



Cir. No. 47

MAY 2021

Dearest Sisters,

Warm and affectionate greetings from Manikandam, Tiruchirapalli.

May is a wonderful month for so many reasons. Spring flowers are in full bloom, the air is fresh, and birds chirp as they happily feather their nests. It seems particularly appropriate in this month of beauty and fullness of life that we, as Religious, honour Mary as the Mother of God. Mary gives us a wonderful example not only of a mother's perfect love for her children but also of how we should aim to live our lives. So, when we need some concrete examples on how to speak, act and love each other, there's no one better to turn to than Mary. Here are a few simple ways that we can be more like Mary this month, which is very dear to every member of the Salesian Family and Novices who are making their First Profession.

TOWARDS FULLNESS OF LIFE

SAY YES: In Scripture, Mary's story starts with her "yes" to God. It was an affirmative response charged with plenty of questions, but she gave her assent to God. God wonderfully steered her simple fiat as a channel of grace for the salvation of the world. What is God asking us to say "yes" to? What is that thing that seems difficult, scary, or even downright crazy to us that God keeps placing on our hearts? This month let us ask ourselves, what God might be asking from us to do, and then work on finding the courage to say "yes" to His will for us.

BE HUMBLE: When we are asked by an eminent person to do something really important for him or her, we feel either elated or manifest our false humility. But when God asked Mary through the Angel Gabriel to be the Mother of God, she did not get a puffed-up sense of herself. Nor did she try to convince God that she wasn't good enough. She simply said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). That is true humility. True humility is seeking only to do God's will. Where is God asking us to be more humble in our lives? It might be cleaning our room, sewing our clothes, keeping our places clean... that no one else will notice, without mentioning it. It might look like holding our tongue when we want to defend ourselves by speaking against someone else. It might just mean smiling when someone compliments us and says thank you. Mary gives us an example of perfect humility so we can turn to her when we struggle.

SHARE OUR JOY: Soon after the Annunciation, Mary left home to visit her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also expecting a baby boy. They embraced each other and shared the joy of the miracles taking place within them. Mary didn't keep her joy to herself. She shared it with her friend. So often we forget that part of being in a family, community or friendship is sharing joy. Not just sharing some fun times, but truly reveling in the joys of others. Sometimes we can find it difficult to share in others' joy when we're hurting. Or we are hesitant to celebrate with others because

we're afraid they'll think we are boasting about the good happening to us. But to hide away our joy is to hide away the best parts of what makes us human. God made us to know both sorrow and joy and to experience both of those things in the community. Mary is the perfect person to help us be courageous in sharing our joy.

BE BOLD WITH OUR PRAYERS: When the wine ran out during the wedding feast at Cana, Mary went right to Jesus. She didn't waste time saying, "Jesus, I thought, maybe you could help? She went to Him and asked Him to fix it. Then she assumed He would. Are we that confident in our prayer? Do we bring our troubles to Jesus and then leave them at His feet, believing that He'll take care of them? What about all spheres of our lives? Do we lag from asking for what we want at work, at home, in the community or with our friends because we're scared someone will say no or we'll be disappointed? This month, let us pray for Mary's intercession to be bold with our prayers and our hopes. Jesus never lets us down.

WALK WITH SOMEONE IN THEIR PAIN: Few of us would have watched someone we love being beaten, tortured and killed. When her beloved son was beaten and tortured to death, Mary didn't turn away. She stayed with Jesus in His time of rejection and pain. We might not be called to witness that kind of excruciating experience, but there are surely people in our own lives who are in crisis, who are struggling to get by, or who need someone to just sit with them in their suffering. This might mean lending a listening ear when a friend is going through a bad breakup, or crying along with a family member when someone she loves has passed away. We are called, not to turn away from suffering, not in ourselves, and not in those around us. Mary gives us the perfect example of a love that never turns away and never gives up. How are we trying to be more like Our Lady?

May our Blessed Mother walk with us in our journey, cover the entire human race with her maternal mantle, protect and save everyone from the pandemic.

MAY DAY: The Feast of Saint Joseph was officially instituted by Pope Pius XII on 1 May 1955, to ensure that workers do not lose this Christian understanding of work: but earlier Popes had already prepared the ground. Blessed Pius IX in a certain way had recognized the importance of St. Joseph as a labourer when he proclaimed him Patron of the Universal Church. The principle of work as a means to eternal salvation was taken up again by St. John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem exercens*, where he refers to "the Gospel of Work". And Cardinal Angelo Roncalli - who became Pope St. John XXIII - when he was elected to the throne of Peter had thought of taking the name Joseph, so devoted was he to the saint who was the foster - father of Jesus.

Besides being the spouse of Mary, the foster father of Jesus, St. Joseph was a carpenter. Through his manual work, St. Joseph provided for the Holy Family and shared in the divine plan of salvation. As a father, Joseph raised Jesus to follow in his profession as a craftsman, in the Gospels, Jesus is called "the son of the carpenter". The life of St. Joseph shows us the dignity of human work, which is the duty and the perfection of human beings, who in this way exercise dominion over creation, share in the work of the creator, offer their service to the community and participate in God's plan of salvation. Joseph loved his work. He never complained of weariness, but as a man of faith elevated it to the exercise of virtue. He found contentment in his work because he did not aspire to wealth and did not envy the rich. Work was not a means to satisfy his greed, but an instrument to support his family.

Many saints, especially St. Teresa of Avila had a particular devotion to Saint Joseph. Devotion to St. Joseph was a hallmark of St. Teresa of Avila. Teresa attributed her miraculous cure to Saint Joseph. When she was living in the Incarnation Convent in Avila, she was struck with an ailment

that left her half dead. She was paralyzed and was presumed dead at one point. She prayed and prayed to Joseph and her prayers were answered. Her paralysis was cured and she was able to walk again even though her health had always been fragile after that. Saint Joseph is an example of a life so hidden and yet so pleasing to God. Scriptures did not record for us a word he uttered. But what the Gospels show us is that Joseph was a doer of God's will. He was always on the go, always on the move to do God's bidding - waking up from the dream to journey to Bethlehem for the census, fleeing to Egypt with Mary and the Infant Jesus to escape Herod and his murderous band, journeying back to Nazareth at God's command after Herod had died. These were important events but nothing was recorded in Joseph's account or words. Even in the life of the Holy Family, the Gospel writers did not deem it necessary to give an account of the life in Nazareth. The only indication we have that Joseph was respected and known in the local community is the passage in the Gospel where the townspeople were figuring out the source of Jesus' power, "How did this man come by this wisdom and the miracles? Is not this the carpenter's son? (Mt 13:54 - 55) Saint Teresa has this to say about St. Joseph: "I wish I could persuade everyone to be devoted to this glorious saint, for I have great experience of the blessings which he can obtain from God. I have never known anyone to be truly devoted to him and render him particular services who did not notably advance in virtue, for he gives very real help to souls who commend themselves to him. For some years now, I think, I have made some request of him every year at his festival and I have always had it granted. If my petition is in any way ill directed, he directs it aright for my greater good."

WITHIN THE FAMILY:

RIP: On the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker, the Lord of life after having tested the gold of faith in her life, came to take Sr. Bastian Maria to His bosom to enjoy the bliss of paradise on 1 May 2021 around 5.10 p.m. Of the four children, Sr. Bastian Maria was born as the first child to Mr. Christopher Aloysius Bastian and Beatrice Elvina Jones in Perambur on 3 May 1930. She was baptized as Marie Philomena Bastian later called Sr. Maria Bastian in the Congregation. The family belonged to the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes - Perambur, Chennai. This Parish nourished the faith of the family to open their hearts in prayer and penance and experience the accompaniment of Mary in leading Marie to love and follow Jesus more closely.

Her father was the only breadwinner in the family, a government employee who worked as the lighthouse keeper. Her father was firm and kind concerning her studies. Her mother nurtured in her a deep prayer life. Sr. Marie did her Schooling from class I to IX in St. Joseph Middle School - Perambur as a day scholar, staying in her grandparent's house. She did her X and XI as a boarder in Holy Angels High School at Mambalam, Chennai which nurtured her leadership qualities as she was the School Pupil Leader in the School in her final year. She did her Teacher Training at Church Park Training College in Chennai. During these years, she experienced the presence of God and the protection of our Blessed Mother. In times of danger, she used to invoke Mary by praying the Memorare and the Hail Holy Queen. After her training, she taught in St. Joseph High School, Tiruchirapalli and St. Francis Xavier's Broadway, Chennai.

The family spirit of the Salesian Sisters in Broadway, towards the poor children and the boarders, captivated her heart. From then on, God began to rouse her heart to detach and enter into a larger Salesian Family. She found it difficult to detach from her family. One day while participating in the funeral ceremony of one of her Mother's friends, she began to question the real meaning and the ultimate realities of life. Then she made her irrevocable decision - to give herself completely to Jesus. On 15 August 1955, she went to Broadway to do her Aspirantate followed by Postulancy. She recounts that those years were years of grace and joy. Then she proceeded for her first year of Novitiate at Kotagiri where she learnt to love and give herself to the Lord. Then she continued her Second year Novitiate in Katpadi. Here she contracted Filariasis. She was shocked when her Novice Formator told her that her ailment would not allow her to continue her Novitiate. She was

heartbroken. Her beloved mother took her home and taught her to accept this situation with the spirit of faith and resignation. With the maternal care of her mother, she recouped her health and began to work as a teacher for ten years in a School, became a member of the Legion of Mary. She loved this apostolate and incorporated the preventive method of Don Bosco's Education in her interaction with the young people.

The Sacramental life, Marian devotion and Salesian Spirit lived in the Parish of Perambur helped her to keep alive the fire within. She cultivated a tender filial devotion to Mary by praying to her often, preparing for the Marian Feasts with love and making her known to the members of Legion of Mary. No doubt, Mary kept casting her gaze on Marie. She recalls with joy: "It was our Blessed Mother, I am sure, who in 1967 inspired Mother Mania of Holy Memory to think of me and call me back to do my Novitiate." Even at this time, she did not find it easy to detach from her dear family as her parents were ageing. Though it was difficult, she detached herself from the Family and re-entered the Novitiate. At the age of thirty-nine, she was clothed in the religious habit on 6 January 1969.

She imbibed the fundamental values of Religious life from the witnessing life of the Sisters especially Sr. Verginia Marchetti and Sr. Regina Colombo. She was impressed by the kindness and understanding of Sr. Aurelia Bossi and Sr. Paulina Gomez, her assistants in the Novitiate. She also valued the most, the life of Saints John Bosco and Maria Domenica Mazzarello who cared for the salvation of the poorest young people. In the Salesian family, she was fascinated by the Family Spirit through which the sisters expressed their love for young people. She found her strength in the Morning Prayer, meditation, the Word of God and the Eucharist. She enjoyed silence and contemplation of God in nature, which helped her to live habitually in His presence, though she found it difficult to integrate prayer and action. She was rather reserved by character but cheerful, patient, and ready to help others, especially the poorest.

As a religious, she was given the opportunity to be trained in Sacred Science and Formation. She rendered her service as an Assistant to the Aspirants and the Postulants for nine years in Broadway, Chennai; as an Animator in Tiruvottiyur for four years, in Sacred heart Home for six years, Kodambakkam for three years, and Broadway for three years; as a Vice Provincial in Kodambakkam for six years, as a Councillor, teacher and an Assistant of Novices in Sacred Heart Novitiate, Tiruchirapalli for 13 years till 2013. Recalling her experience in the Novitiate she says: "At the ebb of my life, I am trying to grow old gracefully. The Lord has placed me now in the Novitiate where I love to be and I am happy to help the Novices in their formation as best as I could. I love the Superior and Sisters and find it easy to collaborate with them. I am grateful for their loving care, respect and understanding of my needs. I thank God for His mercy and love and I will praise Him for the rest of my life."

From 2013 on, she belonged to the community of St. Francis Xavier's Convent, Broadway. It was here the Lord tested the gold of her faith with eight years of neurological disorder, dementia, and systemic hypertension. From then on, God called her to a deeper life of silence, intimacy with Him through prayer and a share in his Paschal mystery. She offered her suffering in silence, for the young people and the Congregation. We are grateful to Sr. Fernando Majella the Animator and her Community, Salesians, nurses and doctors, caretakers and teachers especially Mr. Keeth Stephenson and Mr. David who paid keen attention to her every need and made her feel that she is a precious gift to our family. Joining with the entire Salesian Family with sentiments of gratitude for the meaningful life of Sr. Marie let us offer our prayers for the repose of our sister.

GENERAL CHAPTER XXIV: With reference to the Circular Letter 1008 of our Mother General, we are happy to inform you that our dear Mother General has made a new Convocation of GC XXIV with the same theme - "Do whatever He tells you" (Jn 2:5) Communities that generate

life in the heart of Contemporaneity. The General Chapter will be held in our Generalate, Rome with an official opening on 17 September 2021. The Chapter is expected to conclude on 24 October 2021. May our Blessed Mother accompany us in our GC journey.

ONLINE QUIZ ON THE STUDY OF THE CONSTITUTIONS: We appreciate the effort made by Sr. Amirthasamy Maria Pushpam and Sr. Arockiam Gracy Rani, the members of the Formation Team who conducted the quiz on the Constitution articles on Prayer and Fraternal Life on 7 and 14 April 2021. Congratulations to all of you who participated in the quiz with zest and joy.

ECONOMERS MEETING: The Economers of all the communities in the Province took part in the Economers meeting which gave orientation for the submission of Society Account 2021 by Sr. Madalaimuthu Angela on 20 April 2021 from 10.00 to 11.00 a.m.

ANIMATORS MEETING: The Animators had a meeting on 20 April 2021 from 11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. They had fruitful sharing on article 164 from the Constitutions and Regulations followed by important communication concerning the Province and the events yet to take place in the Province.

TOWARDS FULLNESS: Our heartfelt appreciation to Mrs. Reena Ginwala – an Author and Corporate Trainer residing in the Himalayas, who animated a two-day online training programme for fifty-one and fifty-nine sisters in two batches from 22 to 23 and 27 to 28 April 2021 respectively. The course enabled the participants to learn the skills of Nonviolent Communication based on the notion that all of us have the capacity for compassion through which we can meet our own needs and that of others. It helped the sisters to approach interpersonal relationships with empathy and take responsibility for our own choices and life experiences while supporting others to take responsibility of theirs. It also made the participants to perceive that communication is the key to any initiative or leadership or community building.

PROVINCE COMMUNITY DAY: Due to the virulent spreading of Covid 19, the Feast of Gratitude in the Province was celebrated in the virtual mode. We experienced deep communion as we took part in the prayer moments and participated in the Thanksgiving Mass on 24 April 2021 in each community raising our hearts and minds to God and our Blessed Mother for the innumerable graces we have received during the past year. The choice of the theme and the practices chosen helped us to cherish the joy of togetherness promoting a culture of life. A special thanks to Sr. Amirthasamy Maria Pushpam, the Vice Provincial who took the initiative to present the theme, practices, design the invitation, and coordinate the virtual celebration on 30 April 2021. At this juncture, I humbly acknowledge with gratitude dear Sisters for your active participation and joyous response, your gesture of solidarity in the concerns of the Province. May the Lord bless you with abundant graces. We are grateful to all the communities for your creative expression of **Just A Minute Programme** and the Sisters who anchored the online celebration. A note of thanks to the children and young people of all the Marialayas and the Novices for their colourful and joyful performance of singing and dancing. Our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Peter Selvarani and Sr. Masilamani Sebastia Jeya Pushpam for compering, Sr. Samson S. Gnana Jennifer, Sr. Raja Clarenca Mary and Sr. Joseph Prettencia for coordinating the creative expression of **Just A Minute Programme** of each community in the Province, and to Sr. Rosario Jebamani and Sr. Antony Nirmala Rani for delivering the vote of thanks during the virtual celebration on 30 April 2021. In this time of the pandemic, this celebration is a significant occasion to express our joy of working together for our wounded humanity, bearing deeply in our hearts the way of the passion, keeping the lamp of faith lit in our hearts. On this significant day, we also thanked God specifically for the gracious gift of Sr. Susaimanickam Josephine - the Golden Jubilarian who brings healing and wholeness to the lives of many poor and downtrodden people through her gentleness, kindness and tender care. May

St. Joseph bless her abundantly in her healing ministry. We are especially thankful to all the senior Sisters of the Province who keep alive the Spirit of the Congregation and support our ministries with the power of their constant prayer, sharing of their wisdom and offering their ailments with love.

VIRTUAL INTERACTION: The Legal Cell of Tamilnadu Bishops' Council animated Virtual interaction - A sharing on the judgment **"Surplus and Deployments in Aided Schools"** on 24 April 2021 from 10.00 a.m. to 01.00 p.m. More than seven hundred participants took part in the meeting, which was presided over by Most Rev. Dr. George Antonysamy President, TANCEAN. Our appreciation and thanks to Fr. S. Savarimuthu, Advocate who spoke on the issue in Focus, Dr. Fr. A. Xavier Arulraj, Senior Advocate and Secretary, Legal Cell - TNBC who explained Judgment: An Overview, Fr. V. John Kennedy, Advocate who presented the way Forward crisply. May the Lord guide us to respond to the challenges with a sharp mind and a discerning heart. Sr. Fernando Majella - the Youth Pastoral and Academic Coordinator of the Province, with a few Headmistresses participated in the meeting and benefited from it.

THE GIFT OF VOCATION IN OUR PROVINCE: Having a Special purpose in life - a calling, a vocation is a gift from God that comes with our birth and our Baptism. A religious vocation is a special gift and call from God, that is received in faith and discerned in prayer. The formation process has helped young people to grow and mature in their response to God's call. It is a special gift that God gives to whomsoever, He deems fit. The Lord prepares, moves and helps those He calls, granting them the graces and talents needed to embrace the religious state and persevere in it. Paying heed to the call of Christ, our candidates in initial formation have come forward to take a step ahead to be like Mary by giving their total "yes" in faith and humility. As we receive with gratitude the precious gift of vocation shared with the following candidates, let us accompany them with our prayers and joyful witnessing of religious life.

POSTULANTS: Anthony Samy Jerlin Mary, Arul Samy Alpenda, Arulsamy Pemina, David Jerlin Jeevitha, James Arockiadoss Micheal Avila, John Jancy, Joseph Jency Arockia, Kulanthaisamy Arul Jennifer, Rabel Ketharin, Santhiyagu Arockia Jelaja, Vethakumar Helenprabha will come to Divyadhanam Novitiate on 14 May 2021 and make their Annual Retreat from 16 to 23 May 2021. The initiation ceremony of the First Year Novices will take place on 23 May 2021.

RENEWAL OF VOWS: Sr. Arulananthu Jefri, Sr. Joseph Prettencia, Sr. Mahimai Raj Jaya Sharmila, Sr. Pensiker Bastina Mary, Sr. Vishvanathan Sujatha, Sr. Anthony Samy Renuga, Sr. Charles Sandal Princy, Sr. Joseph Kulanthai Theresa, Sr. Devadoss S. Soniya, Sr. Paralagaraj Jeya, Sr. Paralagaraj Sutha, Sr. Antony Samy Reshma and Sr. Sahayaraj Infanta will make their Recollection on 22 May 2021 and renew their vows on 23 May 2021 in Auxilium Provincial House.

THE FIRST PROFESSION: We rejoice with the Second year Novices - Sr. Anthony Samy Mary Abisha, Sr. Arockia Samy Ancy Jenifer, Sr. Jayaseelan Jasmine, Sr. Rayappan Stephina Roy, Sr. Tharcus Sanci and Sr. Vincent Priyadharshini of INM and Sr. Alexander Roselin Preethi, Sr. Amalraj Rebecca and Sr. Gnanamani Mary of INT who will be making their First Profession on 24 May 2021 in Divyadhanam Sacred Heart Novitiate with the motto "With God towards New Life." We are fortunate to have Most Rev. Stephen Antony D.D Bishop of Tuticorin who will preside over the Mass at 10.30 a.m.

SKILLS ON PERSONAL ENCOUNTER: Selected Animators of our Province will take part in a webinar organized for all the seven Provinces in India on **The Skills To Be Cultivated By The Animator For Personal Encounter** on 5 May 2021. Fr. Stanislaus Swamikannu SDB, Rector,

Theologate, Jerusalem will be the resource person for the Webinar. Our heartfelt thanks to Sr. Lazar Maria Nirmala, the Provincial of INM - Province of St. Thomas the Apostle who has arranged for the meeting.

THE THIRD ANNUAL RETREAT: The third Annual Retreat for the Postulants, Novices and a few Sisters will be held in Sacred Heart Novitiate from 16 to 23 May 2021. Rev. Fr. Mani Lazar SDB will animate the Retreat.

INSTALLATION OF ANIMATORS: We are happy to inform you that the installation of the animators in their respective communities will take place on the dates noted below:

NAME	COMMUNITY	DATE OF INSTALLATION
Sr. Santhana Pushpa Jeya	Tiruchirapalli, Vadakku Paganoor	06.06.2021
Sr. Soosaimuthu Arul Mary	Tiruchirapalli, Manikandam	12.06.2021
Sr. Anthonyswamy Rosy	Tuticorin, Therespuram	01.06.2021
Sr. Rayappan Selvi Cecily	Coimbatore, Narasipuram	05.06.2021
Sr. Michael Arokia Sujatha Mary	Madras, George Town	06.06.2021
Sr. Devaraj Jeya Rani	Tuticorin , M. Saveriarapuram	31.05.2021

LET'S CELEBRATE MAY 2021

01	St. Joseph the worker
03	St. James and Philip
06	St. Dominic Savio
13	Our Lady of Fatima
14	St. Mathias
16	Ascension of the Lord
23	Pentecost
24	Mary Help of Christians / Mary Mother of the Church
30	The Most Holy Trinity
31	Visitation of Our Lady

OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS:

† To Sr. Lazar Maria Nirmala and Sisters who grieve over the death of **Sr. David Elizabeth** (68) who died on 6 April 2021 in Auxilium Home Katpadi and **Sr Regina Sinduraj** (73) on 16 April 2021 in St. Thomas Hospital, Chennai.

† To Fr. Jose Mathew Koorappalli the Provincial and Confreres of INN at the demise of **Fr. V.J. Sebastian Vadakkethannikal** SDB (74) in St. Jude's Hospital, Jhansi - New Delhi.

† To Fr. Joseph Pauria SDB, the Provincial and the Confreres of Kolkata over the death of **Fr. Agapit Minj** SDB on 15 April 2021 in Kathihar Medical College Hospital and **Fr. Sanju Mukul Kachhap** SDB (42) on 29 April 2021 at 6.20 p.m. in Berhampore Hospital due to cardiorespiratory failure and **Most Rev. Lucas Sirkar** SDB (84), Archbishop Emeritus of Archdiocese of Kolkata on 18 April 2021.

† To our dear Sr. Devasagayam Maria Joice and her family who mourn over the sudden death of **Mr. Maria Lawrence**, her elder brother on 19 April 2021.

† To Rev. Fr. Mathew Thonikuzhiyil (Joyce) and the Confreres of INK over the demise of **Fr. Thomas Panakezam** SDB (91) in the hospice of the Little Sisters of the Poor, Hosur road, Bangalore on 24 April 2021.

† To Sr. Aruldoss Rose Mary and her family at the passing away of her sister-in-law **Mrs. Irudaya Mary Bernard** (67) on 30 April 2021.

† To Sr. Madalaimuthu Pockkisha Mary who lost her dear elder brother **Mr. Kannaiah** (79) on 1 May 2021, in Dharmapuri.

May they enjoy eternal bliss. Let us intensify our prayers for the entire human race for the gift of good health and wholeness, courage for all the health workers, eternal bliss to all the souls departed and consolation to all the people who suffer the loss of their dear ones.

We extend our greetings to the entire Salesian Family for the month of our Blessed Mother. May she protect and guide us in the days to come.

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Amalanathan Mary Margaret
Provincial.

**PROVINCIAL ITINERARY
MAY 2021**

16 – 23 May	III Batch Annual Retreat	Manikandam – Tiruchirapalli
22 May	Juniors Recollection	Manikandam
23 May	Renewal of Vows	Manikandam
24 May	First Profession	Manikandam
	Provincial Visit	M. Saveriarpuram Narasipuram Puthenthurai
31 May	Canonical erection of the community and the installation of the animator	M. Saveriarpuram / Therespuram

*“Have true confidence in our Lady
and you will see what miracles are!”*

St. John Bosco

