



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

Provincial Circular

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My dear Sisters,

Cordial greetings and prayerful wishes!

I extend my sincere gratitude to you, dear Sisters, for celebrating the Province Gratitude Day together with our Educating Communities at Therespuram - Tuticorin. One could easily see, that the event was organized and animated with profound love and a strong sense of belonging. The efforts and dedication in making this event memorable are truly appreciated. It was indeed a joyous occasion and a splendid manifestation of our unity and shared appreciation. The chosen theme, “Presence that walks together,” was highly relevant, emphasizing the transformative power of our collective journey and the significance of a supportive and united community walking in unison. Within this experience of walking together and shared journey of faith and solidarity, every individual presence and contribution is crucial; the event was a brilliant explication of this fact. As we continue to walk together, may our shared journey become a source of inspiration, fostering supportive communities and contributing to the growth and vibrancy of our Province.

As Lent draws near, let us focus on a few beneficial thoughts for our path of conversion as individuals, as communities, and as a provincial community.

“Lent as a penitential pilgrimage”

Lent is the season for a true-to-life experience of sharing in Christ’s Paschal Mystery, “sharing His sufferings to share His glory” (Rom.8:17).

Lent is a time of purification and illumination in order to live the Words of Jesus, “Repent and believe in the Good News.” (Mk.1:15)

As we engage in traditional Catholic practices of praying, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent, it is essential to consider how we could prepare ourselves internally for this season. While actions and practices are abundant, the key would be cultivating integrity and intention in whatever we involve in externally. It is not so much about going through these actions, as about fostering a meaningful transformation within in the process.

There is an abundance of ideas for actions and practices during Lent, but it is highly important to avoid the tendency of just checking off tasks as merely accomplishments. Having a definitive plan as to what to do this lent is absolutely important, but let us not forget to have an integral plan for being. Lent needs to be about aligning our internal dispositions, with our external actions, ensuring that our practices do not remain a routine but become meaningful expressions of our deep faith and deepening commitment. The internal focus could amply enhance the authenticity and intentionality of our Lenten journey. Hence, dear Sisters, I repeat, **it is good to have a plan for doing; it is equally** important to have a plan for our being.

- What do I want to be during Lent this year? A person reflective and thoughtful? A daughter lovingly open to God’s will? An apostle capable of sitting with people who need me? A disciple

profoundly attentive to the sacred voice of the Lord in the Scriptures, whether in Church or in private.

- Can I be more compassionate towards my own fears and failings? Can I become more courageous about living the special gifts that God has given me?

Could we try one or more of these following suggestions during this Lent:

- Ask God, every day, "**What does my soul need?**" Just ask, and wait in silence. At times we become experts in explaining ourselves and justifying ourselves, about how we're doing in our daily life. It might take several silent moments of reflection and prayer with this question, before we could be truly open and humble to behold the response from the Lord.
- Take a moment each day to ask God, "**What is that about my life, which brings you joy?**" We need to recognize that certain aspects of our life, like the way we make others feel accepted and welcome, genuinely brings joy to God's heart. While it is natural to acknowledge our shortcomings, it is relevant also to understand that our growth, love, freedom, and kindness bring joy to our Creator. We might sometimes hesitate to believe that we could bring joy to God, but in being persistent in our prayer and consistent in our commitment, we can be truly "pleasing" children of God. Let us keep asking, keep listening, and let the realization unfold gradually.
- Every day, make it a point to tell the Lord "**I decide to be receptive to the blessings of this Lenten season.**" It is a decision we make to gradually and continuously open ourselves to relieve unnecessary burdens from our minds, to listen more attentively to the voice of the Lord, and to enthusiastically engage in actions that contribute to nurturing God's Reign on earth. Yes, it is an ongoing journey of becoming ever more open and willing, step by step, day by day.

The tradition of our Institute considers Lent as a purposeful and intentional journey, a sacred expedition towards the inner sanctuary of encounter with God. Mother Mazzarello's personal observance of Lent was distinguished by a never ceasing internal transformation, guiding the rest of the sisters to reflect on their personal spiritual journeys towards nurturing virtues of daily life. Her approach to fasting extended beyond abstaining from food to encompassing and cultivating self-discipline and detachment from worldly distractions. Rooted in Salesian charism, her life exemplified the joy, kindness, and dedication that are characteristic of that spirit, even amidst the penitential ambient of Lent.

During this season of Lent, as educators, we are called to commit ourselves to lead our young people to maturity of their experience of God's personal love for them, and to an experience of true fraternal love and solidarity with the poor.

✠...♦ **Month's Special!** ...✠

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD - (February 02) The Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, 40 days after Jesus' birth. Simeon prophesied to Mary about her child's destiny, including the suffering she would endure. This paradox of blessedness and sorrow is evident in Mary's role as the mother of the Son of God. Her joy, fuelled by faith, hope, and trust in God, coexists with the sorrow of witnessing her Son on the Cross. Jesus assured his disciples of a joy that cannot be taken away, the joy which characterised the pierced heart of Mary. This supernatural joy empowers us to endure any sorrow or pain, remaining unperturbed in all circumstances.

BL. EUSEBIA PALOMINO - (February 09) Sr. Eusebia's life is an inspiring testament to the transformative power of faith and selfless dedication. Born in humble circumstances in Cantalpino, Spain, her childhood was marked by poverty yet illuminated by unwavering faith and the love of her family. Embracing a life of service, she became a tireless advocate for prayer in every home, fervently promoting devotion to the Wounds of Jesus, for mercy on all sinners. Confronting immense personal challenges and offering herself as a victim for the salvation of others, she manifested extraordinary grace and piety. Blessed Eusebia's optimism in the face of adversity, culminating in her joyful anticipation of Heaven, continues to resonate as an inspiring example for all of us. May she intercede for us to have many more vocations of her caliber.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES - (February 11) Our Lady of Lourdes, a beacon of compassion and healing, invites us to pray and reflect on the transformative power of faith. Through the apparitions to Saint Bernadette Soubirous in 1858, Mary emphasized the importance of penance and prayer, for healing and internal peace. Her gentle presence at Lourdes reminds us to seek solace in prayer, entrusting our hopes, fears, and ailments to her intercession. As we contemplate her message and the miraculous events at the grotto, may we find inspiration to approach life's challenges with ardent faith and an open heart, trusting in the divine grace and mercy that she obtains for all who seek her maternal guidance.

SAINTS VERSIGLIA & CARAVARIO - (February 25) Saints Versiglia and Caravario, martyred in China, offer a poignant reflection for us. Their firm commitment to spreading the Gospel, even in the face of persecution, inspires a profound examination of our own dedication to our beliefs. Their sacrifice prompts us to reflect on the courage required to live authentically in our faith and the call to share love and compassion, especially in challenging circumstances. In their example, we find a compelling invitation to embrace our faith wholeheartedly and extend kindness to others, recognizing that true spiritual resilience comes from a deep and selfless commitment to the call that we have received from the Lord. As we remember them celebrate their feast may the Lord give us the same fervour, enthusiasm and sacrificing spirit.

✂️ News from the Province! ✂️

- **ANIMATION FOR THE HEAD MISTRESSES:** A day of animation for the Head Mistresses will be held at Puthenthurai on 04 February 2024.
- **A COURSE ON JOURNAL WRITING:** A special course on journal writing will be conducted at Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirappalli, from 05 to 07 February 2024.
- **MEDIA COURSE:** Sr. Samson S. Gnana Jennifer and Sr. Sundaram Bernadette Neha will participate in the PCI level “Workshop for Social Communication Coordinators” from 09 to 11 February 2024, at Don Bosco Skill Mission, Bangalore.
- **ANNUAL RETREAT FOR DOMESTIC STAFF:** The Domestic Staff of our houses will be offered an opportunity for Annual Retreat at the zonal level on 10 February 2024. Let us facilitate this important event and pray for them that they may be enriched with the experience of God’s blessings.
- **TRIMONTHLY RECOLLECTION:**
 - The Trimonthly Recollection for Senior Sisters will be held in their respective communities on February 10, 2024 on the Theme “Life in Mission: Romans 15: 1- 6”.
 - Juniors’ Trimonthly Recollection and a Day of Animation will be held at Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirappalli on 17 and 18 February 2024 on the theme “Spirituality of

St. Paul”. The Junior Sisters are requested to be present at the venue by 04.00 p.m. on 16 February 2024.

- **ANNUAL EXAMINATION:** By the end of the month of February, we shall be winding up all celebrations and gradually entering into the mood of examinations of our children. We shall support our students with patience, small acts of kindness towards them, and most importantly, with our loving prayers. I wish to send my personal wishes and assurance to all the students and the teachers for this challenging time of the year.

✂️♦♦PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS AND THANKS ♦♦✂️

- **SALESIAN COOPERATORS MEET AT GOA:** It was held at Pilar Fathers Retreat Centre, Goa on 13 and 14 January 2024 with the theme, “Relevance of Don Bosco’s Dream for Salesian Cooperators”. Sr. Ignaci Kulandai Theresa represented our province and participated in it.
- **PROVINCIAL TEAM MEETING:** On 13 January 2024, the Provincial Team members 15 of them with the General Coordinator Sr. Peter Selvarani participated in the Provincial Team meeting held at Archbishop Louis Mathias Home, Tiruvottiyur, Chennai. Special thanks to the Sisters for creatively and efficiently presenting the three themes that become coordinates of reference usually at the beginning of a year. Sr. Peter Selvarani presented the message of the Holy Father for the 57th World Day of Peace, Sr. John Bosco Edal Queen presented the Rector Major’s Strenna for 2024 on “The Dream that makes you dream” and Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi presented the UNO theme “International Year of Camelids”. Relevant choices for the Province and the communities, and the annual calendar for the new Academic Year 2024-2025 were proposed by the team members.
- **EDUCATING COMMUNITY MEETING - 2024:** A heartfelt appreciation to Sr. Diaz Francis Immaculate, the Provincial Team Coordinator for Educating Community, for her efforts in organizing the Province level Educating Community Meet at Sirudur - Madurai on 20 January 2024. Special thanks to Sr. Antony Nirmala Rani for animating the sessions on the Strenna 2024, to Mrs. Sheila for the talk on the Message for the World Peace Day, to Sr. Ayundhukayam Arockia Malarjothi for the animation on the UNO theme for the year and to Sr. Peter Selvarani, the Provincial Councillor for Social Communication, for efficiently chairing the General Assembly. The active participation of the hundred and fifty members who not only benefited from the presentations but also contributed to the evaluation and the planning for the upcoming year 2024-2025.
- **AUXISTEM ROBOTICS LEAGUE - 2024:** Kudos to all the Sisters, teachers, the team of ASSIST and the students from the Auxilium Group of Schools for the successful “AUXISTEM Robotics League 2024” held on 24 January 2024, at Our Lady’s Higher Secondary School, Tiruvottiyur. Inaugurated by Padmashri Dr. Mylswamy Annadurai, former Program Director of Chandrayaan-1 & 2 and Mangalyaan, the event saw the active participation of education and technology experts. I was personally there to witness the event and my appreciations to Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi, the Province Social Development Office Director and her team for organizing this unique interschool robotics tournament which had aimed at to cultivate scientific curiosity and technological talent among children of FMA-run schools in Tamilnadu,

with the theme "Creativity meets Logic". Dr. Annadurai emphasized the significance of STEM strategies, encouraging students to become creators in the evolving technological landscape. The event featured an exhibition of models created by 122 students, robot competitions, and various other STEM activities, demonstrating both skill and the thirst for knowledge. This initiative resonated with the spirit of Don Bosco, guiding educators to foster the dreams of their young wards for a brighter future.

- **NATIONAL INCLUSIVE CHILDREN PARLIAMENT:** Sr. Peter Arockia Mary participated along with Vikneshwaran from Manikandam Children's Parliament in the National Inclusive Children Parliament (NICP) elections and training program, which took place in Delhi by PRATYEEK from 24 to 31 January 2024. We are happy to announce you that Vikneshwaran has been chosen as Deputy Minister of 8th Sustainable Development Goal - Decent Work and Economic Growth.
 - On 30 and 31 January 2024 Sr. Azarias Arockia Mary Selvi, the Provincial Councillor for Mission and the Province Team Coordinator for Social Development attended the Directors' Meet in Delhi.
- **ANIMATION FOR ELDERLY SISTERS OF THE PROVINCE:** On 29 and 30 January 2024 animation for the Elderly Sisters of the Province, called the 'Evergreens' was held at Auxilium Provincial House, Tiruchirappalli. It was a first-of-its-kind experience, bringing together 12 Sisters who made their profession between 1964 and 1975. The two-day events, filled with liturgical moments, animation, laughter, a visit to Kallanai Dam and Poondi Basilica, and interaction with Novices, provided a joyful boost for the Sisters in their daily journey. They were filled with hearts full of gratitude, expressing thanks for the well-organized program and appreciating the care extended to them.
- **PROVINCE GRATITUDE DAY:** My sincere gratitude to Sr. Lazar Bernardine, the Vice Provincial who coordinated the Provincial Community Day, held at Auxilium Convent, Therespuram - Tuticorin on 03 February 2024 centred on the theme "Presence that walks together," taken from the Acts of the General Chapter XXIV. It was very meaningful that the communities were asked to read and deepen the Acts of the General Chapter XXIV, the Constitutions and the Scripture Passages. The exchange of messages and the hour of adoration by each community has strengthened our bond of unity as a Province. My heartfelt thanks to Provincial Councillors, Team members, the students, teachers, Educating Community and Salesian Family members, Novices and all the communities, in a particular way to the communities of Keela Eral, M. Saveriarpuram and Therespuram for animating various moments of the day. Special appreciation and gratitude to Rev. Fr. Dr. Alphonse Lazar SDB - INT, who presided over the Eucharist, and the other Priests from the Community of Therespuram who solemnized the moment. Thanks to all the Sisters who gracefully accomplished their given responsibilities with a strong sense of belonging and actively participated in the Family Event.
- **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWLY ELECTED BISHOPS:** Our fervent prayers and congratulations to the newly elected Bishops, Most Rt. Rev. Jeevanantham Amirtha Samy D.D., as Bishop of Kumbakonam and Most Rt. Rev. Albert George Alexander Anastas D.D., as the second Bishop of Kuzhithurai on 13 January 2024.

✂️... Appreciation and Thanks! ...✂️

- To Sr. Rayappan Sampooram and the Community of Puliadithammam for hosting the Economers' Meet on 17 and 18 January 2024.
- To Sr. Jeganathan Assumpta and the Community of Sirudur - Madurai for hosting the Educating Community Meeting on 20 January 2024.
- To Sr. Peter Selvarani and the Community of Tiruvottiyur for having organized the Team Meet on 13 January 2024 and for their warm hospitality and meticulous attention to every detail during the AUXISTEM Robotics League 2024 on 24 January 2024.
- To Sr. Soosaimuthu Arul Mary and the Community of Auxilium Provincial House, Manikandam, Tiruchirappalli for having created a conducive atmosphere for the Provincial Council meeting on 20 and 21 January 2024 and for hosting the Elders' Day on 29 and 30 January 2024.
- To Sr. Anthonyswamy Rosy and the Community of Therespuram, who hosted and created a conducive atmosphere for the celebration of the Province Gratitude Day on 03 February 2024.

✂️... Important days of the month ahead! ...✂️

02	-	Presentation of the Lord / World Day of Consecrated Life
04	-	St. John de Britto
05	-	St. Agatha, Virgin and Mart, Mem
07	-	Bl. Pius IX
08	-	St. Josephine Bakhita
09	-	Bl. Eusebia Palomino
11	-	Our Lady of Lourdes / World Day of the Sick
12	-	The Chair of Saint Peter
14	-	Ash Wednesday
16	-	Bl. Maria Troncatti
18	-	St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara
25	-	Sts. Versiglia and Caravario

✂️... Meetings in the Province ...✂️

Date	Meeting	Place
03	Province Gratitude Day	Therespuram
04	Animation for the Headmistress	Puthenthurai
04	Be a Conqueror 21 st Century Skill Training	Local Communities
05-07	Journal Writing	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
09-11	Media Course - PCI Level	Bangalore
10	NCP - Training	Trichy
	Domestic Staff Annual Retreat	Zonal Level
	Training on Responsible Parenting focusing on the Critical usage of Social Media	Ulagampatti
	Tri-monthly Rec. for Seniors	Own Community

	Evaluation of the Past Pupils	Thanjavur
13-14	Economers' Formation Meeting	Online
14-15	Provincial Council Meet	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappali
18	South Zone - VIDES Meet	Ulagampatti
17-18	Juniors Trimonthly Recollection and Animation	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappali

✂️ ... CONDOLENCES AND PRAYERS ... ✂️

- † ***To Sr. Arokiasami Ofelia*** who lost her Sister-in-law, Mrs. Hilda John (87), on 05.01.2024.
- † ***To the Provincial and the Sisters of INK Province*** at the demise of Sr. Helen Netto (80) on 17.01.2024.
- † ***To the Provincial and the Sisters of INM Province*** at the demise of Sr. Periyamayagam Sagaya Selvi (56) on 19.01.2024.
- † ***To Sr. Joseph Juli Nirmala*** who lost her elder brother, Mr. Peter Raj (59), on 22.01.2024.

I conclude with the words of our Patron, St. Francis de Sales: “Lent is the autumn of the spiritual life during which we gather fruits to keep us going for the rest of the year. Enrich yourselves with these treasures, which nobody can take away from you and which cannot be destroyed”

I wish you all a blessed, fruitful and a grace-filled time of Lent!

Yours affectionately in Christ,



Sr. Fernando Majella

Provincial

PROVINCIAL ITINERARY

FEBRUARY - 2024

03	Province Gratitude Day	Therespuram
05-07	Journal Writing	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
10	Trimonthly Recollection	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
14-15	Provincial Council	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
17-18	Juniors Trimonthly Recollection and a Day of Animation	Auxilium Provincial House - Tiruchirappalli
20-22	Provincial Visit	Chittampatti - Madurai
24-25	Provincial Visit	Narasipuram
26-27	Provincial Visit	Tiruppur
March 01-03	Provincial Visit	Regunathapuram