



Cir. NO. 53

NOVEMBER - 2021

Dearest Sisters,

It's with great joy we greet you for the feast of all Saints. "All Saints Day is a family feast" said Pope Francis as it celebrates the lives of people who deserve recognition for helping further God's work in the world.

SANCTITY - A CALL TO HAPPINESS

Pope Francis in his third apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate* speaks about practical ways to holiness. He encourages all people today to embrace the call to holiness in today's modern world. The most beautiful and attractive thing about the Catholic church is its holiness. Everyone is called to holiness, regardless of the state in life. We are called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves. As religious we are called to be holy by living out our commitment with joy. True happiness does not come from being young, rich, or successful, as the world thinks, but from the counter-cultural idea to follow Jesus Christ.

The path to holiness or happiness is engrained in the beatitudes. It is the path of humility, compassion, meekness, justice and peace. The beatitudes are addressed to the poor, the afflicted and those who hunger for justice. Those who know that they are poor, make space for God through self-emptying, remain open to God and neighbour. He emphasizes that the joy of the Christian is the ability to face every situation under God's loving gaze with the courage and strength that comes from Him. Saints give witness to joy even amid trials and suffering. Let us ask ourselves whether we are happy religious or we are dull, sad people with a funeral face? There is no holiness without joy. Holiness is not a life plan which people can create themselves based only on effort and renunciation, but it consists in the joyful discovery of being God's beloved sons and daughters. Holiness is not a human achievement; it is a gift we receive. We are holy because God, who is the Holy One, comes to dwell in our lives.

Holiness is at home in our institute. In the 150 years of history, it can be said that holiness has marked our history and the life of educating communities. This is our great wealth. Holiness is the life blood that nourishes communion in communities and gives fruitfulness to the mission. Currently, the Salesian Family has 9 Saints, 118 Blessed, 18 Venerables and 28 Servants of God. In our FMA Institute, we have one saint, 7 Blessed, 2 Venerables, and 2 servants of God. "In them, we contemplate and recognize the action of the Spirit who works wonders: each of them is a Word of God lived, it is the visibility of an attitude, a feeling, a moment in the life of Jesus. It is not enough to know their life and works, we must go deep, discover their spiritual richness, the specific way in which they conformed themselves to Jesus Christ and lived their belonging to the Church and the Salesian Family. (RM)

WITHIN THE FAMILY :

COMMUNICATION FROM FMA POSTULAZIONE: In the annual letter sent by Sr. Sylwia Cieczkowska, Vice Postulatrice for the cause of FMA invites us to reflect on the following points: The

solemnity of all Saints in the context of the conclusion of GC XXIV invites us to “Do what Jesus tells us” . This is an opportune moment to reflect on two subtle enemies of holiness – Gnosticism and Pelagianism. (GE35-62). Our mission among young people demands continuous attention to the traps set by the enemy to steal their souls. While Gnostics take pride in their knowledge, Pelagians take pride in their personal efforts. Pope Francis reminds us that “The Church has repeatedly taught that we are justified not by our own works or efforts, but by the grace of the Lord, who always takes the initiative.” We cannot buy God’s friendship with our works, it can only be a gift born of His loving initiative. It is worth deepening these themes to be truly generative communities of life that breathe a healthy spirituality and with maternal care try to educate the youth entrusted to us. Let us pray for the progress of the FMA causes as we are expected to report of the graces received through their intercession to the sector. As per the data, there are 17,162 FMA’s who have already entered the portals of heaven, leaving the trails of their lives to be followed by the 11,033 FMA working all throughout the world today. May we be accompanied on the journey to heaven by the spirit of the beatitudes.

THE GENERAL CHAPTER XXIV: We are happy to welcome Sr. Amirthasamy Maria Pushpam and Sr. Ambrose Little Flower who have come back from Italy on 28 October 2021, after their rich experience in GC XXIV. The capitulars thank the Lord and our Blessed Mother who had made possible this event for the life of the Institute and its significance in the Church and today’s world. They affirm that GC XXIV was a charismatic event wherein, 172 sisters, from five continents hailing from 69 Provinces and 5 Pre-Provinces participated. Among them, 106 sisters took part in the Chapter for the first time.

We are well aware that the journey of GCXXIV commenced with the convocation letter of Mother General on 24 February 2019, which led us to reflect on the personal, local community, Provincial Chapter and interprovincial conference. The interprovincial conference studied and shared their insights on the Working Document. Mary who was present at the wedding at Cana was also present during the chapter, whispering to the members to listen to whatever Jesus tells. It took place in a rich atmosphere of mutual trust, openness to the Holy Spirit, to respond to the needs of our mission today and discerned God’s ways keeping in mind, sufferings experienced in recent years in our countries, continents, families, in the lives of the young people and our own communities.

The capitulars affirm that the oft-repeated invocation to the Holy Spirit enabled them to listen to the whisperings of the divine Spirit, beckoning for a life of transformation and new life through prayer, listening to the Word, rereading the life of the Institute in a spirit of faith, using the charism and especially the Constitutions as a fundamental criterion for discernment and decisions. The chapter was a rich opportunity to live the culture of encounter. It brought to light the beauty of communion amid diversity, of cultivating a sense of awe at the traditions, the challenges, joys and hopes in living the Charism of the institute in every reality. It created the desire to know one another, to cultivate a healthy curiosity, to open to the wonder of newness, to take time to understand each other deeply, and be receptive to the enrichment of mutual sharing. It was a beautiful experience of sharing communion. The fundamental attitudes that helped them to live the chapter experiences were silence, discernment, prudence, secrecy and openness.

They are grateful to Fr Pascual Chavez Villanueva who guided the chapter members in the process of discernment and election of Mother General, General counselors and visiting counsellors. They cherish the chapter experience as a family encounter characterized by a climate of joy, trust, openness, simplicity, an experience of interior poverty that opens to hope and also to a sense of co-responsibility in contributing to making the face of the institute shine ever more beautifully in the Church, in today’s society, with the young people.

We are living the Chapter on the horizon of the 150 anniversary of the foundation of the Institute, centenary of the arrival of the pioneers to India and at the moment when the Church has commenced its preparation of the Synod on the theme of Synodality: *For a synodal*

Church: communion, participation and mission. We are in a time of historical change accelerated by the various pandemics that affect the world and we are called to walk as consecrated women, in a mission shared with the laity, towards a future that we are building together with young men and women.

The dissemination of the General Chapter XXIV will take place from 13 - 14 and from 27 - 28 November 2021 respectively in two groups in our Province. The first assembly will be held in Broadway, while the venue for the second assembly will be informed later. All the participants are expected to be in the venue on the previous day evening before 6.00 p.m. As a response to GC XXIV, let us feel the responsibility of writing a new page of history together, not only of the Province or the Institute but also of religious life, of the Church, of the Salesian Family, of the entire world. During these days let us write this new page of life and hope with gratitude and availability as Mary did. She, the humble handmaid of the Lord, allowed God to do great things through her poverty for the good of all humanity. Like Mary, let us also be astonished by the power of the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

GC XXIV DELIBERATION: The Chapter Assembly traced out the deliberation to involve the entire institute in the path of conversion to integral ecology. In response to the appeal of Pope Francis, we officially pledge our commitment, starting from **November 14, 2021**, to undertake a more concrete and permanent path of conversion to an integral ecology, adopting the following seven objectives of *Laudato Si* in the style of the Preventive System through the ***Laudato Si Platform***: To respond to the cry of the earth; to respond to the cry of the poor; to promote ecological economics; to adopt a simple and sustainable lifestyle; to offer ecological education; to develop ecological spirituality, and to promote community engagement and participatory action. Firstly, it is important that the animator of the community registers for the local community, the principal or HM registers for the educational institution both formal and non-formal in the website <https://piattaformadiiniziatiavelaudatosi.org/assicura-il-tuo-impegno/> **before 14 November 2021**. Secondly, make the official registration by sending a letter to Card. Peter K.A. Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, to the email address: info@humandevlopment.va Thirdly send the same letter to the Youth Ministry sector (Sr. Ana Victoria Ulate Vargas who will print and send them to the Vatican City before November 14, 2021 - vulate@cgfma.org

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR: Around the globe, the Catholic Church will celebrate the World Day of the Poor on **14 November 2021**. It takes as its starting point the words ***“The poor you will always have with you”*** (Mk 14:7) We are called to follow the example of Jesus in loving God and neighbour, especially the most vulnerable. The Gospel of Mark recalls the story of Jesus visiting the home of Simon in Bethany. There a woman poured precious ointment over Jesus’ head. Some people were indignant that so much money was spent on the ointment when it could have been given to the poor. Pope Francis interprets Jesus’ response as a reminder that He is the first of the poor, the poorest of the poor because he represents all of them. This identification with the poor would lead to his death, for which the nameless woman had anointed him. The poor people are not outsiders but part of our communities - “they” are our sisters and brothers. Gospel summons us to display special concern for the poor and to recognize the varied and excessive forms of moral and social disorder that are generating ever new forms of poverty.

We are called for development processes in which the abilities of all are valued. There are many forms of poverty among the ‘rich’ that might be relieved by the wealth of the poor. Pope contrasts talking about poor people in the abstract, stopping at statistics and thinking that “we can move people’s hearts by filming a documentary” with “creative planning, aimed

at increasing the freedom needed to live a life of fulfilment according to the abilities of each person.”

We often think that we are called to help people and communities who are disadvantaged, but we are called to discover Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, befriend, listen, understand them and welcome the mysterious wisdom God wants to communicate to us through them. Unless we choose to become poor in passing riches, worldly power and vanity, we will never be able to give our lives in love. Pope summons us never to lose sight of every opportunity to do good. He encourages us to provide immediate assistance to those in need, not as a matter of easing our conscience by giving alms but of opposing the culture of indifference and injustice we have created concerning the poor. Rather than waiting for people who are disadvantaged, marginalized or vulnerable to come to us for help, we should go out to meet them. It is important to understand how they feel, what they are experiencing and what their hearts desire.

On this significant day, let us read in-depth Pope’s message for the world day of the poor and share among ourselves our responses to the following questions: What does it mean to say that the poor are always with us? How might we do a beautiful thing for disadvantaged, marginalized or vulnerable people today? What holds us back from greater sharing and involvement? What forms of poverty do we see emerging during this time of pandemic? What forms of poverty do rich people suffer from, and how might disadvantaged people help to address them? What new signs of Christian love do we see emerging? What does Jesus tell us to do?

CELEBRATE CHILDREN: We are grateful to the Government which has declared to reopen the school for the students from standard one from 1 November 2021 onwards after a long period of lockdown due to the pandemic. Let us welcome them with joy, thanking God for the gift of each child. Let us celebrate our children on **14 November** and make use of this significant day as an opportunity to *spread awareness among children about their rights and encourage the welfare of children.*

COMMUNIO SUNDAY 2021: Conference of Catholic Bishops of India – CCBI invites all our communities, institutions and parishes to celebrate the first Sunday of Advent as Communio Sunday. This year Communio Sunday falls on **28 November 2021**. Communio is an initiative of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) since 2018, to assist all our Dioceses and Religious Congregations working in rural and mission areas in their pastoral ministry. Its scope is to build a culture of sharing among our people to express solidarity with our brothers and sisters in need: to encourage our faithful to pray and to support the missions and the missionaries, to promote vocations to consecrated life: to inspire our lay faithful to volunteer to work in mission areas and to envisage the formation of our faithful as missionary disciples, as proposed by Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Through Communio we synergize, pray and act. Communio aims at lending a helping hand financially to the many needs of the Churches, hospitals, schools and vocations in the areas where the church is new, young or poor. This is our opportunity and privilege to show love and solidarity to our Church family. Through our prayers, we support missionaries everywhere in spreading the Good News. And by donating, we respond to Christ’s call to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. May our Blessed Virgin Mary, the star of New Evangelization and Saint Joseph, the Patron of the Universal Church, intercede for us.

DATE OF ARRIVAL OF THE PIONEERS: We extend our heartfelt thanks to **Sr. D’Souza Philomena Benedicta** – INB who has brought to light the actual date of arrival of our pioneers to Thanjavur. In the process of collecting the data for compiling the history of FMA presence in India, based on the archival documents, Sister has explored that the first

missionaries arrived in India on 24 November 1922, and so hereafter *we celebrate their arrival on 24 November and not on 22 November*. The Pioneers arrived in Bombay by ship on 20 November, they left Bombay by train on 21 November and reached Madras on 23 morning. That night they stayed at Mylapore FMM Convent and left Madras on 24 morning by train and arrived in Thanjavur on 24 evening. May the celebration of the arrival of our pioneers kindle in each one of us missionary zeal.

CONGRATULATIONS: According to the PCI statute and the Interprovincial Conference of India meeting held in Rome Generalate on October 10, 2021, our Mother General acknowledges the appointment of *Sr. Lazar Maria Nirmala*, Provincial of INM as the PCI President and *Sr. D'Silva Meenakshi* Provincial of INB as PCI Vice President from November 2021 - 2023. Joining with all the FMA all over India, we congratulate our dear Sisters who have assumed the new responsibility and assure them of our prayers and collaboration.

NOVICES - APOSTOLIC EXPERIENCE: Let us pray and extend our formative accompaniment to the twelve second year Novices of INM and INT who have gone to the communities of Madurai – Sirudhur, Sringerinagar, Tanjore, St. Mary's, Vellore, Arni, MIC Tirupattur for their one month Apostolic Experience from 20 October to 20 November 2021. May this experience, deepen their fascination for Jesus and increase their passion for His mission.

NDF XVII ANNUAL MEET IN KOLKATA: The XVII FMA-NDF annual meet took place in Seva-Kendra, Kolkata from 21 to 25 October. Fr. Joseph Xavier SJ, the NDF Consultant animated the meeting on the themes - Sustainability practices and environmental stewardship towards building resource-conserving, environment-friendly communities in the target area, review of 'Child Protection Policy', sharing of Annual reports and impact of the implementation of a five-year plan by Social Development Offices, financial Sustainability of NDF for core activities and finance management system for NDF and formation of National level platform for children. NDFC, SDCs, Core team members & staff from seven provinces took part in the meeting. From our Province, Sr. Azarias Arokia Mary Selvi, Sr. Sylas Rani Saluja, Sr. Antony Muthu Lourdu Mary and Mr. Britto and Mr. Jaheer - Staff from ASSIST participated in this meeting. Thanks to Sr. Azarias Arokia Mary Selvi, the NDF coordinator for organizing the event.

ToT PROGRAMME: Don Bosco Institute of Management organized a program on "Empowering civil society organizations by a capacity development programme on the human rights-based approach for non-governmental organizations" on 25 October 2021. The purpose of the training was to enable as many Civil Society Organizations as possible to take the programme to the beneficiaries of their respective organizations, so that people at the grassroots may be empowered to avail of the benefits provided by the government. Seven Staff from different districts of Auxilium society attended the training program. The training of 30 trainers from different NGOs on 5 topics will be conducted in the following fourteen months. The trainees in turn will impart their knowledge to another 90 trainers from different NGOs. Through this networking and sharing, they hope to reach out to 1000 members of civil society in their province.

ONLINE MEET: Sr. Fernando Majella, the Academic Coordinator and Sr. Rani Celine, the Human Rights Coordinator participated in an online meet, on the theme of "Introducing Constitutional Rights Education Programmes (CRE) for children" on 21 October 2021 from 5-7 p.m. The meeting was animated by Mr. Britto from Vann Mugil.

AWARENESS PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN: ASSIST in collaboration with the Bishop Heber college organized a programme for women on the topic “Psycho-Social care, needs and positive Parenting” on 29th October 2021. Mrs. Christy Subathra, Correspondent, CREA, Children Academy, Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Nagamangalam, Trichy was the resource person. 32 women from Gandhi Nagar, Manikandam and Ambedkar Nagar benefitted from the programme.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

DATE	PROGRAMME
05-06	Juniors Recollection and Animation
07	Tri Monthly Recollection and Animation
13-14	Dissemination of the General Chapter XXIV - I
15	Animators and Economers Meet
15 Nov -22 Dec	Second Novitiate: Phase - I
27-28	Dissemination of the General Chapter XXIV – II

LET’S CELEBRATE:

01	All saints day
02	All Souls Day
13	Bl. Artimidis Zatti
14	World Day of the Poor
15	Bl. Magdalene Morano
21	Christ the King Solemnity
22	St. Cecilia &Arrival of First Missionaries to India
28	First Week of the Advent
30	St.Andrew, the Apostle

OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS:

† To Sr. Rayappan Sampooranam and Sr. Rayappan Cecily Selvi, at the passing away of their beloved father **Mr. Rayappan** (85) on 19 October 2021.

All Souls’ Day makes us mindful not only of the death of our dear ones but also of our own. The saints experienced it, and Jesus Himself willed to undergo it. Thus the Church puts before us, passages from scripture most suited to encourage us: *“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord... henceforth they rest from their labours, for their works follow them.”* The life of the body dies; the life of the spirit and the good deeds accomplished during life remain; these deeds alone accompany the soul in its journey from this life and render its death precious.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” This death has been justly defined as *“dies Natalis”* and the *day of birth* to eternal life. Would that our death might be such! A *dies Natalis* which would bring us into the beatific vision, bring us to birth in the indefectible love of heaven.

However, by inviting us to pray for the faithful departed, the liturgy reminds us that between death and eternal beatitude there is purgatory. Because our works do follow us, and not all of them are good works, or, even if they are good, they are full of faults and imperfections, the soul must be purified from every blemish before being admitted to the vision of God. And yet if we were perfectly faithful to grace, there would be no need for purgatory, for God purifies here below those who give themselves wholly to Him, who let themselves be fashioned and formed according to His good pleasure. Furthermore, purification accomplished on earth has

the great advantage of being meritorious, that is, of increasing grace and charity in us, thus permitting us to love God more for all eternity; whereas in purgatory, one suffers without growing in charity. That is why we should desire to be purified during life. On earth total purification entails great suffering. If here on earth we do not know how to accept suffering, pure and unmitigated, as Jesus did on the Cross, our purification will be completed in purgatory. May the thought of that place of expiation rouse our zeal to pray for the souls of the departed, and may it also make us more courageous in embracing suffering in reparation for our faults.

We also enter into the Solemn *Novena for the Immaculate Conception*. As we fervently gaze upon the beauty of God's handiwork in Mary, let us solely rely upon her motherly care and protection. May we imitate our Blessed Mother in allowing God's grace to bestow on us in accordance with the plan of God.

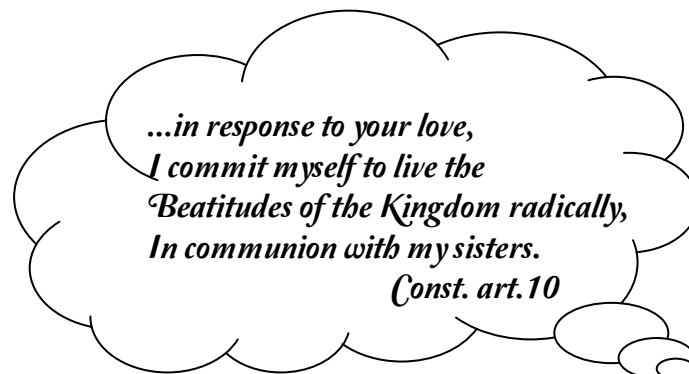
The month of November also unfolds the *Season of Advent*, which welcomes the light of the world. Let us resolve to prepare the room for the Babe of Bethlehem in our hearts by spreading the fragrance of Love, Peace, Joy and Hope.

Yours affectionately,



Sr. Amalanathan Mary Margaret
Provincial.

*Being poor in the heart, this is holiness.
To react with humble meekness, this is holiness.
Knowing how to weep with others, this is holiness.
To seek justice with hunger and thirst, this is holiness.
To look and act with mercy, this is holiness.
Keeping the heart clean of everything that soils love, this is holiness.
To sow peace around us, this is holiness.
Accepting the way of the Gospel every day
despite the fact that it gives us problems, this is holiness.*
(GE 74 – 94)



*...in response to your love,
I commit myself to live the
Beatitudes of the Kingdom radically,
In communion with my sisters.
Const. art.10*