



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

FEBRUARY 2018

DEAR CONFRERES,

Cordial Greetings from Don Bosco Provincial House Tiruchy!

It is bit surprising to realise the fact that time runs faster. As I am completing the first year of my leadership in the Province, I look back the past 19 years of our journey as a province and thank God for His countless Blessings. Visiting all our communities, I am able to witness the enormous amount of hard work of our confreres, faithfully living their religious vocation and committing themselves for the welfare of the poor and marginalized young. I thank you dear confreres especially the Rectors and Leaders, for your hard work. Feast of our Father and Founder St. John Bosco was another occasion to experience the presence of Don Bosco amidst us and the working of the Divine Providence in our Province.

We are starting the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday on 14 February 2018. I invite all of you dear confreres to take this holy season as a time to be closer to the Lord, to indulge ourselves in prayer, penance and charitable works. As a sign of our witness to poverty and our solidarity towards poor, *let us take every effort to be one with the poor, stay close to them and lessen their burdens*, (Art 79). I invite all our communities to send the savings of the Lent to the Economer who will in turn send it to the Rector Major.

THE VISIT OF THE FORMATION COMMISSION TEAM

Fr. Roggia Silvio, from the department of Formation from Generalate and Fr. Jose Kuttianimattathil, the Regional Delegate for formation made a visit to all our formation houses. We thank them for their visit and their concern in the field of formation.

PROVINCE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Provincial Council discussed the role of the finance committee and appointed the following members: Fr. Amaladoss - Economer, head of the committee, Fr. Ricopar Royan - Cauveri Director and Procure Director, an ex-officio member, Fr. Santhanaraj Ubagaram, Fr. Arokiaraj Mariasusai and Fr. Arul Maran.

PREPARATION OF YOUNG SALESIANS FOR RENEWALS AND ADMISSIONS

This is the time our Young Salesians will apply for their next level of formation. They need our guidance and accompaniment at this time of discernment. I request the Rectors and leaders to be with our young Salesians to support and guide them. I urge our Young Salesians to spend more time in prayer, avail the opportunities for *Rendiconto* and spiritual direction, thus become more strengthened and committed in your religious vocation. I ask the Leaders to receive the applications for the Renewal of vows and Perpetual Profession on **19 March 2018**, and **send the papers on or before 25 March 2018** with the house council's opinion in the prescribed form.

Kindly send two admission forms along with the application for those making the Perpetual Profession.

REMINDER...

I exhort all our leaders to arrange for an animation on Strenna 2018 for our confreres and Salesian Family members before 15 February 2018. After the animation, kindly send a report with photos to the Vice Provincial.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS...

01 Every priest is expected to offer one mass for the deceased confreres on 1 February 2018 (*Reg. 76, 4.1*).

10 Provincial Council

21 Administrators' Meet

21 – 25 Administrators' Training for the New Priests

During the month, we organize the Trimonthly recollections and carry out the assessment of our young Salesians.

UPCOMING SALESIAN FEASTS...

06 St. Paul Miki & Companions

07 Bl. Pius IX

09 Bl. Eusebia Palomino

25 Sts. Aloysius Versiglia and Callistus Caravario

RECALLING EVENTS...

- Twenty two Salesians participated in the Annual Retreat – I, at Yercaud held from 13 to 18 January 2018. I thank Fr. Charles Joseph SDB, the preacher, for accepting to animate the retreat. I also thank the Vice Provincial for the arrangements and the Rector and the Community of Retreat Yercaud, for making the campus ready for this annual spiritual exercise.
- The Dissemination of Strenna 2018 was held for the leaders at the provincial house on 13 January 2018. Fr. Joseph Daniel animated the Leaders on the Strenna. I extend our sincere thanks to him for his animation. I also express our appreciation to Fr. Thomas Louis, the Salesian Family Delegate, for organising this event and making the documents available for all the communities.
- The Provincial Community day was celebrated on 20 January 2018 at Pallithammam. I appreciate all the Salesians and the family Members who made it a point to be present to celebrate our togetherness and to thank the Lord for His Blessings. It was a fraternal gathering of the Salesian family expressing a sense of Gratitude to each other and celebrating the sense of belonging. I thank Fr. Agilan the Vice Provincial and Fr. Amaladoss the Economer for coordinating this event. I place on record the dedicated service rendered by the Pallithammam community for the success of this event. I appreciate Fr. George Fernandez, the Rector and the community for their hospitality and hard work and the Salesian Family especially FMA and SMA Superiors and the communities for their great support in organising this event.

- I appreciate Don Bosco Media Team, for taking the innovative initiatives such as 'Screenagers' to educate the young in the proper use of Media and short clippings 'Know Don Bosco,' in English and Tamil on a daily basis throughout the month of DB to make him known among the young people so that they love him and imitate him.

CONDOLENCES

- On behalf of the Province I express my deepest condolences to the Provincial and the Confreres of Chennai Province at the death of Fr. Stanislaus M. Fernandez (85) on 19 January 2018. He rendered his service in DB Varadarajanpet for six years. May his soul rest in peace.
- Our heartfelt condolences to the Provincial and the Confreres of Shillong Province at the sad demise of Fr. Leonard Kharkongor (75) on 15 January 2018 and at the unexpected death of Fr. James Poonthuruthil (62) on 21 January 2018. May the Good Lord grant them eternal rest.
- I extend my sincere condolences to the Provincial and the sisters of INT FMA Province at the death of Rev. Sr. Muthusamy Rosary (84) on 24.01.2018. May her soul rest in peace.

COMMUNITY REFLECTION

Environmental Education towards Ecological Citizenship: Last month we celebrated our Provincial Community Day with the theme 'To Listen and To Accompany' taking the inspiration from this year's Strenna. I take the same theme to elucidate the importance of 'Environmental Education' as next green point in our Eco Concerns.

LISTENING, with the young, to the cry of our 'common home' and ACCOMPANYING the young in protecting our 'common home'. For both listening and accompanying we need wisdom: Wisdom to know the original purpose of the creation and its destiny. Right information, scientific knowledge and environment related causes and effects, all need to be taught, discussed and debated with our young people to make right choices and for environmental sustainability.

Listening to the cry of our earth is an educational process. With the knowledge that comes from environment education, young are able to make informed choices and act effectively. Today, we need to become familiar with the issues around climate, biodiversity and our environment if we are to act effectively to sustain the living world of which we are a part and on which we all depend. Environment Education is about being and becoming competent and knowledgeable so that we can follow ideas, debates, concepts and realities with confidence and are able to contribute to a conversation and society's conversion.

Environmental education promotes a holistic approach.

- It allows people to **make certain sustainable and fair use of resources** devoid of damaging the environment.
- Effective programs conducted in our schools, colleges, boarding homes, community reach out centres or any other places **encourage children and adults to carry environmental education** into their homes and influence their close circles.
- It helps people to **establish a strong bond with nature**. Nature appreciation and awareness education or programs promotes an ecologically sustainable future.

Environmental education indeed enhances appreciation of environment both at the local and global level. It enables one to see issues and its impact at both levels. Enhancing appreciation and analytical outlook among young citizens can give rise to overall positive environmental behavioural change. Air pollution, poor managing of waste, rising water shortage, declining groundwater tables, water pollution, low conservation and quality of forests, biodiversity loss, and land and soil degradation are a few of the main environmental issues faced by whole globe and it has its own share locally. Hence education on environmental issues are important today since it lets people to build up skills, foster a dedication to take steps individually and communally to maintain and enhance the environment.

So far our Province has brought out two books on 'Environmental Education,' namely 'குழலியல் கல்வி - இயற்கை வளங்கள் அறிமுகம்' (on Natural Resources) 'குழலியல் கல்வி - குழலமைவு அறிவோம்' (on Ecological System). The aim of the books is to educate our children and young people of our eco clubs, to become aware of the wonders of earth we live in, to understand the interconnectivity of various biotic and abiotic things of the world and to engage pro-actively in environment protection. Let us therefore, make sure that the content of these books reach every young people of our institutions and achieve its purpose. Let us not limit ourselves only to these books. They are only to start with. The books and the environment education should help us to:

- Share the 'awe of nature' with young people, accompany them to meditate and experience the compassionate love that God bestows through nature.
- Educate young people to understand the eco system and the interconnectivity of all that exists in nature. Convincing knowledge is important to understand that links are very important in the ecosystem. Losing or de-linking causes havoc in the environment.
- Facilitate young people to listen to the cry of our planet, to understand the pain that we inflict to various species through our irresponsible behaviours.
- Discuss and debate with young people on various environmental issues that affect them directly and how they too contribute to degradation. Help them to draw up the redressal plan.
- Accompany young people in designing their personal green life-style, which direct their choices and environmental behaviours.

The path to change comes from education. Pope Francis says, "If we want to bring about deep change, we need to realize that certain mindsets really do influence our behaviour. Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffective unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature." This call is the need of the hour. As Salesians, we enthusiastically engage in forming our young people in 'Honest Citizens.' Now, reading the signs of the times, it is our mandate to evangelize and educate them towards ecological citizenship. Let us LISTEN and ACCOMPANY our youngsters towards this ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP.

Yours affectionately in DB



Fr. Antony Joseph SDB
Provincial – INT

