

Cir. No. 44

FEBRUARY 2021

Dearest Sisters,

We are at the threshold of entering into the season of Lent. It is one of the most beautiful and significant time in the Liturgical Calendar where we contemplate and taste the immense love of the Father in offering His Son for the salvation of the human race. Often, we associate Lent as giving something up for forty days. But it is not just giving up something but it is turning away from sin and being faithful to the Gospel. It doesn't happen instantly. It's a journey, a journey into the desert which is a place of life, a place in which to dialogue in silence with the Lord who gives us life takes place. This journey continues till our last encounter with the Lord.

LENT - A PURPOSE FILLED JOURNEY

The forty days of Lent echoes the forty days that Jesus spent in the desert, fasting and preparing for his public ministry (Luke 4:1-12). Similarly, Lent is meant to be a time of preparation for us, where we grow in our relationship with God. There are three areas in particular that the Church teaches that we should try to grow in these forty days: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

PRAYER: It's no accident that prayer is first on that list. We often get pre-occupied with the "fasting" part of Lent, which focuses on giving something up, but Lent is first and foremost about our relationship with God. In the book of Hosea, God tells His people "I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." Above all else, God desires that we love him and know him. Prayer charges our whole being with His presence. Lent is a time to recommit ourselves to be faithful to our personal and community prayer. Once, when Mother Teresa was asked how she prayed to God, she said: "I look at Him and He looks at me." Every morning when we force ourselves out of bed, to spend at least fifteen minutes in personal prayer as a prelude to community prayer, it has a great impact on us during the day.

FASTING: Fasting has always been recognized as a powerful tool for building self-discipline and helping us to resist temptation. It must pave way for us to grow in our faith and our relationship with God. When Jesus is fasting in the desert, he is tempted several times by the Devil. In the last of these temptations, the Devil leads Jesus up a mountain and shows him all the kingdoms of the world (Matthew 4:8-10). "All these I will give you", the devil says, "if you fall down and worship me." Yet Jesus responds "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him'." Fasting is being capable of giving up the superfluous and going to the essential. Fasting is not only losing weight, it is seeking the beauty of a simpler life. Is there anything in our life that is stopping us from worshipping God and serving only Him?

Do we struggle with greed – always feeling like we have to own the best of things, the latest commodities or newest piece of technology?

Pope Francis in one of his messages states: “Soon we will begin Lent. It would be so beautiful if each of us during this Lent, reflect on this: How do I behave with people? How is my heart in front of people? Am I a hypocrite? Do I smile and then I criticize and destroy them with my tongue? If we, at the end of Lent, have corrected this a little and are not always criticizing others from behind I assure you that the Resurrection of Jesus will be seen more beautiful and greater among us. “Eh, Father, it is very difficult, because I always criticize others.” Some of us say that because it is a habit that the devil puts in us. It is true, it’s not easy. But two medicines help a lot. First of all, prayer. If you come to criticize another, pray for him, pray for her. And ask the Lord to solve that problem, and to close your mouth. First remedy: prayer. Without prayer, we cannot do anything. Secondly, there is another medicine, which is also practical like a prayer. When you feel the desire to talk about someone, you bite your tongue. Strong. Because this will swell your tongue and you will not be able to speak. It’s a practical medicine, it’s very practical.”

ALMSGIVING: Last of the three is giving to others, or “almsgiving.” Yet Jesus makes it clear that almsgiving is a core part of what makes us His followers. We give alms because we are connected. We are part of a mystical body. We are not alone in this world. We give alms because we’re acknowledging this fact very concretely. The things that I own they’re not just mine. They ought to be shared with those who do not have. When Jesus speaks to his disciples about feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked and visiting the lonely, he leaves them with the words “just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). If we want to approach almsgiving with purpose this year, we can be thoughtful about what we give. It might be donating to someone or institute that is doing great work, volunteering at a local outreach centre, or visiting the elderly at a rest home, or supporting children to continue their education, or coaching a slow learner... etc. Whatever it is, let us make a commitment, and stick to it.

PURPOSE: One final thing about prayer, fasting, and almsgiving - they aren’t exclusive to Lent! The purpose of the commitments we makeover these forty days is not to drop them the moment Lent is over. They are meant to be a solid foundation for living out our faith every day! Lent is an incredible opportunity to start or re-start practices that take us deeper in our relationships with God and with the people around us. Let us not miss that opportunity. Let us live our Lent with a purpose.

WITHIN THE FAMILY:

SERVANT OF GOD ANTONIETA BÖHM: We are happy to receive a video from Italy on the 95th anniversary of the entry into the Institute of Sr Antonieta BÖHM. In this era where there is the fire within to nurture Missionary vocation, she emphasises: “I tell you that I was born with the Salesian missionary vocation.” Antonieta Böhm was born on September 23, 1907, in the city of Bottrop, Germany. At Essen, she met the FMA who had arrived in Germany in 1922. She was fascinated by their serene and apostolic style of life. In 1926, she began her Postulancy in the house of Eschelbach and continued with her Novitiate in Nizza Monferrato, Asti, Italy. She made her first profession in 1928 and remained in Italy to study music while she was also the assistant of the university students and the Novices. After making her perpetual profession in Turin on August 5, 1934, she began her

missionary life: first in Argentina from 1934 to 1965; then in Peru from 1965 to 1969; and finally, in Mexico from 1969 to 2008. She was a music teacher, nurse, vicar, superior and provincial. She always showed herself to be a strong woman, ready to listen, and always confident of the help of God and Mary Help of Christians. She consolidated the existing works and opened new ones with farsighted vision. The last years of her life, from 1979 on, were lived in the Villa Spem Community in Coacalco as Vicar and Animator. These were fruitful years for her apostolates as a spiritual guide and her efforts in social work in favour of the poor.

In 1985, she began the “Obra sabatina,” which consisted of the distribution of food to the neediest. She followed the whole organizational team until the year 2000. At that point, she serenely accepted her diminishing strength and knew how to let herself be cared for, edifying the novices and all those who frequented the house. She died on April 27, 2008. The testament she leaves us is ardent love for Jesus, unlimited trust in Mary Help of Christians, welcoming goodness, and generous, serene availability for the mission to extend the Kingdom of God in the various cultures, in the families, and the heart of the people. She lived to 100 years of age, 80 years of religious profession, 74 years of missionary life in America, and seven years of formation in Italy.

NULLA OSTA: On 13 January 2021, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints communicated the Nulla Osta from the Holy See for the opening of the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God, **Mother Rosetta Marchese** (1922-1984). Mother Rosetta Marchese was born in Aosta on October 20, 1922. She made her first profession in the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Turin on August 5, 1941. In 1975, during the XVI General Chapter, she was elected Visiting Councilor and in the following General Chapter of 1981, she was elected Superior General. On 8 March 1984, after a long illness offered like Mother Mazzarello for the holiness of the Institute, Mother Rosetta concluded her earthly life. In July 2019, her *Cause of Beatification* opened. Her profound interiority and her educational passion in the footsteps of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello are generative sources of life and hope for the FMA Institute, for the whole Salesian Family, and the Church. Let us invoke her assistance for the sanctity in the Institute and for those who are in most need of her help.

MISSION SECTOR: In 2021, the Missions Sector is inaugurating a new section in the blog "Go" <https://andatefma.blogspot.com/p/link.html>. It is a space that will give voice to the FMA missionaries *ad gentes* who, by giving their life, have worked the miracle of "good wine" for the lives of many young people, children, and families. The aim of it is to gather the testimony of the Sisters of yesterday and today, seeking to recover the memory of the experiences lived and learnt.

NEW PROVINCIALS: We express our sincere gratitude to God and appreciation to Fr. Jose Koyickal SDB and Fr. Davis Maniparamben SDB, who have graciously accepted the mandate of God entrusted to them by our Rector Major to be the Provincial of Sacred Heart Province, Bangalore and the Province of Jesus the Good Shepherd, New Delhi respectively. We implore our blessed mother to accompany them in their new Mission to lead the Province with efficiency and efficacy.

FMA PCI FORMATORS MEET: We appreciate with gratitude, the coordination of Sr. Kanickaraj Mary Tamizharasi the National Coordinator for Formation in organizing the

online meeting to contextualise the document ‘Guidelines for the formation period of temporary vows’ from 25 to 27 January 2021. Two formators from each Province participated in the meeting. From our Province Sr. Cruz Anthoni Michael and Sr. Susai Anthonia participated in the meeting.

IN PREPARATION FOR GCXXIV: It was a joy to journey together to respond to GC XXIV queries. We appreciate every community for the prompt response and the effort of the following Sisters to collate the responses of nineteen communities for the four questions to be sent to the PCI in preparation for the GCXXIV. **The I Nucleus – Vocational Fruitfulness of the Educating Communities** by Sr. Amirthasamy Maria Pushpam Maria, Sr. Cruz Anthoni Michaela, Sr. Soosai Magnificat and Sr. Samson S. Gnana Jennifer. **The II Nucleus - Synodal community – Synodal style as at Mornese** by Sr. Fernando Majella, Sr. Arockiam Gracy Rani, Sr. Irudayasamy Maria Tamil Selvi, Sr. John Bosco Edal Queen, Sr. Joseph Prettencia. **The III Nucleus – Missionary Prophetic Community – Mornese in outreach** by Sr. Poobalarayen Nirmala, Sr. Antony Rayappan Jothy, Sr. Santhana Pushpa Jeya, Sr. Antony Regina Mary, and Sr. Charles Sandal Princy. **Contextualised reflection in the light of the New Education Policy and Foreign Contribution Regulation Amendment Rules, 2020** by Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi, Sr. Susai Anthonia, Sr. Lazar Bernardine, Sr. Antony Lourdu Sagayam and Sr. Raja Clarenca Mary.

ECONOMERS MEET: The Annual Economers Meeting was held for the economers of all the communities along with the Finance Advisory Committee of the Province from 18 to 19 January 2021. The meeting aimed to present the Budget and the Finance Policy of the Province followed by the submission of Accounts. Thanks to the Province Finance Advisory Committee who worked in collaboration with Sr. Madalaimuthu Angela headed by Fr. Joseph Xavier S.J. who worked behind the screen to make these days a successful one. On 31 January 2021, there was a meeting for all the Economers in Francis Xavier Convent, Broadway. We are grateful to Sr. Fernando Majella and the community for hosting the meeting with love.

TRIMONTHLY RECOLLECTION: Due to the Pandemic, to avoid journey, the Senior Sisters will make their Trimonthly Recollection in their Communities on 6 or 7 February 2021. The Topic for the Retreat will be Discipleship as leaving one’s self and accepting the cross of Christ.

ANNUAL RETREATS: The **First Annual Retreat** was preached by Rev. Fr. Alphonse Philip SDB for fifty-five Sisters in Auxilium Provincial House from 26 December to 2 January 2021 on the theme Chosen for the world consecrated and challenged. **The Second Retreat** will be preached by Fr. Dr. Arnald Mahesh SDB in **Don Bosco**, Wellington from 20 – 27 February 2021.

SILVER JUBILEE: It was a day of jubilation for the Province as we celebrated the unfathomable love of God on the occasion of the twin Silver Jubilee of Divyadhanam Novitiate and Sisters Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi and Rayappan Selvi Cecily on 16 January 2021. We recall with gratitude the sacrifice of Sr. Abramo Theresa, the Provincials, Economers, Novice Formators and Assistants who undertook the task of forming numerous Novices in the Novitiate. May the house nurture with care many more Novices and continue to be the powerhouse of INM and INT, our Institute, the Church and the entire world.

SALESIAN COOPERATORS PROMISE: The animation for Promise day for Salesian Cooperators was organized on 16 January 2021 in Auxilium Centre, Thanjavur. Mr. Peter Tiraviam, Fr. Charles SDB, Fr. Thomas Louis SDB, and Sr. Antonysamy Rosy animated the cooperators on the theme Vocation of Salesian Cooperators, rules and regulations, the structure of Animation, Mission of Salesian Cooperators and the Apostolic Life lead by saintly cooperators. Thanks to Sr. Soosai Magnificat and the Community of Thanjavur who hosted the meeting on 16 and 17 January 2021. On 17 January 2021, eighteen cooperators made their promise among whom five belong to FMA units; four from Regunathapuram and one from Thanjavur.

TEAM MEET: A virtual team meeting was held for all the team members on 8 January 2021 coordinated by Sr. Peter Selvarani. The qualities of a charismatic leader, the peace message of Holy Father Pope Francis for the World Day of Peace – “ A culture of care as a path to peace”, Strenna 2021 - Moved by hope “ See, I am making all things new”, the UNO theme for then the International year of creative Economy for sustainable Development were shared and emphasized during the meeting.

ASHRAM EXPERIENCE: Twelve of the first year Novices of INM and INT will participate in the Ashram Experience from 4 - 15 February in Mannivakkam.

RENEWAL PROGRAMME: Sr. Antony Lourdu Sagayam, Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi and Sr. Rayappan Selvi Cecily will participate in the Silver Jubilee Renewal programme from 2 - 8 February in Dhyana Sadhana, Ring Road Junction, Bogada, Mysuru 570026 which will be coordinated by Fr. Alphonse Britto - Director.

MISSION AD/INTER GENTES: ANIMATION: In response to the letter of our dear Mother General dated 31 December 2020, Sisters were helped in the process of discernment and continue our mission with Missionary unction of Jesus with a webinar orientation Programme held on **24 January 2021, Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** Sr. Cruz Anthoni Michaela highlighted her insights on the Trinitarian, Christological and Pneumatological aspects of Theological Foundation of Mission. Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi shared about the initial proclamation and the Biblical characters focusing on the salient conditions and qualifications for becoming a missionary.

PAST PUPILS MEETING: On 24 January there was a webinar meeting for the Presidents, delegates and councillors of the Past Pupils Federations from all over India by Sr. Maria Luisa Miranda and Sr. Gabriela Patino. Sr. Rayan M. Auxilia Sophia, Sr. Poobalarayen Nirmala and Mrs. Irudaya Mary Daniel – president of Past Pupils of our Province took part in the meeting. The meeting helped the participants to benefit from the sharing on the modifications to be made in the statutes of The Past Pupils Federation.

MEETINGS–FEBRUARY 2021

- 02 – 08 Silver Jubilee - Renewal Programme Dhyana Sadhana, Mysore
- 04-15 Ashram Experience for I year Novices – Mannivakkam
- 10 – 11 Provincial Council Tiruchirapalli
- 13 - 14 Juniors Recollection and Animation
- 20 – 27 Annual Retreat II - Wellington

LET'S CELEBRATE –FEBRUARY 2021

02	Presentation of the Lord
04	St. John de Britto
09	Blessed Eusebia Palamino
11	Our Lady of Lourdes
17	Ash Wednesday
18	St. Kuriyakos Elias Chavera
22	The Chair of St. Peter, Ap.
25	Sts. Aloysius Versiglia and Calistus Caravario

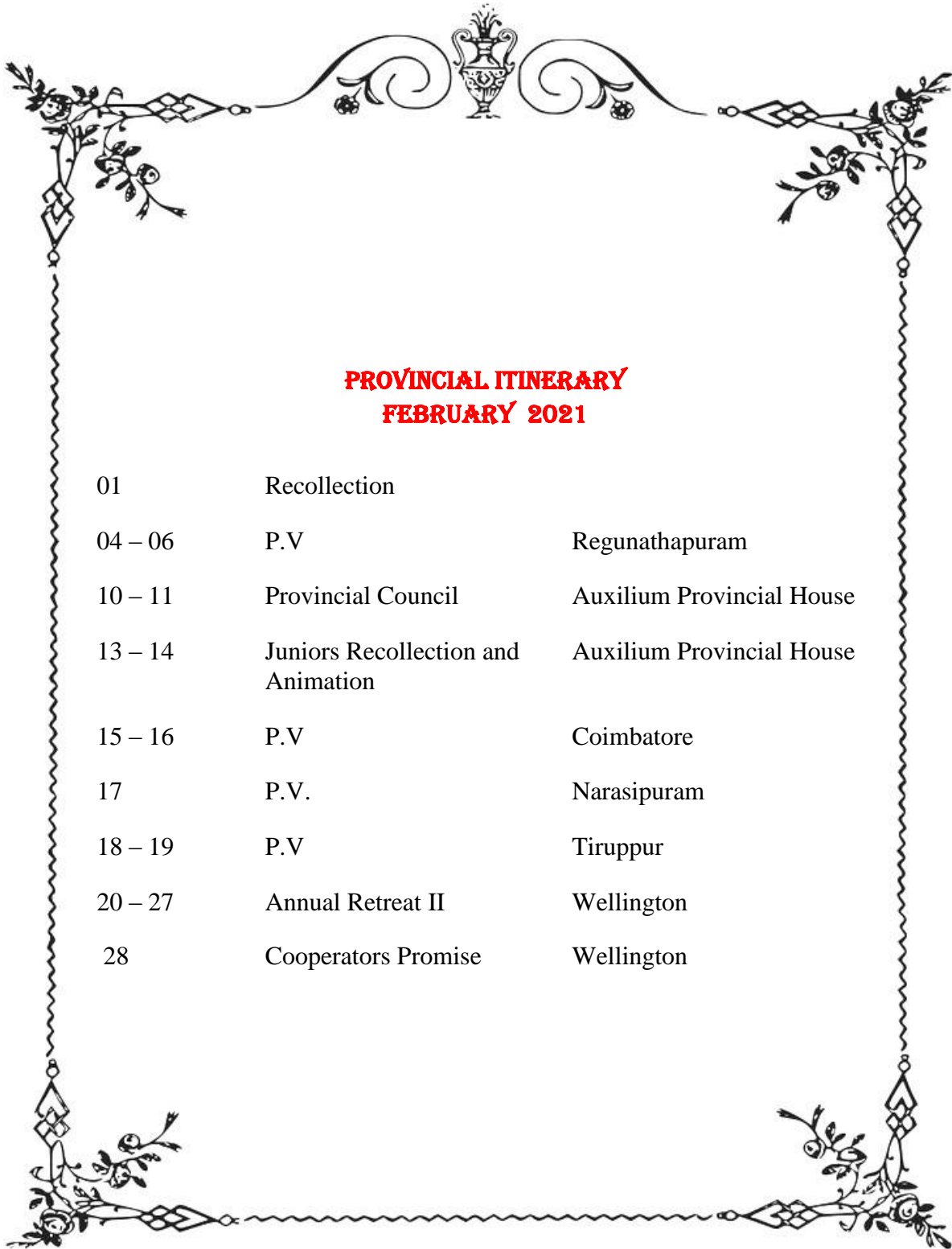
RIP: May the Lord grant eternal rest to Sr. Josephine Pereira the first Indian Sister who went as a Missionary to AES Province. She passed away on 15 January 2021.

I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy feast of The Presentation of the Lord which is solemnized as the Day of Consecrated Life. As we fondly remember to pray for all the consecrated persons in the Church, let us keep alive the message of our Holy Father inviting us for a New Life which he says, "It is a **living encounter with the Lord in his people**. It is a call to the **faithful obedience of daily life** and the unexpected surprises from the Spirit. It is a **vision** of what we need to embrace to experience joy: Jesus"

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Amalanathan Mary Margaret
Provincial.



**PROVINCIAL ITINERARY
FEBRUARY 2021**

01	Recollection	
04 – 06	P.V	Regunathapuram
10 – 11	Provincial Council	Auxilium Provincial House
13 – 14	Juniors Recollection and Animation	Auxilium Provincial House
15 – 16	P.V	Coimbatore
17	P.V.	Narasipuram
18 – 19	P.V	Tiruppur
20 – 27	Annual Retreat II	Wellington
28	Cooperators Promise	Wellington