



# Provincial Circular

## Province of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Auxilium Provincial Office Nongthymmai, Shillong - Meghalaya - 793014

CIR/EG/INS/08/2019

01.05.2019

Dearest Sisters,

Loving greetings from Auxilium Provincial House, Nongthymmai!

The Province has just had the transmission of the document '*Guidelines for the Formation Period of Temporary Vows*' by Sr. Nieves Rebozo, General Councillor for formation and her team from Rome. We thank them for their availability, meticulous planning and clear presentation. It was indeed a momentous event that rejuvenated our enthusiasm and passion of living our vocational journey more authentically and of realizing the importance of mutual accompaniment. The Provincial Council, Animators, Formators, temporary professed sisters and our candidates have benefitted a lot from the rich encounter that we have had. Many of the community animators have already taken it seriously to transmit it to other members of the community as well who were not part of the transmission. The document clearly underlines that every community is a formation community, joyfully undertaking the responsibility of being a community in a state of ongoing formation.

### *The perfume of Holiness*

HOLINESS is primarily and essentially an attribute of God. The Sacred scriptures show explicitly that when God created us, He created us for a life of holiness. In Leviticus chapter 20:26 we read "*You shall be holy and belong only to me, because I the Lord am holy. I have set you apart from other nations so that you belong to me alone*". God is all holy and our call is to belong to him entirely. Holiness is then a pre-condition to belong to God and to be with Him forever. In 2Cor. 1:21-22, we read "...it is God himself who has set us apart, who has placed his mark of ownership upon us and who has given us the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the guarantee of all that He has in store for us". By the very fact of being created in the image and likeness of God, God's holiness is imprinted in us and we become instruments of God's holiness for the world.

We read in 1 Thes.4:3 "This is the will of God your sanctification". The acceptance of the call to holiness places God as our final goal in every aspect of our lives. This fundamental orientation towards God envelops and sustains our relationship with other human beings. "...the life of holiness which is resplendent in so many members of the People of God, humble and often unseen, constitutes the simplest and most attractive way to perceive at once the beauty of truth, the liberating force of God's love, and the value of unconditional fidelity to all the demands of the Lord's law, even in the most difficult situations."(Veritatis Splendor)

The month of May is marked by a perfume of holiness as we celebrate many feasts in our family in particular the gigantic figures of our Blessed Mother the Help of Christians, Mother Mazzarello, Dominic Savio and other Salesian saints. Delving into the profundity of **Holiness**, our saints have truly witnessed through their lives that God has created us solely for Himself and for Holiness of life

## *Dominic Savio: ...A giant of sanctity*

In his short life span, Dominic Savio made a significant impact on the world with the simplicity of his holy life. His entire sojourn on earth was marked by simplicity, humility and a constant rapport with the Lord. His saintly attitudes were seen in his ways of confronting life even at a very tender age and his ways of relating to others always inspiring them to be better. His creative initiative of forming the Immaculate Conception sodality at a very young age of 12 is clear indication of his ardour to attract his friends and draw others towards God and His love.

Dominic's impact on others can be seen in many ways. He was a model for his peers in every way and they held him in very high regard and thought of him a saint. In fact Don Bosco himself wrote of Dominic in his biography, "As soon as news came of his death a few of his friends were already calling him a saint. They met to recite the Litany for the Dead but instead of saying 'Pray for him', that is, 'Holy Mary pray for the repose of his soul', they said, pray for us: 'Holy Mary, pray for us'. 'Because', they said, 'by now Savio is enjoying the glory of Paradise and no longer needs our prayers'

This youthful saint gives us the assurance that Jesus is a person that we can always have a relationship with. We are made to be in a loving relationship with God and that's what our consecrated life too invites us. Imitating this great Saint, we are reminded to be constant in our striving for a life of holiness. Dominic in his life time acquired tremendous wisdom that gave him the impetus to remain faithful to his goal of achieving perfection. His own words "*If I do not become a Saint, I am doing nothing*" was indeed his guiding principle which he accomplished with constancy and love. To us he has given the conviction that what matters in life is the faithfulness and constancy in little things not just the big accomplishments and achievements. He is indeed a model for all time and a great witness to the faith more with his life than words. By following his example, we also can become witnesses to the faith for others.

Pope St. John Paul II writes how we can model ourselves after St. Dominic Savio. "Like Saint Dominic Savio, be missionaries of good example, good words, good action at home, with neighbours and colleagues at work. At every age we can and we must bear witness to Christ! Commitment to bear witness is permanent and daily." (Extract from his Homily 7 December 1997)

## *Mother Mazzarello: ...A "valuing" look that stimulates growth*



We are filled with vibrating emotions of joy and happiness to speak of our Saintly Mother Mazzarello. Hers was a spirit that was firmly aimed at the goal...**SANCTITY!** She was truly a



*"I am not capable of doing big things, but I want to do everything, even the smallest things, for the greater glory of God."*

Mother, an educator and a teacher of holiness of life. She perceived holiness in whatever she confronted, she put a taste of it in whatever she undertook, she stimulate in everyone the passion to reach that perfection of life. Her enormous depth of sanctity was witnessed in every simple action in her lifetime and today which continues vibrating especially through the legacy of her valuable and inestimable letters filled with profound wisdom and a heart for God and for humanity.

The face of Maria Mazzarello that emerges from the letters is a face that has not yet been crowned with holiness, but with all the conditions to recognize it. It appears with the unmistakable notes of a very fine and integral humanity. Here is she, the woman, the educator who seeks the good of others with clear transparency and who motivates and directs the path to daily sanctity. Every moment of life is for her an occasion to increase the love for God and an opportunity to grow closer to Him. As she would habitually say *“Every stitch is an act of love for God”*. She would also often encourage the sisters and the young to witness God through a joyful spirit that speaks much of the enormous Love of God hidden in a human soul and the wholeness of a human heart full of God’s Love.

Her life, though simple, was always projected onto great and high ideals and therefore, it continually points to new goals of reaching the heights of holiness. She continually invites her daughters and girls to conform oneself to this goal of life. In one of her letters, she said *“To us religious, it is not enough to save the soul, we must make ourselves holy and make many other souls with our good holy works waiting for us to help them »*. (L.18,3). Mother Mazzarello progresses with obstinate patience and tenacity on this path. Therefore, she invites us also to recall to the clarity of the motivations and to support the commitment of our religious and spiritual maturation, to avoid making peace with our defects, instead to build small and constant steps towards holiness.

Like our Saintly Mother Mazzarello, let us resolve to make the goal of our spiritual journey to be **SAINTS** through our constancy in meeting God in our daily and simple circumstances of life and in every person we encounter. Let our daily endeavors be filled with much holy joy to witness God and His Love to the world. As our Saintly Mother would constantly remind us *“Joy is the sign of a heart that loves God very much.”*

### *Mary Help of Christians:*



*“...Be devoted to Mary Help of Christians and you would see what miracles are...”* - Don Bosco

In December of 1862, Don Bosco made a resolution to build a church dedicated to the invocation of ‘Help of Christians’. And he declared, on that occasion:

*“To the Virgin Most Holy whom we desire to honor with the title of 'Help of Christians'; the times we are in are so sad that we truly need the Most Holy Virgin to help us in preserving and defending the Christian Faith as in Lepanto, as in Vienna, as in Savona and Rome.... and it will be the mother church of our future Society and the center from where all our works will radiate in behalf of the youth.”*

Six years after, on May 21, 1868, the magnificent Church of Mary Help of Christians was solemnly consecrated in Turin by the Archbishop of the city. The dream of Don Bosco became a reality but didn’t stop there. A decade after the resolution, Don Bosco founded the Institute of the Daughters of Mary help of Christians which was to be a living monument of his gratitude to his Madonna. In Cronistoria I page 303, we read the exact words of Don Bosco *“...let your beautiful title of Daughters of Mary Help of Christians be your glory and often think that your institute is to be a living*

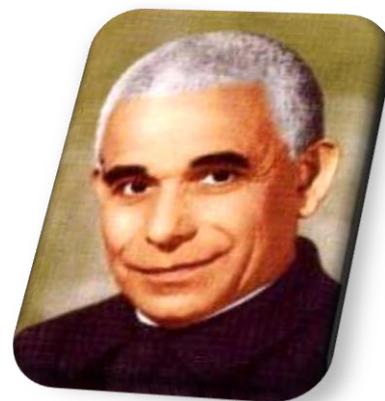
*monument of Don Bosco's gratitude to the great Mother of God under the title of Mary Help of Christians."* Since then, the work of the Salesian Congregation continues to expand under the protection and intercession of our Heavenly Mother, the Help of Christians.

Art. 4 of our Constitutions explicitly manifest the desire of our saintly father Don Bosco that he wanted us to be a living monument of his gratitude[...] and asks us to extend his thanks throughout all times. In celebrating her feast, it is appropriate to ask ourselves a question: Are we truly the living stone that builds up the monument of our father Don Bosco? Is our way of life and mission perpetuating the sentiments of Don Bosco's gratitude? What are the signs and external characteristics that are worthwhile comparing to this title?

A celebration of this feast is indeed a clarion call to each of us to look back to our identity of our being Daughters of Mary help of Christians and to be conscious of our responsibility of making alive the beautiful name of our Blessed Mother with our fidelity and conviction to spread her devotion. Let us prepare ourselves for this great solemnity especially during the solemn days of the Novena.

### *St. Louis Orione (16 May)*

Loius Orione was born in Pontecurone, in the diocese of Tortona, 23 June 1872. As a youngster he helped his father mending roads until he turned thirteen. Louis wanted to study to become a priest and went to the Franciscan Monastery at Voghera, but he had to abandon his efforts because of serious illness. He was welcomed and got acquainted with Don Bosco when he was accepted at the College in Valdocco and was privileged to have Don Bosco as his confessor. He wrote three entire exercise books worth of sins, but the Saint tore them up, saying to him amongst other things: "We will always be friends". It was there that he breathed the Salesian Spirit but later left the Salesians to become a seminarian in his own Diocese of Tortona.



*"Do good always,  
to all, evil to none"*

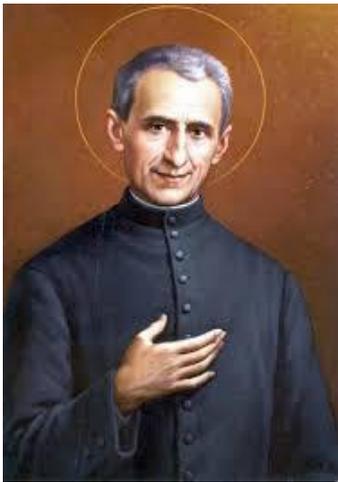
Saint Luigi Orione is the founder of 'The Little Work of Divine Providence', which is made up of two religious Congregations: the Sons of Divine Providence, consisting of Priests and Brothers and the Little Missionary Sisters of Charity with the apostolic Charism of "collaborating in bringing the little ones, the poor and the people of the Church to the Pope, through works of charity" Don Orione loved everybody; but the poor, the young, the elderly, the sick and people with disabilities were his special friends.

The ideal of Don Orione's life was to live and to die for the spiritual welfare of people, serving Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mother Church and its head, the Pope. His motto was, "Do good always, to all, evil to none". He never became a Salesian but nevertheless, he never discounted the Valdocco model in Don Bosco, so much so that he said many times: "I would walk on burning coals to see Don Bosco again, and I would say thanks to him".

Let us learn from this holy pupil of Don Bosco, an art of loving God present in everyone and especially in those who suffer and who are less privileged in life.

### *St. Leonard Murialdo (18 May)*

Leonard Murialdo was born in Turin on October 26, 1828. His father was a wealthy stockbroker, and the mother, a very religious woman. He studied with the Piarist Fathers at Nadino from 1836 to 1843. Back in Turin, he attends theology at the University and in 1851 becomes a priest. He chooses immediately to work in the first Turin oratories, among the poor boys living in the outskirts: at the oratory of the Guardian Angel until 1857. Precisely, in that period, as a catechist of the Oratory of the Guardian Angel, he came to the attention of Don Bosco who appreciated his qualities and



convinced him to accept the directorship of the new Oratory of St. Luigi, in Porta Nuova, which he held until in 1865.

He committed himself untiringly to those who in his time were without any value in the social scale especially the poor and abandoned youth. St Leonard always reminded himself and his brethren of the responsibility of a life consistent with the sacrament received. Love of God and love for God: in fact, this was the force that impelled him on his journey to holiness.

In his ministry, he combined contemplative silence with the tireless zeal of action, fidelity to everyday tasks with resourceful initiatives and fortitude in difficulty with peace of mind. This can be witnessed from his closeness and constant touch with the Lord while serving Him in the least privileged youth. Let us follow the example of this great Saint to form sincere convictions to live the path of holiness in order to be more faithful to the commandment of love for God and for neighbours.

### *Blessed Joseph Kowalski (29 May)*

Joseph Kowalski was born at Siedliska, Poland, a little farming town near Rzeszow in a family rich in faith and religious values. During the years of his schooling at St. John Bosco School- Oswiecim, he was distinguished for his rare piety, diligence, joy, and spirit of service. Everyone liked him, and he was counted among the better boys. Likewise, he grew in an ambient of rich educational, moral and human values of the Preventive System. In this conducive environment, Joseph pursued his own personal journey towards holiness and imitated Dominic Savio preferring death to sin. He constantly worked to acquire maturity in sanctity. He would often say *“I can and must be a saint [...] I must be a holy Salesian, as my father Don Bosco was a saint.”*

His zealous priestly ministry among the young led the Nazis to put him behind bars in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Notwithstanding the physical, mental and emotional tortures he had to endure, Joseph made the prison camp a fertile ground of his pastoral ministry. He united his suffering to diligent attention to his comrades, especially to strengthen their hope and sustain their faith. When he was discovered with a rosary and refused to trample on it, his martyrdom was hastened and occurred at Auschwitz on the 4th July 1942. His body was at first thrown into a refuse dump, and then was burned in the camp’s crematorium. He was beatified on June 13, 1999 by St. John Paul II (*who, as a university student, had known him in the parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Krakow’s Debniki neighbourhood*)

This holy and courageous person gives to us the inspiration that even in the midst of adverse persecutions and difficulties, the Lord’s presence is always felt; rather the rapport with Him grew even stronger. This conviction can be testified from his courageous confrontation even in the face of death. *“Don’t worry about me; I’m in God’s hands.... I want to assure you that I feel his help at every step. In spite of the present situation, I’m happy and completely at peace; I’m sure that wherever I may be and whatever may happen to me, everything comes from the fatherly Providence of God, who in the most just manner directs the fates of every nation and of all human beings.”*



*“I have to become a saint because this is what I am intended for”*

## *Communications*

**Seminar cum Animation for formators of North East:** A Seminar cum Animation for formators of North East on the theme ‘*Pastoral formation for ministry*’ will be held at the North Eastern Diocesan Social Service Society, Guwahati from 1-3 May 2019. Sr. Marvella Shangpliang and Sr. Iahunlang Kyrnsian will participate in it. We wish them an enriching experience.

**Welcome back:** We warmly welcome back home Sr. Anita Dhar who has just returned on 29 April 2019 from Auxilium, Katpadi after completing her Masters Degree in Chemistry. We congratulate her for having completed her years of studies and implore God’s blessings on her mission. Temporarily she will be incharge of the Pre- Aspirants who are having their orientation programme at Bellefonte.

As was communicated earlier, along with her also came 5 young people from Zambia studying at Auxilium College, Katpadi to have some experience in our Province. At the moment, 2 of them are in the community of Jowai and 3 in the community of Mawlai. We welcome our young people to our place and wish them all the best in their month’s exposure in our Province.

**Provincial Chapter Commission:** In the light of the Holy Spirit, prayer and discernment, the Provincial Council has appointed the following sisters for the Provincial Chapter Commission.

*Chapter Moderator:* Sr. Celine D’Cunha

### **Commission Members:**

- Sr. Celina Maslai
- Sr. Esther Marwein
- Sr. Euginia Laloo
- Sr. Euginia Kyntiewlin Susngi
- Sr. Gemima Pohrmen
- Sr. Luigina Duia
- Sr. Mary Lamare
- Sr. Teresa Kamsuan

We are all invited to read and reflect on the document of GCXXIV personally and as a community in these days. Shortly, the Commission will provide the study materials and animations pertaining to the different levels of reflection.

As indicated earlier, let us unite with the whole Institute imploring God’s grace through the intercession of our Blessed Mother through the special prayer of entrustment which has already been dispatched to your communities. Mother General has also invited to implore the Holy Spirit for this important and delicate event in the life of our Institute. Therefore, may I invite the communities to also pray the invocation to the Holy Spirit at the most appropriate time of the community prayer moments.

Let us actively and prayerfully take part in this vital celebration of the Province event that would renew, rejuvenate and reinforce the charismatic identity of our being FMA.

**Student Sisters for Rome:** The Council has identified the following sisters for few years of updating and formation in Rome.

- Sr. Rihunlang Muthoh
- Sr. Philina Kholar
- Sr. Maria Roibok Suchiang

Sr. Rihunlang will frequent a two year programme of Salesian Spirituality while the other two will frequent the three year programme at Auxilium. We wish our sisters all the best and God’s blessings

for this opportunity of religious and cultural formation at the centre. They will leave the Province in the early part of July.

**Missionary Invitation:** As we thank God for the many young vocations the Lord sends for us let us also give heed to His loving invitation to a missionary life beyond our material confines and our physical boundaries. Mother General too constantly reminds us of the missionary dimension of our Institute as explained Art. 75 of our Constitutions. Enthused by the missionary passion lived by our first missionaries, let us also be generous to listen to the promptings of the Lord within our hearts. Therefore, I would request those who feel that they have the vocation of being a missionary ad gentes, to spend sufficient time in prayer and make a wise discernment of this precious gift of God, after which put forward the application for it to Mother General through the Provincial. Let us pray that the young vocations in our Province may not only grow in Holiness but also in generous self offering to the Institute and the Kingdom of God.

**Orientation Programme:** 27 Pre Aspirants who have finished the Class XII examinations are undergoing the three months orientation programme at Bellefonte. I thank Sr. Christina Kharkongor and the community of Bellefonte for accompanying these young people. I request you to keep them in our prayers.

**Congratulations:** We congratulate Sr. Alessandra Smerilli FMA, professor at the Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences 'Auxilium', Rome who was appointed by Pope Francis as State Councillor of Vatican City on 17 April 2019. We wish her success in this new mission in the Church.

**Retreat cum Animation:** The next retreat cum animation for the senior sisters will be as follows:

Animation	:	24 May (morning) - 25 May (12 noon)
Retreat	:	25 May (evening) - 1 June (morning)

The participants are requested to arrive at FMA Outreach latest by 5:30 pm on **23 May 2019**.

**SDB Provincial Chapter:** We assure our prayers for the fruitfulness of the Provincial Chapters of the Salesians of Shillong and Dimapur Provinces which will be held this month.

### *Prayers and Condolences*

We offer our prayers and condolences to Sr. Kanrisha Thangkhiew and her family at the demise of her grandmother on 21 April 2019

### *Prayers for the sick*

We extend our prayerful support to all the sick members of our communities and families through the intercession of our Blessed Mother. We pray especially for:

- The brother of Sr. Bertina Kurbah
- The mother of Sr. Felisita Rynshon
- The mother of Sr. Lydia Pala
- The maternal aunt of Sr. Jurilin Lyngkhoi
- The nephew of Sr. Elsisitina Sun

Let me conclude by greeting you all a happy month of Salesian Holiness. This month immerses us profoundly in a sea of Holiness with many Salesian Saints to guide and remind us of our common identity and destiny- our SANCTITY. In the Salesian tradition, holiness becomes a handing over of oneself in faith, hope and love to Jesus. It involves daily choices, a striving for a life that is lived with love, serenity, patience, an acceptance of the trials and joys of each day and an unconditional love for the young people certain that in the eyes of God everything makes sense, everything is worthwhile, everything is important.

Let us enter with joy into the threshold of this month unveiling gradually the many surprises and graces of God in the company of our Blessed Mother and our Saints.

*“Holiness is a gift from God which is available to all, no matter what their circumstances or age”*

- Don Bosco

I assure you of my sisterly support and accompaniment.

Affectionately,



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

