



# Provincial Circular

## Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

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01.12.2018

Dearest Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium, Nongthymmai!

I have just returned from my marathon visit to the communities in Tripura, Mizoram and Dholai (Assam). It was a hectic but satisfying mission to be with our sisters in the remote parts of the Province. I see lots of opportunities in our educative and pastoral mission which also entail sufficient challenges in its accomplishment. I appreciate the spirit of generosity and availability of our sisters to the mission of our Institute and the Church and their enthusiasm to make alive our Charism in their respective contexts inspite of inevitable difficulties.

### *Advent*

We are entering into the new Liturgical Year with the dawning of Advent on December 2. This holy season offers us opportunities to grow in our faith and to explore new aspects of our being Christians. Let us welcome from the Lord this New Year of grace, of goodness, mercy, love and joy! It is a favorable time when the Lord calls us to conversion, inviting us to direct our steps towards that total and complete "Joy" that is He! With certain hope of God's grace in the heart, let us live this new time of grace by accepting the invitation of St. Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord" (Phil 4: 4). Prior to it, we want to rediscover the meaning of Advent, which the Lord gives us to celebrate because, in waiting for His coming, we can draw fruits of charity and love for us and for our brothers and sisters.

The Liturgy of Advent is characterized by an invitation "To the joy" that accompanies all this time: let us therefore wait for Christ, who at the end of time will come in glory to make us fully participate in his mystery of salvation and therefore in His lasting joy!

May this Advent season be a time for bringing hope, transformation and fulfillment into the Advent of our lives; may our worship and devotion stoke the kind of enthusiastic fire in our souls that can truly change our hearts and may we be open to the Grace of God in this Holy Season in order that we may prepare a fitting place for the Lord.

### *Saint Francis Xavier - December 3*

On December 3, we will celebrate the solemnity of Saint Francis Xavier who is venerated as the patron of the mission because of his zealous capacity in evangelization. His thirst for souls and passionate heart to evangelize spurred him to forge ahead with courage and enthusiasm notwithstanding the many challenges of his times.

We are a missionary province and there is ample opportunity for us to expand God's Kingdom in this part of our country. Scrolling through the annals of our Province and the biography of our departed sisters, we will be stunned to see the amazing work they did in the villages for the expansion of God's Kingdom. They were passionate and willing to make any sacrifice to bring people to God. I

am sure this good tradition is kept up even now in the Province and I believe many of you (not only the touring sisters) are looking forward to this time of direct evangelization in order to offer your services generously in the villages and parishes during this season of Christmas and New Year, inspiring people with new thoughts and preparing them for the worthy celebration of the Sacraments. The words of Pope Saint Paul VI: "If the witness of the Apostles founded the Church, the witness of women contributes greatly towards nourishing the faith of Christian communities", is a veritable complement to women religious who are engaged in evangelization.

May St. Francis Xavier whose feast we celebrate this month be our special intercessor as we venture out as ardent apostles and zealous missionaries into the different corners of our Province. May Our Lady, the Woman of evangelization accompany your missionary steps.

Please send a brief report of the winter ministry carried out by your community to the Province along with visuals, so that the good work you do in the name of Jesus can be documented and preserved.

### *Blessed Phillip Rinaldi - December 5*

Saint Philip Rinaldi was born at Lu Monferrato (Alessandria) and at the age of twenty one he joined Don Bosco. After his priestly ordination, his first responsibility was the formation of aspirants and novices. In 1889, Don Rua sent him to Spain as Rector of the community at Sarria. Later he was asked to be the Provincial and made a decisive contribution to the development of the Salesian Charism in Spain.

As Vicar General of the Congregation he displayed even more his fatherly gifts and his willingness to take new initiatives: care of vocations, setting up centers for spiritual and social support of young workers, guide and support the Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians at an important stage of its history. He gave great encouragement to the Cooperators and founded the world Federation of Past Pupils. He always preferred to remain in the background of events, unnoticed in the crowd. His humble and quiet leadership of the order was combined with his tremendous saintly virtue and apostolic zeal.

When he was elected Rector Major in 1922, he focused his energy on adapting the spirit of Don Bosco to the current situation. Don Francesia wrote of him "Don Rinaldi was only missing the voice of Don Bosco: he had everything else!" He was a master of Salesian ways and spirituality and brought about a renewal in the interior life of Salesians, absolute confidence in God and unlimited trust in Mary Help of Christians. Let us pray through his intercession for our Salesian Congregation and for the members of the Salesian Family that we may imbibe the holy and authentic caliber of Blessed Philip Rinaldi and forge ahead courageously for the salvation of souls.

### *Feast of the Immaculate Conception- December 8*

On the 8th of December the Church honors Mary for the singular privilege of being born sinless – which we call the Immaculate Conception. Through this exceptional grace given to her, Mary became part of the redemptive plan of God. To make her fit to be the Mother of the Saviour, God enriched Mary with gifts appropriate to such a role. The angel Gabriel at the moment of the annunciation salutes her as “full of grace”.

Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, “full of grace”, was redeemed by God from the moment of her conception. That is what the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854: *“The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and by*

*virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin”*

The Novena in preparation for the feast of the Immaculate conception this year focuses on the theme “With Mary Listening to the Young” in line with the recent Synod “Young People, Faith and Vocational discernment” during which the Church listened attentively to the voice of young people, paying heed to their pains and agonies as well as their hopes and aspirations.

As a vital portion of the Church and as group entrusted with the education of young people, let us tune our ears and our hearts to listen actively and attentively to the queries and expectations of the young people. Let us also be part of a renewed Church according to the vision of the young people – an “*authentic Church*” which shines with its “example, competence, co-responsibility and cultural solidarity”; a church that is “transparent, welcoming, upright, attractive, communicative, accessible, joyful and interactive”.

The Church and particularly Pope Francis was courageous enough to ask young people what they expected of the Church and welcomed their honest views of the Church and their expectations from her. What would our young people tell us as a local community and a local Church? Will we give them a platform to express their views? Are we open enough to listen to them without bias, prejudice and labels?

Let us ask the Immaculate Virgin Mary whom we admire as the listening virgin to help us become like her, active and attentive listeners and doers of the Word of God. Let us ask her for the grace to welcome our young people without prejudice and let us accompany them with the attitude of love, compassion, understanding and mercy.

*Strenna 2019: "So that my joy may be in you' (Jn 15:11).  
Holiness for you, too!"*



The theme of Holiness is never an outdated issue. It runs true for every age and for every situation of life. More especially in the context of our religious life, holiness of life is a pre-requisite ingredient for authenticity of our community and evangelical witness. In the last circular we gave a thought to the theme of Holiness with certain reflections from the apostolic exhortation **Gaudete et exsultate** of Pope Francis and this time our Rector Major

to in line with this exhortation uses the same theme for the Strenna 2019 “**So that my joy may be in you' (Jn 15:11). Holiness for you, too!**” In it, he insists on an essential reality of holiness, and he does it through a question: “What does ‘holiness for you too mean?” It is a stimulating question and even more exciting is the answer of the Rector Major proposed to each of us and to the members of the Salesian Family. “*Holiness is not an optional extra and a goal only for some. It is life to the full, according to God’s plan and gift. It is therefore a path of humanization*”

In the course of centuries, the Salesian Family has given birth to a number of Saints in the Church. This proves that the Salesian Spirituality has **Holiness** as its culminating goal. Our saintly founders- Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello encouraged everyone to become saints by living simple virtues and doing ordinary things with joy. We have before us gigantic models of sanctity who have already

paved the way for us to follow. Let us therefore walk together courageously and convincingly this path with Joy, Love and Commitment. Let us remind ourselves constantly of our obligation to become Holy with the aphorism of our Rector Major in his last part of the Strenna presentation “*The path of holiness is commitment, but never self-sufficiency. Holiness is lived together, and it generates communion. Saints for sure, but saints together! First of all, saints are God’s masterpieces*”

### *Communications*

**NDF Annual Meet:** The 15<sup>th</sup> National Development Forum (NDF) Annual Meet will be held at Auxilium Reach Out (ARO), Guwahati from December 16-19, 2018. Sr. Marilyn Bahun Wahlang, Sr. Happyline Shadap, Sr. Aitihun Lawai, Sr. Dorathy Kharduit and Sr. Lucy Sangriang will participate in it.

**Come and See Programme:** God continues to extend his loving invitation to young men and women of our times. It is our duty to help them respond to this invitation to follow Jesus. With the aim of conscientizing young people of the call of God, the Province will organize a ‘**Come and See**’ Programme at Sacred Heart Convent, Mawlai from December 17-20, 2018. I thank the Vocation Pastoral Sector for taking this initiative and solicit the co-operation of the communities to make this event a successful one.

**Preparation for Final Profession:** On 28<sup>th</sup> December, the first phase of the Second Novitiate will commence at Mary Our Help Training Centre, Bellefonte. 9 sisters of our Province and 2 from ING Province will take part in it. Let us accompany all our 11 sisters with our prayerful support in this significant phase of their religious life. We thank Sr. Rosa Pyngrope for her availability to coordinate the programme. The Sisters are:

1. Sr. Dhar Embhahlang (INS)
2. Sr. Dkhar Bhalang (INS)
3. Sr. Hinge Marinella (INS)
4. Sr. Kharsnar Beltiful (INS)
5. Sr. Marngar Christilin (INS)
6. Sr. Mukhim Deihok (INS)
7. Sr. Nongkseh Joplangle (INS)
8. Sr. Pamei Gloria (ING)
9. Sr. Punyii Visasono Irene (ING)
10. Sr. Wahlang Graceland (INS)
11. Sr. Thongni Angeline (INS) (Only for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase)

**XIII National Boscoree:** Some of our Sisters and young people from our institutions will be participating in the XIII National Boscoree which will be held at Don Bosco Nashik, Maharashtra from 30<sup>th</sup> December 2018 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019. We wish them all a fruitful participation.

**Retreat 2019:** The first retreat for the year 2019 will start on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January. We are privileged to get this opportunity for spiritual renewal at the start of the year. Let us make the best of this time of grace. Prior to the spiritual retreat, there would be an animation programme on 9 January (Full day) and on 10 January (Half day). The programme will start at 8:30 am.

### *Prayers requested*

#### **For the Departed:**

- We offer our sincere sympathy and condolences to Sr. Alphonsa Kurisingal and the sisters of the FMA Province of Guwahati at the passing away of Sr. Mary Mampilly on November 21, 2018. We offer our sincere prayers for the repose of her soul while thanking God for the precious gift of her life and for the commendable works she has accomplished in our

Province especially in the her notable capacity and faithful service as Mistress of Novices, Provincial Councilor and other noble responsibilities in the Province. May the Lord grant her eternal rest and bless us with more vocations of her caliber.

- Our prayers and sincere condolences to Fr. Jose Kuruvachira and the Salesian Province of Dimapur at the demise of Fr. Peringalathu Joseph on 29 November, 2018.

**For the sick:**

- Mother of Sr. Patricia Nongkhlaw
- Father of Sr. Helen Puweiñ
- Father of Sr. Rishalin Warbah
- Sister of Sr. Mildaris Marweiñ

We are coming to the close of the year and we have every reason to be really thankful. Let us express our gratitude to God for all the blessings and gifts received. At this juncture of time we are invited to pause and reflect a while...*Am I aware of the plenteous blessings I receive each day?... Have I been receptive to these blessings?...Have I made sufficient effort to be a channel of grace and blessing to others?...As we enter the last month of the year, let us remind ourselves that we are constantly called to be a blessing to others, to the situations around and to our mission. I wish to conclude with the saying of an American televangelist Joel Osteen who said:*

*"When you focus on being a blessing, God makes sure that you are always blessed in abundance"*

I wish you a fervent season of Advent. As we sing joyfully "*Maranatha*", let us truly welcome the Lord Jesus into our lives, into our communities and into our mission.

Assuring you of my sisterly support and accompaniment.

Affectionately,



**Sr. Elizabeth George FMA**  
**Provincial**