.

**ISS FMA ASIA-INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR:** Hundred and twenty-one lecturers from nine FMA Higher Educational Institutes from India, Philipines and Japan participated in the International Conference on *Salesian Educative Presence for faculty* on 28 November 2020. From our Province, Sr. Peter Selvarani, Sr. Masilamani Sebasti Jeya Pushpam and Sr. Ayundukayam Arockia Malarjothi participated in the meeting. Our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Regina Rathinasamy, the Organizer of this International Conference and, the Coordinator and Reference Person for ISS FMA Asia, Sr. Molly Kaniyampadickal belonging to the

Province of Guwahati, the National Youth Pastoral Coordinator in the PCI, Sr. Goulart Lopes Ivone FMA, Coordinator for Higher Education Institutions in the Institute, Rev. Sr. Runita Galve Borja FMA - General Councillor for Youth Ministry, Rome who presented the Statistics of ISS FMA Asia and the significance of the Conference; Don Bosco's contribution for the holistic education of the young; The Feminine Perspective of the Salesian Educative Presence; Ecological perspective of the Salesian Educative Presence respectively. It was a joy to share with the faculty our perspectives on Education as a twin pilgrimage in quest of happiness. May the Lord enable the participants to network and share their resources which is the aim of the meeting.

**SALESIAN COOPERATORS DAY:** Thanks to the effort of Sr. Anthonyswamy Rosy and Fr. Joseph Charles SDB who in collaboration with Fr. Jeyan Joseph SDB Director of Christodayam who spurred the Salesian Cooperators Units of FMA and SDB to celebrate the Salesian Cooperators Day in memory of Venerable Mamma Margaret with a well-prepared liturgy in their locality with the members of the unit. The celebration aimed to attract more young people to cherish their vocation as Salesian Cooperators. May the Lord bless us with more lay collaborators to spread our charism.

**PCI GC XXIV PREPARATORY MEETING:** The Provincials, Delegates and the Substitutes for the General Chapter XXIV had a virtual meeting on 30 November 2020 on PCI mode of study, response to GCXXIV question and consolidation of responses and preparation for the liturgy and Hymns. A team was formed to consolidate and translate the responses. All the four responses will be sent to the Province by 30 December 2020. The seven Provinces will send their consolidated responses to the PCI President and the Secretary by 20 January 2021.

**ANNUAL RETREAT:** "The more in harmony you are with the flow of your own existence, the more magical life becomes", says Adyashanti. The Annual Retreat is a rare opportunity to get in touch with the Lord and get energized with His revitalizing energy to become passionate disciples of Jesus. The First Annual Retreat for the year 2020 – 2021 will be animated by Rev. Fr. Alphonse Philip SDB from INM Province from 26 December to 3 January 2021. We pray that all those who participate in the Retreat may be assisted to make a journey inward, experience inner Stillness and Solitude leading to Surrender to Jesus to have his own way in our lives to become radiators of God's love to the young people.

**INTERACTIVE ONLINE MEETINGS:  
MEETINGS - DECEMBER 2020**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
08	Celebrating Memories of our Pioneers – Webinar
23	PCI Provincials and Centenary Committee Meet 11.00 a.m.– 12.00 p.m

## **LET'S CELEBRATE – DECEMBER 2020**

03	St. Francis Xavier
05	Bl. Philip Rinaldi
08	Immaculate Conception
10	Our Lady of Loreto Human Rights Day
12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
17 – 24	Novena for Christmas
25	Christmas
26	St. Stephen proto Martyr
27	Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
28	Holy Innocents
31	A day of thanksgiving

## **OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS**

† To Sr. George Elizabeth and the Sisters of INS at the demise of Sr.Percynia Synnah (72) who died on 20 November 2020.

† To Fr. Joseph Pauria Provincial of INC and Confreres at the passing away of Fr. Sebastian Alancheril (90) on 25 November and Fr. Varghese Kalluvachel (66) on 26 November 2020.

† To Sr. Arokiasamy Pragasi and family who suffer the loss of their beloved brother-in-law Mr. Joseph Gandhi (53) on 27 November 2020.

Let us also gratefully remember to pray for our dear Sr. Asirvatham Amalorpavam whose first death anniversary falls on 19 December 2020.

I take this opportunity to greet all of you a very Happy Feast of Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Mother and joyous Christmas. Let us celebrate this Christmas meaningfully, in solidarity with the people around conscious of our call to share the immense love of Jesus. As we are at the verge of saying goodbye to the year 2020, we are overwhelmed by the generosity of the Lord and our Blessed Mother in being with us and accompanying us in our everyday journey. None of what we accomplished during this challenging year could have been realized without your prayers and support. Let us be united as a family on the 31 December in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord and thank Him for his marvellous presence in our lives, in our families, country, Church and the world. Let us seek his blessings as we begin the new year 2021 with joy and courage.

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Amalanathan Mary Margaret  
Provincial.

**PROVINCIAL ITINERARY  
DECEMBER 2020**

- 01 Journey to Chennai
- 02 Official work TVT & Cluster Community Meet in Chennai
- 03 Journey
- 05 ASSIST – Celebration of World Soil Day
- 06 Monthly Recollection
- 08-10 Thanjavur - PV
- 11-12 Provincial Council - Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirapalli
- 14 – 15 Puliadithammam - PV
- 17 – 18 Vadakku Paganoor - PV
- 19 Madurai – Sringerinagar
- First Death Anniversary of Sr. Asirvatham Amalorpavam
- 23 PCI - Meeting with the Provincials 10.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.  
Provincials and Centenary Committee Meet  
11.00 a.m.– 12.00 p.m
- 26- 3 Jan Annual Retreat for Sisters – Tiruchirapalli



*Behold the divine gift  
Laid in human hands*