



Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice
Salesiane di Don Bosco
Our Lady of the Snow Province - INT
Tiruchirappalli - India

Provincial Circular

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Cir. No. 08

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My dear Sisters,

Cordial greetings and prayerful wishes from Tiruchirappalli.

I wish you all a joyous and blessed New Year 2024! May the New year be filled with love, peace, and countless moments of happiness.

Let me begin this circular with the positive vibes of beloved Mother Mazzarello: **“Let the New Year, be for all one of new life”**.

In Christ, we discover the profound meaning of new life - a rebirth of spirit and a renewal of hope. His light dispels any darkness that could obscure the true meaning of our life. As we step into the New Year, may this new life in Christ inspire us to irradiate His love and grace ever brighter, illuminating the paths and lives of those around. Newness does not emerge from nothing; it has deep roots, much like the sprouts of a new life.

In a spiritual sense, embracing new life involves shedding of old habits, perspectives, and burdens and allowing oneself to be spiritually reborn. Jesus emphasized (in John 6:63) - “It is the Spirit who gives new life.” This has been brought out in the teachings of the Scripture in varied terms:

- being “born again” (John 3:3)
- becoming a “new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- being “made alive with Christ” (Ephesians 2:5)

When we are filled with the presence of the Spirit, something miraculous and amazing happens within us and around us! We come alive from within, to God and to a new way of life. Everything becomes anew. How could we explain what this new life is like?

- When the Spirit comes, ***we enter into a new kind of relationship with God***: We are no longer alienated or separated. The Spirit lives in us (John 14:17) and leads us (Romans 8:14). God speaks to us, and we speak to God in prayer.
- When the Spirit comes, ***we are empowered to live a new kind of life***. The Spirit empowers us to do God’s will (Romans 8:4); enables us to serve God with boldness (Acts 1:8), grants us spiritual gifts for ministry (I Corinthians 12:7) and above all, the Spirit gives us strength to endure difficult times (Mark 14:38).

Our Founders, Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello, were extraordinary leaders who manifested this newness of life and were guided by the Spirit. Their guiding principles continue to be relevant even in the present day scenario.

Don Bosco’s “newness” is closely linked to his relationship with the Holy Spirit, which had an immense impact on his life, mission, and the unique ‘Salesian’ charism that he gave rise to. This *Spiritual* dimension was the fundamental inspiration for Don Bosco, to come up with the innovative approaches in education and pastoral care, leaving a lasting impact on the lives of young people within the Salesian tradition.

Mary Mazzarello’s “newness” lies in her deep spiritual commitment and innovative approach to service. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she pioneered transformative education for young women, and fostered joy and compassion within every Salesian Sister. Her legacy invites us to embrace a fresh dedication to faith, service, and community life, embodying a timeless spirit of love and renewal.

Embracing “newness” as Salesian Sisters today entails a dynamic commitment to our spiritual heritage and charism. It calls for innovative approaches in reaching out and empowering the young people and staying relevant in an ever-evolving context. This requires a blend of traditional Salesian values with contemporary methodologies, fostering a spirit of adaptability and joy in our service. Living the newness means navigating the challenges of the present with resilience, guided by our founders’ vision, to create a lasting impact on the lives of those we serve here and now.

Here are some ways to live “**newness**” as a Salesian Sister:

❖ **Spiritual Renewal:**

- Find a quiet space where you can disconnect from the busyness of life and deepen the personal relationship with God.

❖ **Formation and Education:**

- Prioritize ongoing formation and stay informed about current issues and trends.
- Integrate contemporary educational methods to effectively communicate the Salesian message and values.

❖ **Community Life:**

- Foster a supportive and joyful community life among the Sisters.
- Collaborate with others in creating an environment that reflects the Salesian family spirit.

❖ **Youth Engagement:**

- Engage actively with young people, understanding their concerns and aspirations.
- Create spaces for dialogue, mentorship, and guidance in accordance with the Salesian Preventive System.

❖ **Educational Innovation:**

- Innovate in educational practices, incorporating new technologies and methodologies.
- Ensure that education is holistic, addressing the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of young people.

❖ **Leadership Development:**

- Encourage leadership development among young people, empowering them to become active contributors to society.
- Provide opportunities for skill-building and character development.

❖ **Reflection and Evaluation:**

- Reflect constantly on the effectiveness of the ministry carried out and discern newer vistas for improvement.
- Seek feedback and engage in continuous evaluation to enhance the impact of the services offered.

By integrating these practices into daily life, we can authentically actualize “newness” in a way that corresponds to the evolving needs of the world, while remaining faithful to the timeless values of the Salesian charism. Let newness and freshness be seen, in all that we are and we do.

WORLD DAY OF PEACE 2024 : The Pope’s message for the 57th World Day of Peace on January 1, 2024 focuses on the theme “Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Peace.” Acknowledging the significant impact of AI on various aspects of human life, Pope Francis emphasizes the need for an open dialogue to understand the enhancing qualities, disruptive possibilities and ambivalent effects of the development of this technology. He calls for the necessary vigilance to prevent the development of AI that could perpetuate violence and discrimination, particularly affecting the most vulnerable. The message highlights the urgency of the need to shape AI with ethical considerations, extending the reflection to fields such as education and law. The Holy Father underlines the importance of protecting human dignity and fostering global fraternity, in the face of these developments in AI, in order to contribute to justice and peace worldwide.

STRENNA 2024: In 2024, we the Salesian Family commemorate the second centenary of Don Bosco's dream-at-nine, the dream that the young Johnny Bosco - the future Don Bosco - had in 1824. It is for this reason that Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime SDB, the Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Father and Centre of Unity for the Salesian Family, has decided to dedicate the theme of Strenna for the year to this dream. As is the case of every year, at the end of the summer plenary session of the General Council he had announced the theme of the strenna: **“The dream that makes you dream. A heart that transforms ‘wolves’ into ‘lambs’.”**

The dream at 9 years, embodying Don Bosco's vocational project and a re-examination of his life, serves as a contemporary inspiration for the Salesians, the Salesian Family, and especially the youth. Cardinal Ángel emphasizes its relevance today, urging a reflection on identity and purpose of our lives. He concludes by highlighting the importance of others in shaping our dreams, highlighting the need for trust and reliance on wise, evangelically inspired leaders, with a special entrustment to Mary, the Teacher presented by God in the dream.

UNO THEME 2024: The United Nations has declared 2024 as the **International Year of Camelids** (IYC), recognizing the crucial role of camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos in supporting the livelihoods of millions, especially pastoral communities in dryland and mountainous regions worldwide. Proposed by Bolivia and supported by Ecuador, the resolution aims to raise awareness about the significance of camelids in the protection of the ecosystem, the conservation of biodiversity, food security, and in responding to climate change.

✠... MONTH'S SPECIAL! ...✠

FEAST OF ST. DEVASAHAYAM PILLAI: (January 14) St. Devasahayam, the recently canonized Indian martyr, has become very special to us - because he hails from the geographical jurisdiction of our province. He led a life marked by firm faith and dedication to Christ. Born into a Hindu family, he converted to Christianity and faced persecution for his beliefs. Despite enduring hardships and imprisonment, he remained steadfast in his faith even unto death. St. Devasahayam's life serves as a testament to the resilience of Christian devotion in the face of adversity, inspiring believers with his courageous journey as a witness to Christ in India.

BLESSED LUIGI VARIARA: (January 15) He was a Salesian Priest from Italy and a missionary who worked in South America. Born in 1875, he dedicated his life to the Gospel and the care of those on the fringes of society. Luigi Variara co-founded the Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a religious congregation focused on education and social work. His reflection centers on the transformative power of love and compassion, as he tirelessly worked to alleviate the suffering of the poor, sick, and abandoned. His life echoes the teachings of Christ, emphasizing the importance of selfless service and a profound trust in Divine providence. Blessed Luigi Variara's legacy challenges us to look beyond our comfort zones, embrace those whom the society often forgets, and live out the Gospel values with genuine love and dedication. His beatification in 2019 reaffirms his significance as a beacon of holiness and a model of Christian charity for contemporary believers.

THE UNITY OCTAVE 2024: (January 18-25) The theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2024 has been indicated by the World Council of Churches as, **“You shall love the Lord your God ... and your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27).** The theme encapsulates the essence of Christian discipleship and the call for unity among believers. It draws inspiration from the core commandment to love God and one's neighbours, echoing the core teaching of Jesus Christ. This theme serves as a reminder that genuine Christian unity is rooted in love - love for God and love for one another. It challenges us to transcend denominational boundaries, theological differences, and cultural distinctions, emphasizing the common bond of love that unites all followers of Christ. As we engage in prayer and reflection during this week, may we be inspired to live out this fundamental

commandment of love, fostering greater understanding, cooperation, and solidarity among Christians worldwide, beginning from our concrete contexts.

BLESSED LAURA VICUÑA: (January 22) Laura, a Chilean young girl, a martyr who exemplifies solid faith and sacrifice, was born in 1891. She faced hardships from her young age, including family struggles and financial difficulties. Laura's devotion to God and her desire to protect her mother led her to make a heroic act of self-sacrifice. At the tender age of 12, she offered her life to God for her mother's moral and spiritual well-being. Laura's story reflects the profound impact of faith, persistence, and sacrificial love in the face of adversity. Her beatification in 1988 recognized her as a model of virtue and an inspiration for those navigating challenges with faith and grace, in their personal lives and their families. Blessed Laura Vicuña's life invites us to reflect on the transformative power of selfless love and dedication to a higher purpose.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES: (January 24) St. Francis De Sales, the Salesian Patron, remains an endearing figure whose teachings resonate across centuries. His profound spiritual insights and compassionate approach to evangelization have left an indelible mark on the Salesian tradition. Saint Francis de Sales, a Doctor of the Church, exemplifies a gentle yet persuasive manner in communicating the message of God's love. His emphasis on the "Little Virtues" and the idea that holiness is attainable in everyday life provides a timeless guide for spiritual seekers. As the patron of the Salesians, his legacy inspires members of the Salesian family to cultivate a spirituality rooted in joy, humility, and steadfast trust in God.

REPUBLIC DAY: (January 26) As we celebrate the 74th Republic Day, let us take a moment to reflect on the constitutional ideals that form the bedrock of our Nation. Today, we honor the visionaries who crafted our Constitution, envisioning a democratic India where justice, liberty, and equality prevail. May this occasion inspire us to uphold the values of unity in diversity, fostering a spirit of harmony and understanding among all citizens. In our reflections, let us also acknowledge the challenges we face as a Nation and renew our commitment to building a society where every individual is treated with dignity and respect. As we pray for our country, may we seek guidance and strength to contribute actively to the well-being of our fellow citizens and work towards a future where the principles of justice and compassion flourish in every corner of our beloved land.

FEAST OF DON BOSCO: (January 31) The feast of St. John Bosco beckons us to reflect on our beloved Father, a unifier of natural talents and grace in the service of the young through the Preventive System. It's a time to rejoice, expressing gratitude for the charism Don Bosco passed on. As true apostles to the young, we need to intensify our vocation through the proclamation of the Gospel of joy and the pedagogy of kindness. Embracing what the youth love, we guide them to discover their highest happiness in seeking God's will with enthusiasm. Don Bosco, known as the 'Saint of JOY,' taught that holiness is found in being joyful and cheerful, enduring in God's presence and fulfilling His holy will. A very Happy Feast of Don Bosco to all!

✦...NEWS FROM THE PROVINCE! ...✦

- **PROVINCE GRATITUDE DAY:** Filled with joy and gratitude, guided by the theme: "Presence that walks together" (Jn. 2.5), let us prepare ourselves prayerfully from January 03 to February 02, 2024 to celebrate the Province Gratitude Day on 03 February 2024, at Therespuram, Tuticorin.
- **TEAM MEET:** A Team Meet is scheduled for January 13, 2024, in Tiruvottiyur, where the Strenna 2024, Pope's Peace Message, and UNO theme for 2024, will be presented to the Provincial Team and the Councillors.

- **SUBMISSION OF ACCOUNTS:** The local ecomomers shall submit the Annual Accounts at Puliadithammam on 17 and 18 January, 2024. May they be guided and supported by the Spirit of the Lord, as they commit themselves to this meaningful endeavor.
- **PROVINCE LEVEL EC MEET:** Province level Educating Community Meet will be held at Sirudur, Madurai, on 20 January, 2024.
- **NOVICE FORMATORS' MEET, ROME:** Sr. Curz Anthoni Michaela, the Novice Formator, will attended the meeting at Rome from 07 to 27 February 2024. She will be leaving on 01 February 2024. We wish her a safe journey and a rejuvenating experience guided by the Holy Spirit.

✦...PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS AND THANKS ...✦

- **NATIONAL CONFERENCE CUM WORKSHOP:** Sr. Peter Selvarani and Sr. Antony Rayappan Jothy participated in a National Conference cum Workshop at St. Peter's Seminary in Bangalore. The event focused on the theme of "Priestly and Religious Formation in India Today, in the Light of Pope Francis' Vision." The conference aimed at exploring how Pope Francis' vision could shape the contemporary landscape of priestly and religious formation in India.
- **ANNUAL RETREAT I:** Forty-Seven Sisters participated in the Annual Retreat - I, held at Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirappalli from 27 December, 2023 to 03 January, 2024. "STAY WITH ME" Mt. 26:38 --- "TO BE WITH HIM" MK. 3:14 was the theme, under which it was animated by Rev. Fr. Antro Belevendiran SDB.

✦...APPRECIATION AND THANKS!...✦

- To Sr. Palliparambil Leelamma, the Provincial of INC, Sr. Veliyen Rosy and the Sisters of the Community of Holy Child Auxilium Convent, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi for their hospitality, and accompaniment of the Sisters in their First Phase of the Second Novitiate from November 15 to December 15, 2023.
- To Sr. Soosaimuthu Arul Mary, the animator, and the community of Auxilium Provincial House for hosting the Provincial Council on 02 and 03 December, 2023.
- To Sr. Soosaimuthu Arul Mary, the animator and the community of Auxilium Provincial House, Manikandam, Trichy and Sr. Cruz Anthoni Michaela, the Novice Formator, and the Novitiate community for their hospitality, in creating the prayerful atmosphere for reflection and contemplation during the Annual Retreat - I.
- My appreciation and thanks to the communities for your sacrifices in keeping the Christmas celebrations modest, as you joined hands and demonstrated solidarity with the flood-stricken victims in Chennai and Tuticorin District. Your collective support and commitment have played a crucial role in providing hope and strength to those in need. Thank you for embodying the spirit of compassion and unity during these challenging times. Together, we can make a positive impact and contribute to the recovery and well-being of the affected individuals and families.

✦...CONGRATULATIONS! ...✦

- Congratulations to Rev Fr. Sebastian Kuricheal SDB, as the Provincial Designate of the Province of Mary Help of Christians, Guwahati (ING) and to Rev. Fr. John Zosiama SDB on his appointment as the third Provincial of St. John Paul II, Shillong Province by His Eminence Card.

Ángel Fernández Artime, the Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco, on 14 December 2023. Our heartfelt prayers accompany them in their new role.

- Congratulations to Archbishop Emeritus Thomas Menamparampil of Guwahati, who has received the Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam World Peace Award-2023 on the United Nations International Human Rights Day.
- Congratulations to the seven newly ordained priests for the Salesian Province of Tiruchy on 29 December 2023 at Sirudur - Madurai. We wish them a fulfilling and blessed journey in their priestly ministry.

✂️... IMPORTANT DAYS OF THE MONTH AHEAD! ...✂️

- 01 - Mary, Mother of God
- 07 - The Epiphany of the Lord
- 08 - The Baptism of the Lord
- 14 - St. Devasahayam
- 15 - Bl. Louis Variara SDB
- 16 - St. Joseph Vaz
- 18-25 - Unity Octave
- 22 - Bl. Laura Vicuna - Novena to Don Bosco begins
- 24 - St. Francis de Sales
- 25 - Conversion of St. Paul
- 26 - Republic Day
- 30 - Bl. Bronislao Markiewicz SDB
- 31 - St. John Bosco

✂️... MEETINGS IN THE PROVINCE ...✂️

06	Chennai Zone VIDES Meet	Broadway
07	Be a Conqueror Century Skill Training	Local Communities
13	NCP - Training	Trichy
13	Team Meet	Tiruvottiyur
14	Provincial Council	Tiruvottiyur
17 -18	House Account Submission	Puliadithammam
18	Training on Responsible Parenting Focusing on the Critical Usage of Social Media	Puliadithammam
20	Province-Level EC Meet	Madurai - Sirudur
24	Orientation CPP, HRE & CRE	Regunathapuram

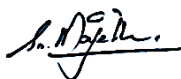
✂️... CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS ...✂️

- † *To Sr. Arokiasami Ofelia who lost her elder brother Mr. John (87) on December 09, 2023.*
- † *To Sr. Kumbukal Rosa who lost her uncle Mr. Joseph Ittiavira Thekkumkattil (98), (the father of Sr. Anna Kutti (INK) and Sr. Theresa Joseph (INB)) on December 10, 2023.*
- † *To the Provincial and the Conferers of INB Province at the demise of Fr. Lawrence D'Souza (77) on December 12, 2023.*
- † *To the Provincial and the Conferers of INM Province at the demise of Fr. Mariaselvam Rayappan SDB (85), on 30 December 2023.*

Dear Sisters, as we stand at the threshold of a new year, let's express gratitude to the Lord for His numerous blessings and the grace bestowed upon each of us and our Province. May Divine blessings and God's protection accompany us into 2024. May the upcoming year be a time of growth, joy, and fulfillment for each one of us and for our beloved Province. Together, let us face the future with hope, trusting in the providence of God and embracing the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyous New Year!

Yours affectionately in Christ,



Sr. Fernando Majella

Provincial

PROVINCIAL ITINERARY

JANUARY - 2024

27 Dec.2023 - 03 Jan. 2024	Annual Retreat - I	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
05 - 07	Provincial Visit	Thanjavur
09 - 11	Provincial Visit	St. Francis Xavier - Broadway
13	Team Meet	Tiruvottiyur - Chennai
16	Provincial Council	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
17	Economers Meet	Puliadithammam
20	Province - Level EC Meet	Sirudur - Madurai
24	AUXISTEM Robotics League 2024	St. Francis Xavier - Broadway
25 - 31	Provincial Office	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli